

NEVADA DESERT EXPERIENCE
1420 WEST BARTLETT AVENUE
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NDE participants pray with Chief Johnnie Bobb at the base of Yucca Mountain in September.

Please welcome Robert Majors as NDE's new Event Coordinator. Robert brings kindness, community, new ideas, and lots of new energy to NDE. May the Creator bless and sustain Robert and give him the strength, focus, and flexibility to be able to coordinate NDE's events joyfully with the help of others.

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Yucca Mountain Newe Sogobia

By Johnnie L. Bobb

Chief and Spiritual Person, Western Shoshone Nation

During the Desert Justice event a few weeks ago, I led a group to the base of Yucca Mountain to pray for the land. A few years ago we had hopes that Obama would stop the Yucca Mountain Repository.



But in August 2013, the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, ruled that President Obama and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission were "flouting the law" when they stopped working on site suitability of Yucca Mountain. "The president may not decline to follow a statutory mandate or prohibition simply because of policy objections." Thus, Yucca Mountain, on Western Shoshone territory, came back onto the drawing board for construction of the Yucca Mountain High Level Nuclear Waste Repository.

The Ruby Valley Treaty of 1863, a treaty of Peace and Friendship, clearly described the boundaries of the Western Shoshone Nation, ceded no land, and only gave an assurance of no depredations against non-Indians passing through the Treaty land – most of which is in what is now called Nevada. We have asked for negotiation for many, many years, but we are ignored. The US has failed to recognize and uphold our Constitutional, religious, and human rights.

In 2006 the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) decision 1(68) gave the US recommendations for future relations with the Western Shoshone Nation to avoid further lack of due process and human, civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights violations. It urged the US to stop activities and planning on Western Shoshone lands, including land transfers to extractive industries and energy developers,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Desert Justice #2

by Brian Terrell

In late September people converged in Las Vegas for "Justice For Our Desert," an event marking the International Day of Peace with reflection, music, prayer and nonviolent action.

The International Day of Peace was established in 1981 by a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly and affirmed by unanimous vote in 2001, which established September 21 as an annual day of non-violence and cease-fire: "The United Nations invites all nations and people to honor a cessation of hostilities during the Day, and to otherwise commemorate the Day through education and public awareness on issues related to peace."

While each of the member states of the United Nations agreed to "commemorate the Day," and some nations have actually followed through in various ways, International Peace Day has been ignored by the most profoundly and aggressively militarized member state, the one that needs peace with justice the most, the USA. For the second year Campaign Nonviolence saved "the Day" from obscurity in the US. Although the government pledged to observe it, Campaign Nonviolence, a project of NDE's sister movement Pace e Bene, encouraged hundreds of commemorations in the week around Peace Day in communities around the country for the past two years.

NDE's commemoration of the Day began on Friday the 19th with an introduction and nonviolence training session at the Francis and Clare compound in North Las Vegas. From

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Communicate With Us!

Let's Create Social Justice & Environmental Justice

NDE's Council asks YOU to PLEASE let us know if you wish to remain on our mailing list, and if your contact info has changed, or if you wish to be in a different kind of contact with us. Phone, write, or type to us (we prefer e-mail) however you wish. Our email is info@NevadaDesertExperience.org

Please donate what you can,
via mail or on-line with the
green donate button on our website.

Our postal mailing address is at the top of this page.

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 18th 2016 March in the MLK Day Parade w/ NDE!

March 19th to 25th 2016 Accompany NDE on the Sacred Peace Walk.

April 1st Help Shut Down Crech with Code Pink & Vets For Peace.

MORE INFO PLUS UPDATES ON THESE AND OTHER EVENTS IS FOUND AT
www.NevadaDesertExperience.org



A dozen people gathered for prayer at Yucca Mountain on Western Shoshone land as part of NDE's Justice For Our Desert #2 event in the Great Basin Desert, only 40 miles from Peace Camp and the traditional site of spiritual work against nuclearism at the NNSS. This NDE event is in synch with Campaign Nonviolence and the International Day for the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

Desert Justice #2 *CONTINUED From Page 1*

there we went downtown for a concert by Alzara & Brother Spellbinder from San Francisco in one of Las Vegas' most local, authentic and organic of venues, Reclaimed Art Suppliez. Playing music defined by one critic as "cabaret-folk rock with a dreamy, old-world ache and a modern melodic edge," Alzara & Brother Spellbinder set a jubilant tone for the actions in the next days. Their music, as well as the musicians themselves, accompanied us as we dipped into the desert the next morning.

Meeting at the historic Peace Camp near the Nevada National Security Site, where in the days leading to the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty thousands came together, our small group prayed a liturgy that was written to commemorate the Day for the Catholic churches of England and Wales. Salt was mixed with water, as a "symbol of the sorrows and tears in this broken world." At the gates of the place that has seen more atomic detonations than anywhere else on the globe, we remembered and honored the tears shed in Iraq, Afghanistan, Darfur, Palestine, Congo, Central America, the streets and prisons of the US and all the places where human suffering should have ceased, if even for one day.

Johnnie Bobb, spiritual leader and Chief of the Western Shoshone National Council, issued us permits to the land and sent nine of us into the site with blessings. The illegitimate authorities who have stolen and poisoned this sacred place recognize neither the permits nor the blessing and so we were summarily arrested and briefly detained.

