



Gratitude and Hope

By: Laura Savinkoff
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

What a month May turned out to be for Grand Forks and the Boundary! We watched as both rivers, the Granby and Kettle did their usual rising to absorb the snows from the mountains. Last year the waters overflowed the banks with some flooding in some areas that long-time residents have never seen under water before. But this year exceeded all the years prior even the historic flood of 1948.

We knew the snow pack was higher than it has been for many years. On May 9th the Granby, beside which I lived, kept on going up and up and up but still we hoped it would not flood too bad. And the rain kept on coming in sheets all day and all night. Early morning on May 10th Evacuation Alerts came to most of downtown and all areas along both rivers. By 11 am these alerts became Evacuation Orders as the rivers spilled their banks to cover roads and streets and we sought higher ground with what we could grab in a few short hours. And then that night the Dikes that protected two low lying areas—the areas that the poorer people lived—broke in two places and people were lucky to get out alive. And the downtown core was covered in 2-3 feet of contaminated water. And businesses scrambled to get equipment and stock out but the waters kept on coming no matter how many sandbags were piled on top of each other. The sticky muddy river water joined the ground water bubbling up under floor boards and into basements faster than it could be pumped out. Many roads not only in town but in the rural areas were covered and the bridges were closed. The electrical power was shut off as was natural gas and communications. Some homes got up to 6 feet of water in their basements, other's home teeter precariously on the banks of the river. So many of us fled to friends and to the evacuation center on the other side of town where the Red Cross set up to register and find housing of some kind for a couple thousand people seeking refuge.

In some areas the water receded into the previous river channel in a couple of days, but the threat was not over. There was more snow ready to come down and rain was once again in the forecast and higher temperatures as well. But the rains held off and the sun shone to evaporate some of that stagnant water, making room for more melt to come down. We did avoid more disaster as the town and surrounding area banded together with help coming from other communities.

But, now the next stage arrives. How to recover? How to recoup losses? How to find a place to live? The downtown is devastated with many businesses and services unable to operate because of contaminated buildings. Some of the poorer sections of town still stand in water two weeks later
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and the rest are encrusted with stinky contaminated mud so hard that many items cannot be recovered. I was fortunate for I could get into my rental within two days and most of my stuff out but some big ticket items were destroyed. But the task of cleaning off that mud is daunting and I am finding things I need to throw out as I sift through my hastily packed possessions. I do have temporary storage and temporary housing but I and so many others, need a permanent home in a region already strapped for affordable housing. So many have houses but not the immediate cash to remove the contaminated walls, flooring and replace furnaces and hot water heaters...and must pay their mortgages as well as for motels or other accommodation. Recovery will take months, maybe years! Although there is the Disaster Financial Assistance program it will take months to get those funds especially with the large number of claims needing to be assessed.

Personally, I am homeless and although I am blessed to have a temporary place to live, it is temporary. So, essentially I am couch surfing and I don't have any idea for how long this will be necessary! This is a good lesson, I suppose, on how it is to be homeless, how it is to be a refugee, how it is in a war zone. It is not the stuff that you mourn but your life, your daily routine, the uncertainty of where and how you are going to live. That is what causes great stress and anxiety. Some may have a meagre amount of things and the other expensive things but the loss of those things is profound and devastating for both.

This is Climate Change in action, my dear friends! It is not coming—it is already here! And it has been here for a few years. We may try pretending it's a natural cycle; we may try convincing ourselves that this year is a freak of nature. But is it? Last year was bad--but this time it was worse. And other areas there are fires already!

These extremes of weather are not a cycle I'm afraid, but a result of humans polluting our planet. Yes there are cycles but with our greed and our warring we have exacerbated the problem and the planet is reacting to our disregard of our home.

Are we going to stop and think about what we, the world's people, are doing to our home? We are taught to keep our living and working spaces clean and sanitary, free of dangerous chemicals and activities. And yet, when it comes to our land, water and air somehow we seem to think its okay to dump everything into our rivers and oceans, spill it on and into our soil and keep on pumping all types of pollutants into the air. Well, it is coming back to bite us and bite us hard, unless we make a concerted effort, all of us—from the homeless to the billionaire, from municipal to federal politicians, from the youngest to the eldest—to stop our greed for material possessions and begin to transition more deliberately to renewable energy and fuel, stop producing weapons so more wars are necessary to justify their invention. It is not only our daily use of fossil fuels that is creating the issue of climate change but every time a jet-fighter flies it uses more fuel than I will in a decade driving every day and when it drops (Continued page 2)

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the bombs that take fossil fuels to develop and produce, the cloud of chemicals that fly up into the air and the rubbish left behind create more pollution than I will in a decade as well. And all this in a few moments of time! Is this reasonable? Is this taking care of our mutual home? I'm not saying we have no personal responsibility to conserve and eliminate our over usage but a greater responsibility I think is to stop the war machine from start to finish. At least 8% of every tax dollar in Canada goes to the war industry. And war destroys not only communities and human life but the life of all creatures in its path and sends plumes of destruction into the air, the water, the soil.

