



VOLUNTOWN PEACE TRUST

News from "The Farm"

FALL 2010



The Rothbard family has been with us just 14 months and sadly in December will be departing the Voluntown Peace Trust. There are many things the Rothbards did to keep VPT up and running –including cleaning, shoveling and plowing snow, mowing and taking care of rentals but the following examples are what I will remember of their time at VPT.

I enjoyed working with Robert to hang the 2009 Political Art Exhibit and the 2010 VPT Art Walk. Both were tasks above and beyond his job description. Robert also went the extra mile by promoting VPT through his photos and videos of events. He posted VPT events on YouTube as well as VPT's website. During his time off, Robert's creativity benefitted VPT. His sculptures, wind chimes and sun catchers are surprises waiting to be found as visitors walk the VPT property. A snow dragon (built from the plowed driveway snow) delighted yoga participants one snowy day!

Robert's contribution to VPT is obvious– the grounds and buildings are well tended. Robert was very resourceful. He combed every storage area to find leftovers of wood, paint and stain for maintenance. He used leftovers to paint the floor in Mustee and the exterior as well. He has cleared trees and invasive brush creating new trails and more garden and yard space. I believe Robert's greatest achievement at VPT was painting the exterior of the farmhouse almost singlehandedly.

When he saw a job to be done he did it- his inventiveness solved many maintenance issues and will be missed. Two memorable solutions are the rainwater collection invention and a solar powered anti-sweat toilet tank invention! In addition I would like to thank Michelle for generously taking time from her college classes to write and apply for grants on behalf of VPT. The Rothbard children became full participants at Voluntown School. They are kind and popular. Students and staff will sorely miss Sydney and Quinn.

Robert has accepted a position that is more lucrative and is closer to elderly family members. The members of VPT send the Rothbard family on to their next adventure with our thanks and best wishes. —Nancy MacBride

Voluntown Peace Trust is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization, that is recognized by GuideStar. Our ability to offer VPT's facilities at reduced rates for low-income rentals depends on your generosity. Your gifts help to maintain the historic property, pay for staff, and to subsidize VPT's hospitality to those who otherwise would not have access to retreats, conferences, or a connection to farm life. We appreciate any monetary gifts ~ large and small. Your tax-deductible donations may be mailed to the address below, or you may give online quickly and easily by clicking on the "Donate" button at the top right corner of each page on our website, www.voluntownpeacetrust.org. This will bring you to GuideStar's VPT profile page. Navigate to the left of the page, where you will see the "Donate" link, just beneath our organization's name.



Headline

Emmett Jarrett

Feb 21, 1939 – Oct 9, 2010

As a young man, I was challenged by a priest to decide whether I was an admirer of Jesus or simply another one of his disciples in the way that I lived. For twenty years I've been pondering this challenge in my prayers and with my life while looking for disciples in my midst for inspiration. Emmett Jarrett was one such soul during his time on earth; I'm sure he remains one in his new life.

To be a disciple is to be both prophetic and pastoral. Emmett was a prophet who didn't merely "believe in" Jesus, he believed Jesus when he said that in order to love God we must love our enemies and neighbors as ourselves. He believed it when Jesus proclaimed that the Kin'dom of God was in our midst. Emmett

worked to carve out and make visible a bit of God's Kin'dom in a world of poverty and violence by founding St. Francis House in New London. St Francis House is a place where Jesus, the poor and dispossessed are welcome to eat and sleep among family. Emmett challenged the grip of violence on this world through his prayers, his witness at the Sub Base, his walks for peace, and his fasting. He engaged in nonviolent civil disobedience to laws of this land that protect the violence of war-making and poverty, and therefore reject the laws of God that seek to spread the mercy and dignity of the Kin'dom to all God's children. Emmett also recognized another portion of the Kin'dom amidst the forest, along the brook, and in the meeting rooms of the Voluntown Peace Trust. His support for VPT, including his 2+ years as chair of our board, were a tangible part of his prophetic effort to vanquish with love the forces of violence.



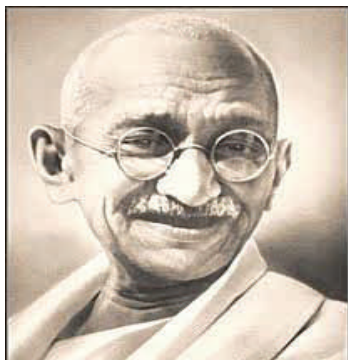
In his working, praying, singing, preaching, fasting, marching, mediating, walking and witnessing for the world God intended, the prophet Emmett remained pastoral. While condemning the structures in society that assault the dignity of the human person, Emmett was careful to maintain respect for those entangled by, drawn to, and even cooperating with the Principalities and Powers that seek to keep hidden, or deny, the Kin'dom in our midst. To be pastoral is not to be confused with being "nice" or polite. A good pastor calls out the sins of a sinner not simply because the sin might hurt others but because the sin also imperils the sinner. Like a good shepherd, Emmett's love was not confined to those on the "right" path but, shared also with those on different, or even decidedly wrong, paths. His keen pastoral sensibilities were always evident in his interactions with the police and judges he would encounter as a result of his prophetic activities. Unlike some self styled hard-core revolutionaries who might treat the police and judges with caustic contempt, Emmett had a gentle, loving sense about him that disarmed these supposed adversaries and even encouraged a sailor to seek his assistance in becoming a conscientious objector.

