



# Desert Voices

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## THE PATH HOME

*By Miss AyeVee*

I was welcomed to the desert,  
By a flower,  
Whose petals burned as a sunset.  
Like lights guiding me home,  
I followed.  
No question.  
No hesitation.  
I knew I was safe,  
Like a mother's warm embrace.  
Nature set my pace.  
Blessings.  
Peace beneath my feet,  
Knowing all shall pass.  
The universal guarantee.  
Peace.  
Whispers on the wind.  
The Great Spirit speaks to me.  
Ancestors.  
Old Friends.  
Guide me home.  
Solitude of thought,  
But never alone.  
Gaia moves through me.  
Peace.  
The drum of my heart beat.  
Slow, steady.  
Security.  
Trusting in my feet.  
Step by step.  
Time moves on.  
The mountain sings its song.  
Come along, come along.  
Peace.



Letting go of right and wrong  
Yin and Yang.  
Same coin,  
Same song.  
Peace.  
Be the change.  
Leave your cage.  
Freedom.  
Peace.  
My feet slow.  
The sun sets,  
And the sky catches fire.  
Darkness reaches across the land.  
Our Mother tucking us into bed.  
My head,  
Filled with visions.  
Warm fire.  
Cold breeze.  
The beauty,  
Is always,  
Hidden in the contrast.  
The thought comes with ease.  
Answers,  
To unasked questions.  
The beauty,  
Is always,  
In the contrast.  
Clarity at last.  
Different places.  
Different people.  
Different mindsets.  
All beautifully equal.  
The beauty is in the contrast.  
Peace.

## SHUT DOWN CREECH #2: MARCH & APRIL 2016

By Marcus Collonge

The global movement against remotely piloted, robotic warfare continues to push back against the war machine. In the past two Springs, we have seen larger-than-usual gatherings at Indian Springs, NV as multiple organizations host the Shut Down Creech (SDC) convergences for an end to killer drone activities at this crucial and historical venue for violence. Veterans for Peace, Code Pink, Voices for Creative Nonviolence and NDE bring their mutual constituencies to this site in Nevada to speak out and act up for justice and a nonviolent end to drone warfare.

Unlike an event hosted by NDE, the singular focus of Camp Justice is the complete stoppage of killer drones for as long as the scores of activists can sustain the nonviolent, people-powered cease fire. Our primary strategy in the first two years of SDC has been the blockage of multiple gates that ordinarily allow employees to come and go with impunity during regular assassination bombing missions at Creech Air Force Base. The primary components of Camp Justice are the *orientation* to the scene of the crime at Creech in this tortured desert, the *training* in nonviolent direct action, regular pickets and vigils at Creech's gates, and a build up of energy for the climax where all our people-power can inspire the shutting down of Creech.

This year we noticed a third gate had been installed as Creech recognizes its prior vulnerability



to the masses of pedestrians capable of blocking limited portals. As with last year's strategy, we organized as affinity groups to take on specific tasks, including

multiple sites and multiple gates for maximum nonviolent effectiveness in slowing down or stopping all entrance capacity for soldiers commanded to kill via drone.

After a few days of 3-4 hours demonstrating for peace during the morning and afternoon peak commute into and out of the Base, a Veterans for Peace affinity group blocked the Eastern entrance while others meditated at the middle gate on Thursday morning March 31st. The next morning four affinity groups closed the Eastern, middle and Western entrances to Creech in two waves. After the first wave of peace and justice activists had been arrested and were being processed on-site into a single police bus, the traffic into Creech resumed at the Eastern gate (closest to Las Vegas).

Due to limited numbers of arrest-riskers, and the desire to support the arrestees about to depart Creech towards Vegas, our second wave focused on that portal only because we knew we could not sustain another complete coverage of all three gates at that moment. As the bus entered the highway (US-95) to proceed east then south to the Vegas jail, our second wave came into the frontage roadway, stopping traffic before and after the white line demarcation of alleged Creech property. Other Camp Justice activists continued to vigil for passing traffic to oppose killer drone activities.

By the end of the two days of nonviolent civil disobedience to Shut Down Creech, 26 people had been arrested (eight on March 31st and eighteen on April 1st) at the gates of Creech. More than 70 people had joined our convergence at Camp Justice, and everyone had pitched in to support the momentum at a variety of levels and risks to our personal freedom. Everyone's contribution to peace and justice is highly valued as we work together to make a permanent dent in the war machine at Creech. Please join us April 22-27, 2017 for the next Shut Down Creech!

### SPECIAL THANKS TO...

The Southern California War Tax Resistance folks who gave a generous grant to NDE. We are grateful for the solidarity.

# GLIMPSES OF A PEACE WALK

By Rev. Carolyn Metzler

(Full journal available at [NevadaDesertExperience.org](http://NevadaDesertExperience.org))

## DAY ONE, LAS VEGAS

The dark quiet has fallen over Francis and Clare House now in Las Vegas, except for a bamboo wind chime playing its monotonous two note song over and over in the rising breeze. Today's 14 mile walk through the Strip and into the poor part of town was harder on the emotions than on the knees. It began early this morning at the National Atomic Testing Museum where we were blessed in several traditions. I counted about 40 strong, including the media. Overhead the planes roared up from the nearby airport about every minute. We started walking with much cheering and holding aloft of many colorful signs, flags and banners and at least four drums. It was hard not to dance.

