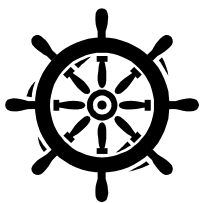




Save a Tree, Share a Copy

**Boundary Peace Initiative meets on the 2nd & 4th Thursday @ 7 pm in the Slavonic Seniors Center on 72<sup>nd</sup> Ave. & 7<sup>th</sup> Street**

**To Do**  
**March 10<sup>th</sup> @ 2 pm** at the Slavonic Senior Citizens Center (72<sup>nd</sup> Ave & 7<sup>th</sup> St) come hear **Greta Berlin and Bill Dienst** recount the experience of the **Gaza Flotilla** and the present project **The Gaza Ark**. Admission is by donation to cover rent.



Watch for poster announcing the next Idle No More event.

### Heartfelt Gratitude

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The 8<sup>th</sup> year of the No Boundaries Film Festival is over and we are now absorbing and integrating the information from the great documentaries. The Festival Committee devotes time and effort to make this an affordable event and have been able to date, not only provide the films but also purchase and then donate audience picked films to the local library. A great accomplishment, John and Larry and much appreciated. But, dear friends, the costs keep going up and they will need more support and involvement from us, the people, in order to continue. Please contact the club at [jwestawa@telus.net](mailto:jwestawa@telus.net) to get involved.

The BPI partners with the Film Festival, which financially sustains us for most of the year, but it is also inspiring and invigorating to know that we have your support for *our* work. Not only are our coffers replenished but also our hearts are overwhelmed by the generosity of so many people who share their bounty. I will not attempt to list the individuals who donated because I would invariably forget someone and that is not good. You all know who you are, so please accept our heartfelt gratitude. And then there are those who volunteer to help prepare and serve the concession and lunches. I will list this years helpers—Denyse, Martin, Tara, and Graham; the USCC Bread ladies shared their awesome bread; Kocomos/Hardy Mountain Coffee Roasters; Joga's; From the Hearth Bakery; Jerseyland; Buy/Low Foods; Overwaitea; La Zapoteca Coffee Company: the Slavonic Senior Citizens Society. Thank you all!

All this support speaks volumes about the community we live in—a community that gives of itself to establish social, economic, environmental and cultural equality and justice through peaceful, non-violent living. That is what community is about, loving, sharing, honoring and valuing each other and working together because it is right, because it is good and therefore is a community I choose to live in.

So, dear neighbors, friends, sisters and brothers, from our hearts to yours—thank you!

In Universal Kinship and Loving Peace,  
 Laura Savinkoff  
 On behalf of the Boundary Peace Initiative

### Our Mission

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents a growing number of area residents of diverse backgrounds brought together over the Iraqi crisis.

We support multilateral action for non-violent conflict resolution, human rights, ecological integrity for the planet and international law, through education and dialogue locally and globally.

We encourage everyone's participation as we strive for peace and justice to build a better world for future generations.

**BPI web site:** [www.boundarypeace.20m.com](http://www.boundarypeace.20m.com)

### Freedom Sailors: A Story of Determination and Courage

**By:** Greta Berlin, Co-Founder, The Free Gaza movement [www.freedomssailors.com](http://www.freedomssailors.com)

During the Israeli assault on Lebanon in 2006, a small group of people from California and the UK decided to sail boats across the Mediterranean to break a vicious and illegal blockade on 1.5 million people trapped in Gaza, a small slice of land squeezed between Israel and Egypt. We were worried that, with the attention of the world on Lebanon, Israel would begin another round of dispossession in Palestine, especially in Gaza. In a little over two years, we raised the money to purchase two dilapidated fishing boats stored in secret ports in Greece, collected 44 passengers, crew and journalists, aged 22 to 81 and chose Cyprus as our embarkation point. We called ourselves the Free Gaza movement.

We were idealists who had big ideas but little understanding of what we were doing. Had we really understood the dangers, we might not have gone ahead. Knowing what we know now – that Israel Defense Forces would later murder nine people, including an unarmed American citizen, Furkan Dogan, executed at point-blank range during a later Freedom Flotilla – our chutzpah is astonishing.

We truly were amateurs - most of us had never even been on a boat. Before we sailed, one of our coordinators told us: "If you aren't willing to face attack, injury, imprisonment or death, don't get on the boat."

Everyone got on the boats.

People who weren't there don't realize how isolated we were once we finally set sail to Gaza on the late morning of August 22, 2008; over 33 hours on the sea, most of us seasick, and our communications systems blocked by the Israelis after night set in.

When dawn came and we hadn't been attacked, we knew we had survived the dark but were still braced for Israel's probable attack. After all, they had told us bluntly that we would not be allowed to sail to Gaza.