It is time for us, you and me, to speak up! It is time for us to say no to the Military Industrial Complex and the War Economy. I realize those of us struggling right now to find homes or funds to fix our homes may not have the energy to say NO. Others do and must! But this can help us, those directly affected, understand the needs of refugees suffering from war, children that have lived with war all their lives, Palestinians who live under siege in the largest and longest running outdoor prison in history, all those creatures big and small that have had their habitat destroyed. I know it is not an easy thing to step out of our own suffering and think about others but I plead with you—let's not forget what it feels like to have your home destroyed from no fault of your own, to have no home to go to, to have your livelihood pulled out from under you. Whether this happens because of a flood or because some elites in Ivory Towers decide they want a war the destruction tears at our soul! Bombs missiles rain down and tanks mow down everything in their path and the majority of the people suffer, not those who decided it was time for yet another war! And out of fear and anger people react in violence and the warring goes on and on and on!

We were fortunate in the Boundary that there were no direct deaths or injuries as a result of the flood but the stress is draining all of us and can cause health issues. Just as in war it is not only the immediate deaths that are cause for concern but the ongoing stress and health effects from pollution and destruction of basic human needs that keep on adding to the list of war death and injury. Yet sadly, a heart attack or a stroke or cancer or any other illness is not considered a result of war and so they are not counted among the war dead or injured. I wonder how many illnesses and deaths will be a result of the stress and the contaminated air we are breathing here in the Boundary Region of B.C. Will these illnesses be counted as an affect of the flood or will it just be accepted as the natural progression of living, the natural cycle?

I and the Boundary Peace Initiative are grateful for all the people who so generously gave of their time and energy to help each other during this crisis. The community pulled together with even the gas stations lowering the price of fuel. I wonder if this feeling of 'community' will continue into the future. Will we extend a hand of friendship and love to create a respectful and kind community beyond today? Will we expand our compassion and understanding to the homeless, the poor, and the physically challenged? Will we treat all with the dignity all are entitled to? I do hope so! Will we extend our hand and our love beyond the Boundary? I hope so. Will we lay aside our prejudices? Will we take up the standard of love, honour, justice, equality, dignity, integrity and most of all love for all Creation? I do hope so.

In Universal Kinship and Loving Peace

April 14, 2018 B.C. Southern Interior Peace Coalition conference minutes

(As compiled by Peter Kerr and Laura Savinkoff and will run in the next few issues)

**Please contact Laura if you want the reports at LApeace@telus.net or (250) 444-0524.*

Mark Haley chaired. Peter Kerr took notes.

In Attendance:

Mark Haley, Laura Savinkoff, Roy Lechner, Peter Kerr, Madelyn MacKay, Dora Stewart, Don Currie, J.J. Verigin, Peter Chataway, Carol Kergan, Robin Horseman, Debbie Hubbard, Richard Cannings, M.P.

Morning Session:

Prior to the official opening of the conference, we discussed if a change is needed to the structure of the conferences in order to attract more participants, to be more pro-active, to address current events in a timely manner. It was suggested we address this at a future conference.

Member Group reports: NOTE- Most of these reports are much more comprehensive than the following notes taken here and written reports by most groups were distributed at the beginning of the conference and had been emailed prior to the meeting. *{All reports are attached including one late arrival}*

Madelyn MacKay reported on behalf of KAIROS Nelson and spoke about a Mothers' Day peace gathering in a park in Nelson for those who might find it difficult to go to Osoyoos for the annual Mothers' Day Walk for Peace. She also reported on the upcoming "For Our Earth" conference in support of the Coast Protectors opposing the Kinder Morgan pipeline. This Forum is on Monday, April 23rd at 7 p.m. in the Nelson United Church. On April 28th there will be a Direct Action Workshop/training and in July a Paddle for the Peace to supplement the annual paddle being held on the Peace River in opposition to the Site C dam. ***{Attachment #1 and Attachment #2 is Sandra Hartline's report on behalf of KAIROS}.***

