



**Resource Center
for Nonviolence**

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FALL/WINTER 2010

The Roots of Nonviolence

Scott Kennedy awarded international Peace Prize

On Sunday, October 3, 2010, the Fellowship of Reconciliation will present its annual Peace Prizes to four activists who are working to build a culture of peace in the midst of mistrust and war. FOR's theme this year is **Peace of the Action!** As a play on words, Peace of the Action speaks to being a "piece" or a part of an active flow, and a state of wholeness or serenity within the movement for peace. This year's peace prize recipients all reflect an active, strategic flow to peace in their lives and work.

Our 2010 peace prizes include International Pfeffer Peace Prize winner **Scott Kennedy**, co-founder and Middle East program coordinator for the Resource Center for Nonviolence & former mayor of Santa Cruz, California; Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Prize winner **Medea Benjamin**, co-founder of Code Pike & Global Exchange; and; and Local Nyack Area Peace Prize winners **Drs. Tashi Dolma** and **Tashi Rabten**, founders of the Tibetan Home of Hope.

Festivities will take place at FOR's national headquarters at historic Shadowcliff Mansion, Nyack, NY, beginning with an Art Show featuring Hudson Valley artists. The Peace Awards Celebration is also being planned to commemorate those who committed themselves to peace and reconciliation during their lifetimes, and those whose lives were sacrificed in the continuing struggle for justice and nonviolent conflict resolution.

For more information, please contact Jonette O'Kelley Miller or Linda Kelly at: 845.358.4601, jmiller@forusa.org or, development@forusa.org.



Interfaith Peace-Builders Board of Directors and Staff. Above: Michael Brown, Joe Groves, Gerald Lenoir, Barbara Wien, Jacob Pace. Below: Reem Marto, Alta Schwartz, Mara Kronenfeld, Scott Kennedy. Washington, DC, February 2009.

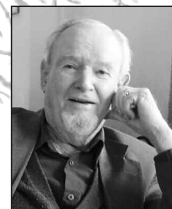
Santa Cruz in March 2010. Houser interviewed Scott Kennedy for the Fellowship of Reconciliation in preparation for awarding of the **International Pfeffer Peace Prize**.

Did your religious background have anything to do with your pacifism?

Yes. Growing up in the Methodist Church in San Jose, California, was a decisive factor in my commitment to nonviolence. I was active in the Methodist Youth Fellowship and attended summer camps. In high school I was invited to participate in youth leadership teams at the local and regional level. This involvement gave me my first real experience of community and team building, consensus and encouragement to align faith and practice. I don't recall ever hearing about pacifism or conscientious objection through my local church in Sunday school or from the pulpit. Through this youth leadership network I met conscientious objectors for the first time. Robert Cary, the Northern California and Nevada Methodist Conference youth director had been a conscientious objector or "CO" during the WWII. I met and heard Vietnam-era COs, such as Hal Conklin, speak during camp. Before my senior year in high school, I experienced a "call" to the ministry during summer camp. During that summer and fall, through lengthy conversations with others involved in the youth leadership teams, I became convinced that Christian Faith and violence are incompatible.

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George Houser was imprisoned as a conscientious objector in WWII, co-founder of



George Houser.

CORE (Congress on Racial Equality) & the American Committee on Africa, & a participant in the first Freedom Rides in 1947. Houser participated in a delegation to Israel and Palestine in November of 2009 co-led by **David Hartsough & Scott Kennedy**, and spoke during Israeli Apartheid Week in



Above: Azim Khamisa, founder of Tariq Khamisa Foundation; Mubarak Awad, founder of Nonviolence International, and Scott Kennedy.

Scott Kennedy with Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniya, of Hamas, Gaza, Palestine, November 2006.



Scott Kennedy at demonstration against expansion of Israeli settlements, 1979. (Photo by Lennart Falkloff)

When I turned 18 in 1966 and registered for the Draft, I filed as a conscientious objector. My local pastor and other Methodist leaders actively supported my choice, as well as the Methodist Book of Discipline. My upbringing in the Methodist Church was decisive in my understanding pacifism as a Christian vocation and to my commitment to nonviolence.

"Engagement in specific and incessant struggle against death's rule renders us human.... In resistance, persons live most humanly. 'No' to death means 'yes' to life."

— William Stringfellow,
"An Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land"

When did you make contact with the FOR?