(Continued page 2)

### **(From page 1) Freedom Sailors**

Many hours later, we were elated to see on the dusty horizon, the shores of Gaza. We started to believe we might actually make it all the way.

At about 3:30 pm, we heard through the one functioning satellite phone that the Israeli military had decided not to stop us. At the 20-mile offshore marker, the place where Israel had threatened to board and harm us, our two boats were the only ones in sight. We sounded our horns, gave a rousing cheer to all and headed for shore.

Most memorable for all of us on board were the little boats that suddenly appeared all around us about two miles offshore. These boats were filled with cheering men and boys waving flags; the boys jumping in the water to collect the "Free Palestine" balloons we dropped over the sides, then clambering onto the decks of our boats until we feared we would sink. To see 40,000 Palestinians waiting on the dock to greet us was a sight none of us will forget. They were trying to believe what they were seeing, what they hadn't seen in over four decades. The people of Gaza had been largely ignored for years, and they hoped for a sign the world might begin to recognize their plight.

We represented that sign. That first voyage in 2008 achieved exactly what we hoped it would. We opened the door just a bit, proving it could be done. None of the later actions, by land or by sea, would have been possible or even attempted if we hadn't climbed into two ramshackle boats with nothing but our determination and our naiveté holding us together.

On the fourth anniversary of our sailing, our new book, *Freedom Sailors*, details how we came together, raised the necessary money, and pulled off the successful voyage, despite the prying eyes of Israel's intelligence service, the Mossad. The story is riveting. More to the point, it makes you understand the importance of taking a stand when you see an injustice rather than becoming complicit through your silence.

*{Ed. Note: Come hear Greta and Dr. Bill Dienst speak of their experiences on Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm at the Slavonic Senior Citizens Center on 7<sup>th</sup> St. and 72<sup>nd</sup> Ave. in Grand Forks. Admission will be by donation to cover rental costs.}*

### **Gaza's water could be undrinkable by 2016**

**From: IRIN- a service of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (Aug. 30, 2012 Jerusalem)**

Polluted water in the Gaza Strip is seriously affecting people's health and the situation looks set to get worse, the [UN warns in a new report](#).

Gaza's rapidly growing population of about 1.64 million - expected to increase by 500,000 by 2020 - could soon lose its main source of fresh water, the underground coastal aquifer, which could become unusable by 2016, with the damage irreversible by 2020, it says.

Clean water is limited for most Gazans to an average of 70-90 litres per person per day, compared to the minimum global World Health Organization (WHO) standard of 100 litres a day, according to Mahmud Daher, officer-in-charge of the WHO in Gaza.

"We have respiratory diseases, skin diseases, eye diseases, gastroenteritis, which can all be linked to polluted water," said Mohamed al-Kashef, general director of the international cooperation department in the Gaza health ministry.

According to a UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) 2010 [update](#), diseases associated with water account for about 26 percent of diseases in Gaza.

(Continued next column)

### **(From last column) Gaza's water**

However, Daher is more careful to make the link. "There is no evidence that the current water situation is a major public health problem. But what we know for sure is that viral diseases and parasites are connected to polluted water."

Nitrate contamination of the aquifer is believed to be a threat to infants and pregnant women, [says UNICEF](#).

One of the child-diseases connected to polluted water is methaemoglobinaemia, or the so-called "blue-baby syndrome", which has occurred among babies born in the Gaza Strip. It is believed that high nitrate contamination in groundwater is causing the disease.

Diarrhea, which has become very common in the Gaza Strip, is most likely linked to poor hygiene standards in enterprises which desalinate water, says Mahmud Daher, adding: "It is not clear if the problem is the water, or water together with other sources."

#### **Remedial action**

"Damage to the coastal aquifer will be irreversible without immediate remedial action," says the UN report.

An average of 160 million cubic meters (mcm) of water is taken from the aquifer per year, but it is only fed with 50-60 mcm from rainfall and water-runoff from the Hebron Hills every year, resulting in a huge gap between availability and usage. As a consequence, ground water levels have been falling, allowing seawater intrusion.

Meanwhile, the report projects demand for water of 260 mcm in 2020, an increase of about 60 percent from today.

"When I shower my daughter, I need to shower her a second time with bottled water, because you can literally feel the salt sticking to the skin," said Sami Abu Sultan, a development aid worker from the Gaza Strip dealing with water purification projects. "Most people believe that the drinking water we get is not healthy at all."

And they seem to be right: 90 percent of the water from the aquifer is not safe for drinking without additional treatment, the UN report says.

