

Work For Peace... Stop Paying For War

Conscience Canada

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Board Members Stepping Down Search for Next President



Mary sending out letters inviting peace trusters to consider helping CC with presidential responsibilities. Photo by Sandrine Uwimana, Mary's Rwandan housemate who has helped facilitate CC board meetings via skype in recent years.

Believe it or not, Mary Groh has been our president since 2010. Now she's halfway through her 9th decade, and needs to step down as president. She is happy, however, to help whoever will step up to be our new president, as her time and abilities allow.

But it's not just Mary who is leaving. Both Anna Kirkpatrick and

Kelly Krauter completed contract work for CC and are now both so involved with other things that they need to step down as well. Thank you, Anna, who has been on the board even longer than Mary, and Kelly, who has given a real boost to CC's energies over the past couple years.

It has been an honour to work

with people who manage to support peace and justice while enriching the lives of those around them in ways great and small. Each of them has provided connections to their regional communities as well: southern Ontario, BC and Quebec.

People let us know they appreciated Mary's light-hearted note in our last newsletter - the tribute to Don Woodside, written to the tune of "My Bonnie". Here are three new verses:

*Amazing it's been over 6 years
Since Mary stepped up to the plate
Now if no one'll take up the challenge
What'll be our future and fate?*

*It may seem the world has gone crazy
Hope and faith outside of our reach
But Mary you haven't been lazy
Your example is still here to teach.*

*Thank you, Thank you
No need to give up and flee
Mary's still here;*

Let's bring in new people to we!

C O N T E N T S

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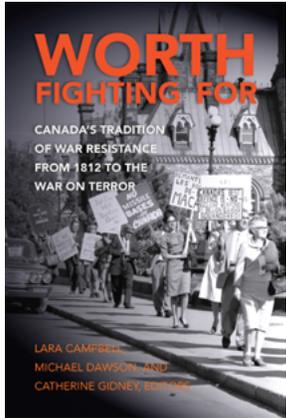
"Put yourself firmly with the peace-builders like Mandela and put the 'I' in COMIT. Say, 'I' COMIT to directing the military portion of my income tax away from war preparation."

~ Mary Groh, 2014

Peace Resources

As mentioned in the item on Canada's 150th, below, there's always value in collecting stories of nonviolent transformation.. Below is a list of currently available resources. Other resources are listed on the consciencecanada.ca website under "resources".

- Former CC board member Jonathan Seiling is one of many contributors to the book, *Worth Fighting For: Canada's Tradition of War Resistance from 1812 to the War on Terror*. "In the midst of contemporary debates about Canada's legacy as a 'warrior' nation or a 'peacekeeping' nation, this welcome collection of wide-ranging case studies that span 200 years provides sound evidence of individuals and groups that rejected militarism as a national ethos



Cover of *Worth Fighting For*, published in 2015 by Between the Lines Books

or a solution to global conflict." ~ Marlene Epp, Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo

- Other recent Canadian books promoting peace include *Disarming Conflict*, by Ernie Regehr and *The Vimy Trap*, by Ian McKay and Jamie Swift.

- In Nov. 2016, the big budget film about Desmond Doss, *Hacksaw Ridge*, was released. Doss was a conscientious objector but saw himself more truly as a "conscientious cooperator" and performed what many see as miracles, as a medic during WW II. He was the first conscientious objector to be awarded a Congressional Medal of Honor.

Doss' story is also recounted in an



President Truman awarding Desmond T. Doss the Congressional Medal of Honor, Oct. 12, 1945

award-winning documentary, *The Conscientious Objector*, available on youtube, and in the book, *The Unlikeliest Hero*.

- A Center for Global Nonkilling (nonkilling.org) has been established in Hawai'i. Through the website it is possible to subscribe to their newsletter and to access a variety of resources.

Canada's 150th

Wouldn't it be great to celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary by improving our record on peace, justice and sustainability? Just as the Regina Manifesto was grounded in a recognition of the dangers of class exploitation and unregulated capitalism and laid out a blueprint for the creation of a social safety net, the Leap Manifesto is based on the recognition that Canadians must improve our human rights record, especially with respect to indigenous peoples, and do our part for ecological stew-



ardship. Its vision calls for a "Canada based on caring for the earth and one another" - ecological sustainability and social justice.

The manifesto lists financial transaction taxes, higher resource royalties, cuts to military spending and other measures to pay for the transformation of our economy.

Since willingness to cut military spending is related to our ability to "wage peace" nonviolently,

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A B O U T

This newsletter is produced by Conscience Canada, a non-governmental organization which has worked since 1978 to:

- increase Canadians' awareness of the connection between taxes and war
- divert taxes away from war
- support creative nonviolent conflict prevention and resolution
- promote conscientious objection legislation

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the positions of Conscience Canada.

An electronic version of this newsletter is available at www.ConscienceCanada.ca. Please let us know your preference.