My application for CO status was rejected. Just before appealing my status before my local Selective Service or draft board, I followed my minister's advice and met with George L. "Shorty" Collins. Collins was campus minister at San Jose State and a regional representative of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. He had been a field worker for the FOR for decades. Shorty gave me a good idea of what to expect in my appeal hearing before the draft board and what kinds of questions I could expect. At the end of our hour-long conversation, Shorty asked me if I had ever heard of the FOR. I told him I had not. He explained that affiliation with a pacifist organization sometimes strengthened one's case demonstrating the sincerity of one's convictions. He showed me the FOR Statement of Purpose and I agreed wholeheartedly with it. I signed the SOP, all that was necessary to join the FOR.

Later that same day, because I did not belong to a Historic Peace Church (Mennonite, Brethren or Quaker -- in fact I don't think I had ever met one by that time!), among other questions, the draft board asked me whether I belonged to any pacifist organizations. I said, "Yes, the Fellowship of Reconciliation." Unlike me a few hours earlier, the draft board definitely had heard about the FOR! Thankfully, they didn't ask me how long I had been a member as the ink on my membership form was scarcely dry. At

the end of my interview, I told the Draft Board that I would go to jail before accepting either student or seminarian deferment or I-AO non-combatant CO status and if they refused my exemption as a conscientious objector.

Six weeks later I received word through the mail that I had been granted I-O status. This meant that the Selective Service System had determined that I was a conscientious objector to all military service. I apparently had persuaded the draft board that my beliefs, as required by law, were "based upon moral, ethical or religious beliefs which play a significant role in his life and that his objection to participation in war is not confined to a particular war."

Looking back on it, my CO application was a rather straightforward or even simplistic statement of Christian pacifism. "Would Jesus fly to Vietnam to kill people?" Obviously he would not. I understood the waging of war to be incompatible with Christian Faith. While I am still active in the Methodist Church, my commitment to nonviolence has been broadened and strengthened by exposure to other secular and non-Christ-



Resource Center for Nonviolence Staff, November, 2009. Curry Knox- AmeriCorps Volunteer, Sandino Gomez, Anita Heckman, Ryan Fry- UCSC intern, Marciano Cruz, Nanlouise Wolfe, Barbara Hayes, Scott Kennedy.

ian sources, such as Gandhi and anarchist thought, as well as economic, environmental and geo-political critique of the war-making state. Much of that exposure was a direct consequence of my ongoing membership and involvement with and within the FOR.

How did you become actively involved in the national FOR?

After joining the FOR by signing the Statement of Purpose, I received "Fellowship Magazine" and other FOR materials. Local groups with which I work hosted FOR speakers and many contacts were made through the FOR network.

If I remember correctly, I was first elected to serve on the FOR National Council in 1975. At that time I was doing my alternative civilian service as a CO and working with the Thomas Merton Unity Center that several friends and I established in

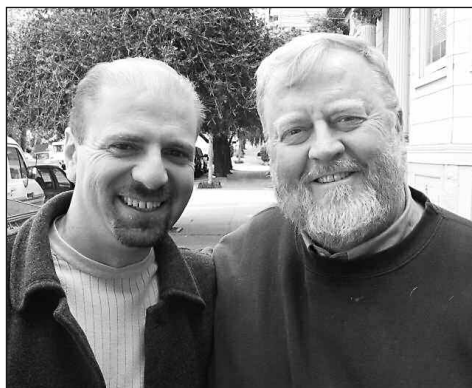
Isla Vista, a small town adjacent to the University of California at Santa Barbara. I had previously been actively involved in the War Resisters League, but having attended both WRL and FOR national conferences, I felt more at home in the religiously based FOR rather than the secular WRL.