#### **Polluted**

"The water supplied to people here does not meet any health criteria that exist in this world," Mohamed al-Kashef told IRIN. "The pollution of the water leads to many diseases, especially for children."

One source of pollution is the intrusion of seawater into the aquifer, while some 90,000 cubic metres of sewage pumped into the sea every year and fertilizers from farmland irrigation further contaminate the water with nitrates.

"The UN is optimistic in saying that 90 percent of the water is not usable. I would say 95 percent", said Munther Shoblak, general director of the Gaza Strip's Coastal Municipalities Water Utility (CMWU).

He added that nitrate levels are reaching up to 500mg per litre in some areas, or 100-150mg per litre on average, compared to the international standard of 50mg.

About [half a million people](#) in the Gaza Strip are not connected to the sewage system, forcing them to use cesspits and open channel flows which often contaminate the environment and pollute the aquifer.

Because the water provided through the municipal systems is polluted, some [83 percent of households](#) buy

(Continued page 3)

## (From page 2) **Gaza's water**

desalinated water, spending up to a third of household income. But even this water is often not clean enough. And those who cannot afford to buy water use private and agricultural wells, which are often contaminated and polluted.

### **Desalination plans**

Efforts are under way to improve the situation through desalination of seawater, which would decrease the amount of water that needs to be extracted from the aquifer, while providing cleaner drinking water.

"Solutions are on track", said CMWU's Shoblak. "As a short-term goal, 13 million cubic litres should be desalinated by 2015. We will focus on the most vulnerable areas where pollution is particularly high. And in the long run, large desalination plants should produce at least 100 million cubic meters a year, before 2020."

Funding for the short-term goal is partly provided by the Islamic Development Bank and the European Union, Shoblak said, adding that the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) has been pushing the long-term plan forward. It is [planning](#) to set up a desalination plant with a capacity of 55mcm annually in a first phase, and 110mcm in a second phase.

But despite efforts to solve the crisis, a real cure might yet be far away. "Even with remedial action now to cease abstraction, the aquifer will take decades to recover," says the UN report.

[This report does not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations]

## **Bravo, Sam!**

**With permission from Roy Ronaghan, publisher of The Brooks Creek Journal, of February 15, 2013**

Kudos must go to Sam Harrison, a 16 year old who made a presentation at the Northern Gateway joint Review Panel hearing in Vancouver on January 31. Here is some of what he told the panel

***"It's the 21st century and we've reached a pivotal point in human history. We simply can't keep doing what we're doing. There is no debate. Climate change is the issue of our time. It will define who we are and what our legacy will be for the rest of human civilization. We're not living on the planet you were born into anymore. By the time I graduate university five years from now, it's estimated that in the summer, the Arctic ice will be gone."***

***"People say, 'Well if we don't sell it, someone else will. We should sell it while we can and we'll build the Canadian economy.' Frankly, that may be true. Maybe if we don't sell it, someone else will, but that certainly doesn't make it okay. I assure you, no parent has ever said to their kid, 'Don't worry, it's okay to become a drug dealer because if you don't sell drugs, drug addicts will give their money to someone else. You should profit while you can.' That's just plain wrong."***

***"Furthermore, they say it will grow the economy. Well, I have a message for you on behalf of youth all around the world."***

(Continued page 4)

**Web-site recommendations:** *We will continue adding to this list but check out past issues for more sites. If you have a site you find of interest and informative, please let us know at email; [l4peace@telus.net](mailto:l4peace@telus.net)*

Canadian Boat to Gaza: [www.tahir.ca](http://www.tahir.ca)

Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War:

[www.hamiltoncoalitiontostopthewar.ca](http://www.hamiltoncoalitiontostopthewar.ca)

Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives:

[www.policyalternatives.ca](http://www.policyalternatives.ca)

Project Plowshares: [www.ploughshares.ca](http://www.ploughshares.ca)

Stop War Vancouver: [www.stopwar.ca](http://www.stopwar.ca)

TikKun Magazine: [www.tikkun.org](http://www.tikkun.org)

## **Book & Film Recommendations**



### **Dancing in the No-Fly Zone A woman's Journey Through Iraq**

**By: Hadani Ditmars**

Publisher: Olive Branch Press 2006

When Hadani Ditmars first went to Iraq in 1997 she was shocked at what she saw. Six years of the worst sanctions ever inflicted on a modern nation had brought the people to their knees. Yet there was so much more to the ['cradle of civilization' than misery and suffering. In the midst of despair, she found art, beauty, architecture, music.