The walk took us down the Strip, past many hotels each more ostentatious than the last, casinos, wedding chapels (including a drive-through), and souvenir stores. I wondered what in this city was real. When at last we came into the western part of the city and the walkway was lined with homeless persons, I knew I had found what was real. We had been given a windfall of bananas and gave them out to people as we went. It was very hot and several of our people poured water from their bottles into the bottles of the homeless people. By mid afternoon when we stopped for lunch we numbered 40 strong. [A young man] was staying out of the camera's view and did not want to carry a sign. First he told me he was on vacation from his home state and liked our cause and just wanted to "walk with us a little ways." Later he confided to me he had blown the whistle on some human traffickers and didn't dare go home. We talked the rest of the afternoon, and as I write this late evening he is still with us.

At the National Nuclear Security Agency government building we stopped. This is where decisions are made carried out at the Nevada Test Site, where we will be on Friday. We had alerted all the Powers that Be where we will be and when, and they had armed guards posted with bullet proof vests in front of the facility. We were not to pass the rope they had strung up there. Also the city police showed up at the same time. We had friendly enough conversation and kept respectfully within their boundaries. Event Coordinator Robert had led us in a pledge of nonviolence in orientation yesterday, and I saw a new wisdom in that as all my angry arguments rose in me. I led the group in a silent prayer as close to the forbidden line as we could get without actually crossing it.

We walked back to the Francis and Clare House for a wonderful supper of vegan rice, beans and veggies under a glorious sunset. I am tired and sore but glad to be here. I washed dishes with a volunteer for a long time and saw my new young friend who joined us midday taken up with

conversation with others. We all have found a temporary community in the shelter of each other's care.

## DAY FOUR, CACTUS SPRINGS

During the [foot-washing] ceremony we all heard large explosions about every three minutes. Turns out that [the US Air Force] was shooting missiles into the mountains around us. I truly do not think they were aiming at us, but it was frighteningly close. I was conscious that this is the sound that many people in the world live with frequently. We could see clouds of smoke rising in the barren mountains where the missiles had landed. Very sobering. This stuff is real. After supper we attended a full moon Ceremony in the temple. About 40 people squeezed into the open space there, so full of strong feminine energy. Tomorrow we will move on to the Nevada National Security Site, a walk of about 15 miles, all mostly uphill. ...



Good Friday line-crossing at Mercury, NV photo by Tami Yaron

## LAST DAY, MERCURY

We were stripped of all our possessions except sunscreen and locked in. I went to the farthest end of the pen which was closest to the bombed land and suddenly I knew what I had to do. I went down on my knees in the hard gravel and prayed for the land, the workers, for the softening of the hearts of all who work in nuclear development, for those who think of us as enemies, for refugees and other victims of war, for those on every level who contribute to the possibility and maintenance of the war machines of the world.

After about half an hour they started taking us out two by two to be processed. The charge was not as serious as at Creech and in 30 years they have never followed up on the citations they give us. I have now been arrested. Twice! (Sorry, Momma!). This was the first group in which I was considered "an elder." I am more committed to the cause of peace. It is not enough to just pray for it. It is not enough to just send money. We need to embody the words of St. Francis and give ourselves to being instruments of peace. In this nuclear age, our world depends on it. Alleluia!

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## **FROM OUR EVENT ORGANIZER**

Our annual Sacred Peace Walk included an amazing group of walkers from all walks of life. This journey through the desert, sharing the suffering of the world and an intention to deliver peace to all we come across, is a seed of hope for all who were involved. Already we are preparing for a different kind of gathering in the fall. From September 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> we will be having our third annual Justice For Our Desert (JFOD). This will be a celebration of the things we are given to appreciate.



*All photos in this issue of Desert Voices are by **Tami Yaron**.*

The importance to preserve the gift of life, in our desert and our world, is a message we hope to impart through food, music, art, and community. We will include the ever growing important practice of Non Violence as we share in Pace e Bene's week of Non Violent action. We will mobilize a Non Violent demonstration to overcome the obstacles towards a healthy world, seeking a message that will bring common ground for all to speak from.

We welcome all to come and join us for this celebration. It is a crucial need for our community to gather in a collective environment to share our presence and voice. If you have the weekend available, please consider this invitation to share in celebration just as important as an invitation to endure each other's suffering. Please contact NDE for details or to RSVP so that we can accommodate your needs.

In Peace,  
Robert Majors

## **Please Help... Dive Deeper... Enjoy More !**

We have so much more to say, but could not afford to print it all, so check out our website to see what we wish to share—more in-depth coverage of our faith-based resistance to nuclearism and weaponized drones. See the words and pictures that didn't fit here, and find opportunities to plug in to the movement.

**Learn more and donate at [NevadaDesertExperience.org](http://NevadaDesertExperience.org)**