I continued to serve on the FOR NC on and off over the next three decades, conclud-



Peter Klotz-Chamberlin, co-founder and current chair of the Steering Committee of the Resource Center for Nonviolence; Zoughbi Zoughbi, former director of Middle East Witness in Palestine 1989-1993 and founder and director of "Wi'am," the Palestinian Conflict Resolution Center, Bethlehem, West Bank, Palestine; and Carol Fuller, local Democratic Party activist in Santa Cruz, California. Bethlehem December 2010.

ing my service with two years as Chair from 2002-2004. I served on the Finance and the Personnel Committees for many years, largely because few other NC members were interested in doing that aspect of the FOR's work. I also helped start and co-chaired the FOR Task Force on Latin America and the Caribbean (FOR TFLAC) in 1983 after President Reagan's invasion of Granada, code named "Operation Urgent Fury," following the bombing of the US Marine barracks in



Sami Awad, founder and director of the Holy Land Trust in Bethlehem, West Bank, Palestine, with Scott Kennedy in San Francisco, April 2008. (Photo by David Hartsough)

Beirut. I also helped establish and co-chaired or chaired the FOR Middle East Task (FOR METF) for many years. In addition to the compelling issues involved in these initiatives, this was part of a conscious effort of several of us to move the national FOR away from too great a dependence on national staff and to better utilize the volunteer energies of former NC members and other activists around the country.

I worked closely with Don Mosley, Richard Deats, Ursula Scott and others in the FOR NC's decision in the 1980s to place "racial and economic justice" on a equal footing with "peace and disarmament" as program foci for the work of the FOR. I think this twofold commitment brought the FOR into much closer alignment with the active nonviolence of Gandhi and King and others working for systemic change and to challenge institutionalized violence. I also was privileged to accompany a plane load of humanitarian supplies to Iraq on behalf of the FOR immediately before the start of the first Gulf War in December 1990.

I understand you were instrumental in the formation of the Resource Center for Nonviolence. Can you say something about this and how important this has

been in your life?

There was an important precedent. While doing my alternative civilian service for the Draft 1971-1973, several friends and I formed an intentional community and started a nonviolence center called the Thomas Merton Unity Center (TMUC). We were a rag tag group of Christians, Jews and secular college students, university graduates or drop-outs who actively identified with the counter-culture and anti-War movements. We gathered around the dual commitments to living life in community and publicly educating about nonviolence and organizing against the continuing US war on Vietnam. We sponsored a lot of activities, started a war tax resistance alternative fund, started several community organizations. Eventually, the group decided to dissolve the community and close the Merton Center in 1975. Half of our community, eight of us, relocated to Santa Cruz, 70 miles south of San Francisco, in 1976.

In the spring of 1976 we formed the Redwood Nonviolence Community (a group that continues to this day though my wife Kris and I left the community in 1998). That same year, members of the Redwood Community joined an equal number of others from Santa Cruz, and Joan Baez, Diane Thomas and Ira Sandperl from the Institute for the Study of Nonviolence in Palo Alto, to found the Resource Center for Nonviolence (RCNV). We have a staff of five part time and many more volunteer co-workers.

What has been the outreach and significance of the Resource Center?

Working with RCNV has been an extraordinary base for my own work and the locus of a lot of good organizing. RCNV has actively supported me in my work with the FOR and other organizations, by freeing my time to serve on the FOR NC as well as to work with groups such as Witness for Peace in Nicaragua, the American Friends



Bishop James A. Pike, Diane Kennedy, an Imam, and Scott during Scott's first trip to Israel and Palestine, Hebron 1968.

Service Committee, Middle East Witness, and National Youth Advocates.

RCNV initially played an active role in anti-nuclear work in California. We helped co-found the Abalone Alliance that worked from the late 1970s into the mid-1980s employing active nonviolence to oppose nuclear power plants and nuclear weaponry. RCNV had major responsibilities for strategizing and training for mass nonviolent action at the Diablo Nuclear Power Plant. RCNV was instrumental in a organizing ballot measure in 1980 that sought to outlaw production of nuclear weapons parts in Santa Cruz County. While defeated by an opposition heavily funded by Lockheed, our local electoral initiative was a forerunner to the nationwide Nuclear Freeze campaign.

RCNV staff worked closely with Witness for Peace from its founding in 1983 until 1988. Phil McManus, David Sweet, Ellie Foster, Jack Schultz and others and I hosted the first national office of WFP



Founding of the Redwood Nonviolence Community 1976, at the "Lost World" in Scotts Valley: From left: Scott Kennedy, Faith Whitmore, David and Janet Bunje, Debbie McGibbon, Liz and Peter Klotz-Chamberlin, Alice Logan, Wendy Lamb, Debbie Kitchen, Susan Dodd, Tom Helman, Jim Kitchens, Kris Kennedy. (Photo by Erik Hutchins)

and recruited and trained the first long-term volunteers into the war zones of Nicaragua. RCNV also provided offices and helped staff the FOR TFLAC and METF.