Don Currie reported that because he is isolated in Slocan City, it difficult to be as involved as he would like. Don read his 'letter to the editor' of the Nelson Star, regarding a speaker sponsored by the MIR Centre for Peace, Selkirk College in Castlegar. *(The letter is in the BPI newsletter of April 2018 on the website: www.boundarypeaceinitiative.org)*

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Laura added to the report on behalf of the Boundary Peace Initiative *{Attachment #3}* and spoke of the “For Our Earth” event in Nelson which BPI endorsed as well as the Council of Canadians and the Canadian Peace Congress. She has DVDs for sale of the Walk the Drum held in Grand Forks on September 21, 2017 and the Peace Concert. This action was in support of the decision at the April 2017 conference regarding Canada 150.

Laura explained she felt marginalized by the Canadian Boat for Gaza Committee, but requested to be informed of activities, as stated in her report on the Canadian Boat to Gaza Committee *{Attachment #4}*, to which the committee agreed. They also expressed gratitude for her participation and regrets for not be as inclusive as they wished to be.

Kelowna Peace Group *{Attachment #5 and 5b}* was summarized by Mark. At the World Community Film Festival held in Kelowna in March twenty names were added to the Kelowna Peace Group list. Paul Crawford introduced art from Syria which was displayed at the Pentiction Art Gallery and the Kelowna Peace Group contributed to the display with signs and banners. JJ and Laura commented that they worked with Paul when he was the Curator of the Art Gallery in Grand Forks.

J.J. reported on behalf of the Kootenay Region United Nations Association in Canada (KRUNA) and the USCC Working Groups for Peace and Social Justice. He spoke of the International Day of Peace in Castlegar and Women for Women in Grand Forks and Castlegar as well as the walk for gun control. He spoke too of World beyond War, a U.S.-based anti-war group formed in the 1980s but that has recently re-surfaced and is gaining momentum.

Madelyn MacKay- Nelson- Voice of Women for Peace and other groups- spoke about the seventh peace leadership camp for women that have been held in Nelson as well as across Canada. Nine women have gone to the United Nations regarding Women’s issues. Madelyn identifies with the Non-violent Peace Force which is involved with empowering young women and girls to gain confidence. She spoke of a Women’s Peace Retreat to be held near Nelson from July 12th to 15th this summer--what started out as a retreat for specifically young women and girls has grown to include older women. She spoke of the importance of men rejecting gender-based violence because this is not strictly a woman’s issue. Laura reminded us that it is not only men who perpetrate violence but women as well. *{Hannah reported for VOW--attachment #6}*

B.C.S.I.P.C. Coordinator Report *{Attachment #7}* was tabled by Laura Savinkoff resulting in the following resolutions.

It was moved by Don Currie, seconded by J.J. Verigin, and carried that Laura Savinkoff continue as the Coordinator of the B.C. Southern Interior Peace Coalition. (More next issue)

IJV Canada statement on the 70th Anniversary of the Nakba

By: Members of IJV Montreal and IJV McGill at the Montreal Nakba Day demonstration, May 14, 2018

Seventy years have passed since the state of Israel was established in Palestine. As a direct result, hundreds of Palestinian villages were destroyed, thousands were killed and hundreds of thousands were rendered homeless. For Zionists, 1 May 1948, marks the culmination of ambitions to create a Jewish-majority state; for Palestinians, it marks what came to be known as al-Nakba: the Catastrophe.

Independent Jewish Voices Canada (IJV) is a grassroots organization grounded in Jewish tradition that opposes all forms of racism and advocates for justice and peace for all in Israel-Palestine. Today, IJV stands in solidarity with Palestinians marking and mourning 70 years since the 1948 Nakba.

Palestinians say, “The Nakba **continues!**” and it is the shameful truth. The Israeli government systematically **imprisons Palestinian children**, it continues to colonize Palestinian land for **Jewish-only settlement** in collaboration with the **Jewish National Fund**, and of course denies Palestinian refugees their **right to return**.

The ongoing Nakba has perhaps been hardest on Palestinians in Gaza, who live in what is known as the **world’s largest open-air prison**, largely cut off from the outside world and subject to repeated aerial bombing campaigns. We dedicate a special message of solidarity to them, currently mourning the death yesterday and today of **more than 60 people and the wounding of over 2000 others** by Israeli snipers. The bravery they exhibit in facing the Israeli army speaks to the desperation of their situation, but also of the undying Palestinian will for justice and return to the land they call home.

Let this latest string of massacres be a wakeup call to the world. We call on Canadians, and fellow Jewish Canadian in particular, to join us not only in acknowledging and mourning the Nakba, but in doing all that we can to put an end to it.