B O A R D

Dave Bechtel, Mary Groh, Murray Lumley, Jan Slakov, Dwyer Sullivan, Peter Tiessen, Eric Unger.

The newsletter content is by Jan Slakov unless otherwise noted.

CONSCIENCE CANADA 2017 Annual General Meeting

(AGM Official Notice)

Date and Time: Saturday, April 1, 2017, 2:00 p.m.

Place: Danforth Mennonite Church

(TTC exit Woodbine Station, stay on north side and walk 1 1/2 blocks east to 2174 Danforth Ave. Street parking and public lot nearby)

2:00 BUSINESS MEETING

Agenda

1. Approval of the minutes of the 2016 AGM (available upon request)
2. Review of the work done by CC during 2016 and a look ahead (members' participation invited)
3. Confirmation of board members standing for re-election: David Bechtel, Mary Groh, Murray Lumley, Jan Slakov, Dwyer Sullivan, Peter Tiessen, Eric Unger
4. Election of new board member(s)
5. Presentation and Approval of the 2016 financial statements (available upon request)
6. Appointment of auditors for 2017
7. Farewell to board members Anna Kirkpatrick and Kelly Krauter

BREAK

8. 3:30 pm MONOLOGUES from "YELLOW BELLIES" performed by Ben Wert of Theatre of the Beat. The play produced in 2016 enacts stories of conscientious objectors during WWII.

As time permits, participants are invited to share stories of and visions for their activism - What are we engaged in and how can we build solidarity?



This notice constitutes the official notice as required by the Conscience Canada Inc. by-laws. Please let us know if you want to receive a copy of the by-laws electronically or by mail.

If you cannot attend the meeting in person, please send your proxy below for your vote, either by post or by e-mail to: info@consciencecanada.ca &/or janslakov@shaw.ca

I, (please print) _____, a member in good standing of Conscience Canada, do hereby grant my proxy vote for the April 1, 2017, Annual General Meeting of Conscience Canada to: _____ or in their absence to any Board Member of Conscience

Canada.

Signature: _____

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it would be helpful for us to become more familiar with stories of how nonviolent action created positive change historically. Conscience Canada already has collected some, first in the *Risking for Change: Stories of Ordinary People* book, of 1999, and other stories collected in 2013.

The 150Alliance is inviting Canadians to make the most of Can-

ada's 150th anniversary. It sees this event as an invitation "to reflect, renew and regenerate. To reach across divides and make new connections. And to build a national narrative that weaves together thousands of local stories." A project to collect Canadian stories of nonviolence is not yet finalized, but Conscience Canada board member Jan Slakov is working to make it happen. If you

would like to contribute a story or to be involved in some other way, please get in touch at janslakov@shaw.ca or (250) 537-5251.

NOTE: The Leap Manifesto is too long to publish in our newsletter and it is available online. For those who would like a paper copy, please contact Jan Slakov, whose phone number is listed above.

Private Debt-based Money Related to War Economy

Conscience Canada has not yet taken a stand on public banking, but this issue may be of utmost importance to humanity's chances for creating a liveable world.

To understand why, I recommend reading Mike Nickerson's book, *Life, Money and Illusion: Living on Earth as if we want to stay*, soon to be available in French. To give you a taste of what you will learn, here are two quotes:

Until the control of the issue of currency is restored to government ... all talk of the sovereignty of parliament and of democracy is idle and futile."
~ Prime Minister Mackenzie King

"Once a nation parts with the control of its currency and credit, it matters not who makes the nations laws. Usury, once in control, will wreck any nation. Until the control of the issue of currency and credit is restored to government and recognized as its most sacred responsi-

bility, all talk of the sovereignty of parliament and of democracy is idle and futile."

~ Prime Minister Mackenzie King, 1935 (about when the Bank of Canada was established)

"The 'War on Terror' has helped keep money circulating. It is an ultimate make-work program that provides huge growth opportunities in the manufacture of massively destructive weapons and then doubles those opportunities through con-

tracts to reconstruct the things those weapons destroy."

~ Mike Nickerson, 2006

Currently, the Committee on Monetary and Economic Reform (COMER) is in court, aiming "to do nothing less than force the Bank of Canada to reorient its activities on behalf of Canadians". The lawyer representing COMER, Rocco Galati, could be called a legal rock star for his able defence of democracy and the common good. He says this is "by far the most serious and important case I've ever done." (*Toronto Star*, 23/3/15)

To learn more, and to support COMER's work, visit www.comer.org & become a member.

Conscience Canada membership application / renewal

Membership is open to any person committed to supporting Conscience Canada's objectives.

Address correction requested.

Name: _____ **Dated:** _____
Address: _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

There is no membership fee but donations in support of CC operations would be greatly appreciated. Receipts will be issued for all donations. Persons completing this membership application will receive membership privileges for two years unless removal from our mailing list is requested.

Let us know if you would like to get involved in helping as a volunteer, or if you would like more (or fewer) copies of the newsletter, or if you would like other informational material.