Ditmars traveled to Iraq again and again, reporting on every aspect of life. In September 2003, she returned to Baghdad to find the people she had met over the years and see what had become of them since the U.S. 'liberation'. Dancing in the No-Fly Zone is the story of that trip, interwoven with tales from her earlier visits and of the people she met along the way. It includes a visit to Abu Ghraib prison, in which Ditmars is given a tour of the Saddam-era execution chamber by the U.S. general who was later dismissed after the abuse scandal broke.



### **Films donated by the No Boundaries Film Club to the Grand Forks Public Library**

*New films recommended by the view will be purchased and will listed here.*

**Ed. Note:** If you have read a book or seen a film that you feel would be of interest or informative please let us know and we will include them in this section. Email the name of the book, the author and the publisher with a brief explanation of the book, and for the film the name, the producer and a brief explanation of the contents to Laura at [l4peace@telus.net](mailto:l4peace@telus.net). Thank you.

(From page 3) **Bravo, Sam!**

***"That is not the economy we want for our future. We simply cannot keep investing in fossil fuel infrastructure. The Enbridge pipeline would export the equivalent of 82 mega tonnes of CO2 per year. That's more than B.C. emits as an entire province."***

Sam appears to be well informed on the impact fossil fuel consumption is having and will continue to have.

Stopping the construction of the Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline is one of the defining issues of the day in British Columbia, but there is another issue which must be addressed... the turbulent times ahead.

Even if we stop our use of fossil fuels today, the carbon dioxide and methane that has been pumped into the earth's atmosphere will continue to have a deleterious effect.

*{Ed. Note: The ability of this young man to express his thoughts and feelings so well, we felt, deserved to be included in our Newsletter. We thank Roy for his kind permission to share this article with our readers.}*

**LOVE**~the most powerful force in the world.

A wise man once said ...There comes a time in life, when you walk away from all the drama and people who create it. You surround yourself with people who make you laugh, forget the bad, and focus on the good. So love the people who treat you right, and forgive the ones who don't. Life is too short to be anything but happy. Falling down is a part of life, getting back up is living. {Author Unknown}

Today the real test of power is not capacity to make war but capacity to prevent it. Anne O'Hare McCormick

We are not birds who live in the air, we are not fish who live in the sea, we are campesinos who must live on the land".

Unified Campesino Movement of Aguan (MUCA)

## **A Cup of Coffee from the Wall**

**Submitted by: Wes Kmet**

I sat with my friend in a well-known coffee shop in Venice Beach near Los Angeles. As we enjoyed our coffee, a man entered and sat at a table beside us.

He called the waiter and placed his order saying, "Two cups of coffee, with one of them for the wall." We heard this order with interest and observed that he was served with one cup of coffee, but he paid for two. As soon as he left, the waiter pasted a piece of paper on the wall saying "A Cup of Coffee."

While we were still there, two other men entered and ordered three cups of coffee, two on the table and one for the wall. They had two cups of coffee but paid for three and left. This time also, the waiter did the same. He pasted a piece of paper on the wall saying, "A Cup of Coffee."

It seemed that this gesture was a norm at this place. However, it was something unique and perplexing for us. Since we had nothing to do with the matter, we finished our coffee, paid the bill, and left.

After a few days, we again had a chance to go to this coffee shop. While we were enjoying our coffee, a man entered. The way this man was dressed did not match the standard or the atmosphere of this coffee shop.

Poverty was evident from the looks on his face. As he seated himself, he looked at the wall and said, "one cup of coffee from the wall." The waiter served coffee to this man with the customary respect and dignity.

The man had his coffee and left without paying. We were amazed to watch all this when the waiter took off a piece of paper from the wall and threw it in the wastebasket. Now the matter was very clear. The great respect for the needy shown by the inhabitants of this town welled up our eyes with tears.

Coffee is not a need of our society, nor a necessity of life. The point to note is that when we take pleasure in any blessing, maybe we also need to think about those people who appreciate that specific blessing as much as we do, but they cannot afford it.

Note the character of this waiter, who is playing a consistent and generous role who helped the needy with a smile on his face. Also ponder upon this man in need. He enters the coffee shop without having to lower his self-esteem asking for a free cup of coffee. He only needs to look at the wall.

The Boundary Peace Initiative (BPI) welcomes articles, which are the sole responsibility of the authors and may not be common consensus. To contribute please contact **Laura** at **250-442-0434** or **l4peace@telus.net**. The BPI is a member of: Southern Interior Peace Coalition, Canadian Peace Alliance, Abolition 2000, Lawyers Against the War, Canadian Voice of Women for Peace and an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation as well as other local and global groups.

Exercise your democratic rights:  
Voice your opinion to the Prime Minister  
Free postage: Prime Minister, Steven Harper, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6  
Phone: 613-992-4211 Fax: 613-941-6900  
Email: pm@pm.gc.ca