For more information, please contact:

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National Coordinator
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Our Mission

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents people of diverse backgrounds officially brought together in 2002 because of our mutual concern for the rise in world conflict. Our mandate is to participate in multilateral non-violent conflict resolution in support of global human rights, ecological and environmental sustainability and international law through education, sharing of information, dialogue and activism locally and globally. We encourage and seek your participation in our mutual work for true peace based on social justice, equality, accountability, integrity, honour, respect, etc in order to build a better world today and future generations.

BPI web site: www.boundarypeaceinitiative.org

BPI meetings are suspended until at least 3 people commit to meet monthly. For information call (250) 444-0524 or email L4peace@telus.net.

What's Up?

*This event has been cancelled due to scheduling difficulties: ~~Coming to Grand Forks on June 24th—a film **The Living Salish Sea**. The film maker will ~~here. Watch for posters and details in the next issue.~~~~*

No events hosted by the BPI are planned for June and July as Grand Forks and area begin the long recovery from the flood. We will get there with the help of all citizens and friends. **We will work on organizing our annual Nagasaki Day event** and encourage all to come join us. Watch for posters and announcements as August 9th approaches. Thank you.

Video of the Sept. 21, 2017 Walk the Drum and Peace Concert are available for \$10 a set. To order call Laura at 250-444-0524 or email at L4peace@telus.net

The BPI welcomes your input. Articles are the author's responsibility and may not be common consensus of members. To submit articles contact Laura at **250-444-0524** or email L4peace@telus.net. The BPI is a member of: BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition, Canadian Peace Congress, Abolition 2000, Lawyers Against the War and an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. We work with a wide range of local and global peace, social justice and environmental groups.

Voice your opinion to the Prime Minister and all MPs. Free postage: {Name of MP}, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6
Go to the Government of Canada website for MP contact information at <http://www.canada.gc.ca>

New research confirms energy needs can be met by renewable

By: James Holloway May 18th, 2018

Could renewable sources meet 100 percent of our energy demand? Yes, according to new research which scrutinizes the arguments against? "There are no roadblocks on the way to a 100-percent renewable future," the research states, while pointing out that existing research already holds the answers to the common objections raised.

The article is a direct response to a review paper published in the journal *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews* last year, written by Benjamin Heard and colleagues. This questioned a 100-percent renewable future, raising the risk of extreme weather events causing low sunlight and wind availability, as well as the ability of electricity grids to handle a high degree of variation in source power.

In response, scientists have scrutinized dozens of existing studies to address the concerns of last year's paper one by one. Their conclusion? There is nothing stopping a future when all our energy is provided by renewable sources. "Here we analyse the authors' methodology and find it problematic," the response says.

The new research counters that the technology already exists to address the supply concerns raised, pointing to synthetic gas, itself produced by renewable energy in times of surplus, as just one way to make up the temporary energy deficit in a worst case scenario.

They reject the claim that 100-percent renewable energy would require a "re-invention" of the power system – stating that "directed evolution" is sufficient instead, with the technologies needed for grid regulation already being used in many countries.

"While several of the issues raised by the Heard paper are important, you have to realize that there are technical solutions to all the points they raised, using today's technology," says lead author Tom Brown in a press release.

"Furthermore, these solutions are absolutely affordable, especially given the sinking costs of wind and solar power," adds co-author Christian Breyer.

Though the original research correctly states that Iceland is the only 100-percent renewable nation, the response points out that there are regions of other countries, including Germany, New Zealand, Scotland and Denmark, that have also achieved 100-percent renewable energy. Further, there are other countries getting very close, with Paraguay (99 percent), Norway (97 percent), Uruguay (95 percent) and Costa Rica (93 percent) top of the list.

The new paper highlights an example raised in the original research of an energy blackout in South Australia, blamed on wind as the power source. However, the new article counters by saying that subsequent improvements to the controls would have prevented the blackout, and that this wasn't down to fundamental shortcoming in wind energy.

"There are some persistent myths that 100-percent renewable systems are not possible," adds co-author Brian Vad Mathiesen. "Our contribution deals with these myths one-by-one, using all the latest research. Now let's get back to the business of modelling low-cost scenarios to eliminate fossil fuels from our energy system, so we can tackle the climate and health challenges they pose."

The scientists come from five bodies: the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Lappeenranta University of Technology, Delft University of Technology and Aalborg University.

Their article appears in the same journal that the original was published in, *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*.

Source: Lappeenranta University of Technology