RCNV mobilized broad-based local opposition to the two Gulf Wars. We trained more than 300 draft counselors from throughout the Central and Northern California region during the first Gulf War. We have a very active GI Rights Hotline and work with others on counter-recruiting. RCNV continues to work on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict locally as well as in concert with many regional and national groups.

We work on immigration issues and with a locally-based campaign coalition to overcome racism. One of our staff members organized and coordinates soccer leagues with 80 teams of children, youth, women and men, that also involves a great deal of conflict resolution and education.

All of this grassroots organizing has been tied to national and international efforts. We are very egalitarian, make decisions by consensus and all staff are paid the same regardless of what work we do or how long we have been on the staff. The Resource Center has sustained this work for 34 years now.

I was so glad to be part of the group that traveled with you to Israel/Palestine last December. When did your concern about this Middle East conflict begin? How many times have you been there and do you know how many groups you have led there? Do you have positive feelings about reaching a peaceful resolution to the conflict?

Since the mid-1970s, the focus of much of my work has been the Middle East. More specifically, I have attempted to amplify the voices of those Palestinians and Israelis that are committed to nonviolence or waging nonviolent struggle to end the Israeli Occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem (as well as the Golan Heights). We help educate and mobilize people in the US to apply the same commitments they have



Scott Kennedy with Mordechai Vanunu, the Israeli whistle blower who confirmed Israel's possession nuclear weapons. Vanunu convened a Hiroshima Day Vigil on August 6, 2005, to commemorate the US atomic bombing of Japan. Members of the Interfaith Peace-Builders delegation, co-led by Scott, joined in the vigil at the courtyard of St. George's Anglican Cathedral in Jerusalem. Vanunu served 18 years in Israeli prison, most of it in solitary confinement, and is still essentially under town arrest in Arab East Jerusalem.

demonstrated to peace and justice in the USA or elsewhere around the globe to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

My involvement in Middle East issues was something of an accident, or the product of family circumstances. I first traveled to the region as a freshman in college in 1968 with my sister

"Although the Arab Druze campaign in the Golan may not serve as a text-book for nonviolent struggle, or a clear direction for Druze in other geographical locales, perhaps those struggling against oppression in other areas will be able to hear the words of an Israeli antiwar activist who commented to a group of Majd al-Shams villagers, "When you are able, competent and generous, you don't need arms.""

— "Noncooperation in the Golan Heights," by Scott Kennedy in "Civilian Jihad: Nonviolent Struggle, Democratization, and Governance in the Middle East," edited by Maria J. Stephan, 2010.



Salman Fakhir El Din Speaks to the 2005 Interfaith Peace-Builders delegation about the defeat of the Syrian army and forced evacuation and demolition of dozens of villages following Israel's occupation of the Golan Heights in 1967. Salman was a leader of Israel's forced annexation of the Arab Druze communities to the Jewish State in a powerful nonviolent noncooperation campaign that was widely publicized in an article researched and written by Scott in 1985.

Diane Kennedy Pike and her husband, the late Episcopal Bishop James A. Pike. Bishop Pike died in the desert between Bethlehem and the Dead Sea in the fall of 1969. My sister and I lived in Jerusalem for several months in 1970 while finishing a book that Pike had been writing at the time of his death (*The Wilderness Revolt, Doubleday, 1972*). While living in Jerusalem 1970-1971, my interests shifted from the religion and history of the region to contemporary politics of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In 1974, I met Allan Solomonow, who was first staff person for the FOR affiliated Jewish Peace Fellowship and also worked with the Committee on New Alternatives in the Middle East (CONAME). Allan invited me in 1975 to participate in a the first inter-religious peace delegation to Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Israel and the Israeli Occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. We traveled to the region together again in 1979. I was hooked! Allan, who later worked for two and a half decades with the AFSC in San Francisco, and I have continued to travel to and organize delegations to the region nearly every year from 1979 to the present. We have worked under different organizational umbrellas, such as the FOR METF, Middle East Witness, and now Interfaith Peace-Builders, which started as a program of the FOR. (www.ifpb.org) I have been to the region more than forty times and have led three dozen delegations to the region.