After a luscious desert lunch provided by King Ron of Food Not Bombs, Johnnie Bobb led us up Highway 95 and into the wild and rough desert to the far side of Yucca Mountain, the place where there is renewed talk of storing high level nuclear waste from nuclear power plants all over the country. Watched over by wild donkeys, we were led in ancient prayers for cleanings and restoration. Then, in Cactus Springs, Jon Dennis of NDE's Council helped us grapple with the intricacies of law and the courts regarding desert protests of desert injustices.

The morning of the International Day of Peace, September 21, we held vigil at dawn outside Creech Air Force Base, the center of the military

and CIA killer drone programs. Kofi Annan, when he was United Nations Secretary General, described the purpose for the International day of Peace- "Twenty- four hours," he said, "to give relief workers a safe interlude for the provision of vital services; to offer mediators a building block towards a wider truce; to allow all those engaged in conflict to reconsider the wisdom of further violence."

We gathered at Creech conscious of the common practice of drone crews there known as "double tapping," where crews based there will attack a second time the same target they bombed minutes before by remote control. The deliberate purpose of the double tap is to kill the first responders or family members who come to aid the wounded or retrieve the dead from the wreckage of the first missile launched. This is an atrocious violation of international norms and of basic human decency, but one that we are told is a routine policy. On this Day of days meant "to give relief workers a safe interlude" we went to Creech to offer to those who fly the drones and launch the missiles a chance to be humanly decent for at least a single day—the date that their government agreed to uphold peace and nonviolence. Three of our

friends were arrested for speaking this with their bodies, and they face criminal charges in Las Vegas courts.

Last year at the end of Justice For Our Desert, I began working on contract with Nevada Desert Experience as event coordinator. This year, I choose not to renew my contract and so my time as NDE "staff" is over. This decision was not easily arrived at. With my work on the Catholic Worker Farm in Maloy, Iowa, and with Voices for Creative Nonviolence based in Chicago but sending me to the ends of the earth, I came to the conclusion that I was overextended. Both I and NDE, I believe, will be better served if someone who is not doing so many things were event coordinator, and even better if that person were based in Nevada.

I am grateful for my time working for NDE in this role and happy that the council has appointed Robert Majors to take it on. Robert is a Las Vegas native with close connections to the activist and artist communities, a most generous and creative young person. I will continue to return to the desert to walk, reflect and protest with NDE.



Brother Spellbinder and Alzara at the Mercury Exit of US-95 on Sept. 21st

Yucca Mountain/Newe Sogobia

CONTINUED From Page 1

without meaningful consultation. CERD urged the US to remove restrictions on hunting, fishing, and gathering, and cultural and spiritual practices.

Decision 1(68) was distributed widely, to the President, to Congress, and to federal, state, and local agencies, but was ignored. The US made no effort to contact the Western Shoshone National Council to discuss these issues. Therefore in August 2014, I traveled again to Geneva where the Western Shoshone National Council submitted an update to CERD which included US restoration of plans for Yucca Mountain. We received a strong re-affirmation of the previous decision. Still we have received no response from the US.

Yucca Mountain is sacred to Western Shoshone and Paiute peoples. Earthquake faults are in the area, and only a few years ago, earthquakes occurred in the area, causing damage to offices there. What if the casks leak? The groundwater would be damaged. Already radiation is moving in the groundwater from under the adjacent Test Site. Meanwhile, while there is no safe disposal method for nuclear waste in the US, the DOE continues to propose new reactors which will create waste while there is no safe disposal option.

Yucca Mountain is on Western Shoshone Treaty land. According to Western Shoshone beliefs, we were put on this land, Newe Sogobia, as caretakers of the animals, plants, water, and people here. Most Native people have similar beliefs and a different relationship with land than non-indigenous people. If there is an accident, if radiation leaks into groundwater through earthquake faults, or vents into the air, we would have to choose whether to stay as the last caretakers, or to be relocated. We would lose our entire homeland, and with it, our culture, native food and medicine, traditions, and lifeways. *Please help us stop the Yucca Mountain Project.*

For more information, contact Chief Johnnie Bobb at PO Box 252, Austin, NV 89310

ODE TO MY DNA

By Chelsea Collonge, (c) 2003

Present in every living thing
 You direct my growth from cell to breath
 Too small for radar
 your words encode my body
 my tangible presence
 You connect me with all life
 bonobo chimpanzee to California poppy
 yet make me unique
 wheat-colored hair
 swollen joints
 Oh spiral fishing line
 you connect my parents
 to their maybe-grandchildren
 Lie snug in my egg cell
 in the pink pillow of my womb
 All this wonder wound tight
 in your bouncy spring
And DNA,
 I fear for you
 bringer of order yet so mutable
 mutatable
 and like radiation, invisible
 Another Chernobyl
 bunker busting nukes
 or even the cell phone in my pocket
 could scramble your wisdom
 make my babies born with open skulls
 or heart defects like the kids of Belarus
 Seaborg invented it here
 on Berkeley campus
 plutonium manufactured to kill enemies,
 it can extinct whole species
 with its gamma-attack on the genetic
 code of life
You created us, DNA
Don't let us destroy you
 Encode new proteins
 for a brain that thinks ahead
 a heart that respects life
 Help us evolve