Emmett's pastoral proficiency was especially evident during his time as VPT chair. Whereas prophets see the world as God intends it and are thus often full of hope, too many of us in the peace movement can only see the world as it is and we thus run the risk of being embittered social critics. The dynamic tension of Emmett's prophetic impatience and his patient pastoralism worked like the grinding stone of an eyeglass-maker, by simultaneously focusing our attention on those who suffer in this world and our gaze on the world as it should be. With this sort of inspired vision we begin to recognize stranger, enemy and neighbor alike as all members of one Beloved Community. At VPT this is both our hope and our work. Please join us in honoring Emmett.

- Christopher J. Doucot



Events & Projects



- The **VPT Art Walk** featured outdoor art by: Ana Flores, Claudia Flynn, Caitlin MacBride, Nancy MacBride, Dan Potter, Paul Robertson, Robert Rothbard, Troy West and the participants of Hartford Catholic Worker summer program, this October. Please see the videos posted on YouTube at “VPT 2010 Art Walk video and some of the art by Robert Rothbard”.
- VPT held a fundraising gala dinner and silent auction to celebrate **Mahatma Gandhi’s birthday** on October 2. Members and guests had a wonderful time. A special thanks to all who made this event possible.
- VPT hosted a walk as part of the **Last Green Valley’s Walktober Weekend**, October 10. Jim MacBride led a party of fifty through VPT’s 55 acres and described the land’s history and management issues.
- Westerly Friends hosted a second annual **Fun(d) raising Fair** on October 16. Cider-pressing, a cauldron of Whirled Ps soup, baked goods, bonnet-passing, poets around the fire, the Rivergods, Chris Monti, tango-dancing, the Mystic Paper Beasts, and the Raging Grannies raised funds and fun for VPT.
- The Southeastern Connecticut Peace and Justice Network hosted the **2010 Peace Walkers at VPT** on October 28. They walked from New Hampshire to Connecticut during October, engaging people along the way in conversations about peace. This particular evening at Muste, approximately 20 people talked with the Walkers about their hopes and fears concerning peace and justice.

A Popular Education Center for Social Change

The Cooperative for Nonviolent Action (CNVA) has grown. The Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence recently joined the War Resisters League, Westerly Friends Meeting, and the Southeastern Connecticut Peace and Justice Network’s Friends of VPT. We are also in the early stages of developing a Center that will provide resources to strengthen our social change work. The Popular Education mission statement is as follows:

The Cooperative for Nonviolent Action aims to build a Popular Education Center at the Voluntown Peace Trust. We believe that attaining collective social justice requires individuals to actively engage in participatory democracy. To this end, we believe that people in both dominant and subordinate groups have crucial roles to play, both individually and collectively, in dismantling all aspects of oppression. Therefore, we plan to offer popular education workshops and programs that begin with people’s lived experience and foster critical insights (conscientization) and actions directed towards collective social change. We draw on Paulo Freire’s critical pedagogy and Mohandas Gandhi’s three elements of nonviolent social change to inform our popular education methods. Freire’s pedagogy begins with the standpoint of the oppressed; it provides a forum for people to share their experiences, embark on a process of liberation from internalized oppression and become agents for change. Gandhi teaches us to involve personal change and reflection, challenge violent and oppressive structures, and to create alternatives to those violent structures in our social change work. In addition, we will draw on the non-hierarchical participatory processes promoted by the feminist movement and the Highlander Center; the Highlander Center has used popular education to foster the development of grassroots efforts by marginalized communities and advanced multi-issue relationships and networks for 75 years. We seek like minded groups to help build upon our vision and to engage in collective dialogue as how to best collaborate in order to serve their needs and our mission.



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THE MISSION OF VPT

The Voluntown Peace Trust is a non-profit education center dedicated to social change and sustainable living. We offer programs, workshops and retreats, as well as hospitality and resources, to people constructing alternatives to the violence of our age.

TO:

DONATION FORM

We are thrilled that you are committed to the mission and activities that are the heart of the Voluntown Peace Trust ("VPT"). We invite you to share your information and donation with us so that we can continue to pursue the VPT mission.

Name: _____

Mail Address: _____

Email address: _____

Phone contact/s: _____

How did you hear of VPT? _____

I enclosed my gift of \$ _____ in the form of _____ Cash _____ Check.
(please make checks payable to VPT)

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