In my several decades of work on the issue, I have seen major

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changes for the good, such as mutual recognition by Israel and the Palestinians and majority support for a Two State Solution. The use of active nonviolence to withdraw support from the Israeli military occupation and militant nonviolence to resist the Occupation have gained strength and momentum. Still, it is a major challenge to marshal the political will in the USA to exert the force necessary to bring about a negotiated political settlement, instead of the *status quo* imposed by the force able to employ the greater violence.

You have been very involved in local politics, on the City Council, and mayor in Santa Cruz. What led you to this involvement? Have there been some positive developments as a result of your involvement and leadership? What are some of the major issues other than your commitment to peace (local, national, international) that have been central to you work?

I was recruited to run for council by several affordable housing activists who were afraid that gentrification and reconstruction from a major earthquake would result in a loss of affordable housing. I was elected in 1990 and again in 1994 and 2000. I was defeated in a reelection bid in 2004. I was elected by fellow councilmembers to serve as Mayor of Santa Cruz 1993-1994 and 2003-2004.

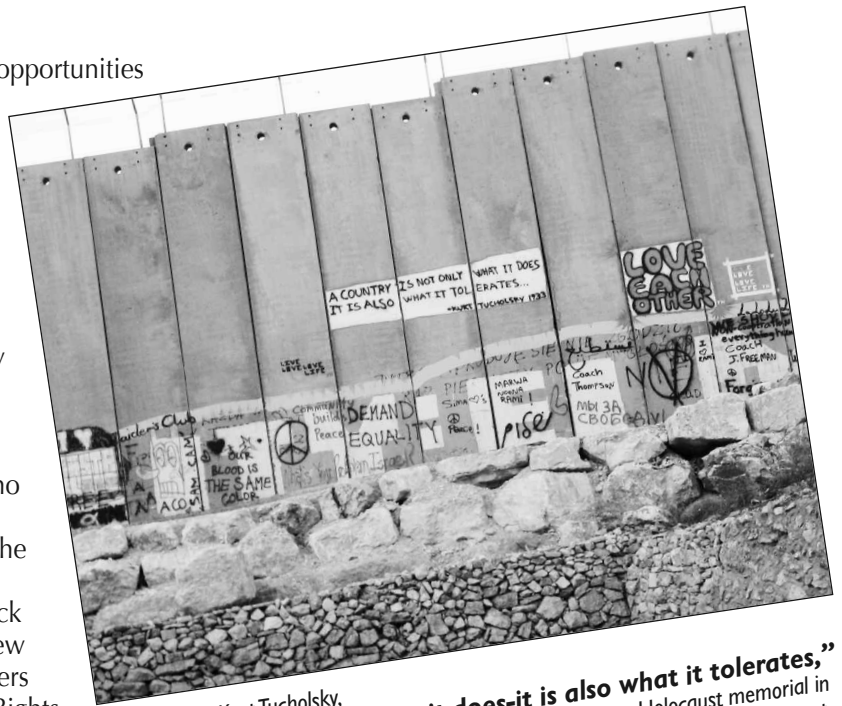
In all of my work, including with the FOR NC, I have always enjoyed the



Affif Safieh, PLO representative to the United States, and Scott Kennedy, during question and answer period at the Veterans Hall in Santa Cruz, summer of 2006.

challenge and opportunities of problem solving and the nitty-gritty work that helps make an organization, or a city, work. I was inspired by the late theologian and author William Stringfellow who was elected to local office in the Town of New Shoreham, Block Island, RI. I knew that many leaders from the Civil Rights Movement had gone on to serve in elected office. Despite the mixed results of these forays into elected office, I have been challenged by Gandhi's admonition, "no principle exists without its concrete application" (my paraphrase). I rather like jumping into the fray when a situation presents itself and to test my commitment to nonviolence in active engagement with day-to-day challenges.

Serving as a local elected official took a toll on friendships, especially since it followed two decades of work with people who are idealistic, take strong moral stands, are resistant to political compromise and outspoken and adamant in expressing their views. Frankly, I lost some close friends and working relationships as a result of decisions I had made while serving as a local elected officials. Conflicts arising from my terms on the Council were largely responsible for my wife Kris' and my leaving an intentional community that we had helped to start more than 25 years earlier. That remains a heavy price to have paid for my choice to run for elected office.



This quote by Kurt Tucholsky, **"A country is not just what it does-it is also what it tolerates,"** is on the first panel as you enter the exhibit at the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem. The quote also has been graffitied on the wall, what the Israeli government calls "the Separation Barrier" and most Palestinians call "the Apartheid Wall," encircling the Palestinian city of Bethlehem. Kurt Tucholsky, was a German journalist, poet, pacifist and dissident of Jewish origin, who fled Nazi Germany. His works were banned and he was stripped of his citizenship by the Nazis.

But I think I was able to make a difference, by working closely with other councilmembers and building or sustaining a majority to construct low-income housing, extend youth services, expand funding for homeless services and the emerging Latino population, rebuild our downtown after the earthquake, strengthen cooperation with local schools, and permanently preserve through public acquisition several Greenbelt properties on the city's perimeter. Being in elected office also made it possible



Santa Cruz City Councilmember Scott Kennedy and Mayor Emily Riley, Santa Cruz 2003.

for me to intervene in several individuals' situations in a helpful way, including immigrants and victims of war. And there are other, more symbolic, actions that are possible in such a position. For example, I authored and Santa Cruz was the first local government to adopt a resolution opposing the Iraq War. Serving on the City Council was one of the most challenging and growth-filled experiences of my life. Despite the costs, I would do it again.

"... Camus' message is that those who would not be victims must also and adamantly refuse to be executioners. This fundamental change of course is necessary if the human race is to get beyond the seemingly endless cycle of victim and executioner. The history of humanity and suffering of war might be better told by upholding those heroes of le Chambon, who refused to be either victims or executioners. This message is tragically too little understood. It is a message that we must carry to Moscow, Beijing, Tel Aviv, Algiers, and Washington. And it is a message that we must inscribe in our own hearts."

— Scott Kennedy in the "Postscript," of the 2007 reprint of Albert Camus' "Neither Victims nor Executioners," with a new Introduction by Peter Klotz-Chamberlin and Scott Kennedy.

Has your family been a significant part of your life and effectiveness?

My parents always supported my decisions, though they didn't always fully understand them. My brothers and sisters have also been very supportive. I have come to recognize and appreciate what a rare and great blessing it is to have experienced nearly unconditional love from both of my parents. My wife Kris is a teacher in the public schools and has been the main bread-winner for our family during our 36 years of marriage. She has been the moral and emotional bedrock of my life and work. Kris has made it possible for me to devote much of my time and energies to nonviolent activism. All three of my children have been actively involved, joining me for door-to-door canvassing from their early elementary school years to traveling to Israel and Palestine with me. I have tried to balance the responsibilities of being a father and husband with activism, not always successfully. But there is no doubt I could not have lived the life I have lived without Kris' active support.

Have you any thoughts about receiving the Pfeffer Peace Prize?

I am deeply indebted to the FOR for exposing me to many of the extraordinarily diverse and vital nonviolent activists and

movements, in the USA today as well as throughout history and the world. That certainly includes the FOR affiliated Palestinians and Israelis whom I first met in 1975 (including Joseph Abileah, Elias Chakour, and Yeshayau Toma Sik) and those with whom we continue to closely work through Interfaith Peace-Builders and other groups, such as Jeremy Milgrom, Jonathan Kuttab, Zoughbi Zoughbi, Sami Awad, and Jean Zaru. It's a great honor to be singled out for recognition, especially by people whom you consider your mentors. I'm also keenly aware of the many others with whom I've had the privilege of working that deserve recognition as well.

Have there been any outstanding experiences that have influenced your life and commitment? Any specifics?

Having the opportunity to visit other countries, such as Israel and Palestine, and especially Third World Countries such as Nicaragua, has had a huge impact. Growing up during the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam war and the decision to be a conscientious objector were decisive. My involvement in church youth leadership encouraged and supported my following my "call" by devoting my life-work to nonviolent education and action. I have had the great privilege of having personal contact with people and events that have been life-changing, including Cesar Chavez and the United Farmworkers Movement, the Los Angeles Catholic Worker, Dan Berrigan and the Catholic Left, the WRL and FOR. Being mentored by Jim and Diane Pike, William Stringfellow, Lee Swenson, Ira Sandperl and many others, have expanded and deepened my commitments.



Kris, Peter, Rahim, Megan, Ben and Scott Kennedy at Seabright Beach, Santa Cruz, following Megan's wedding to Rahim Chouane, August 2009. (Photo by Matt Fitt)



Scott and Kris Kennedy circa 1990

Meeting and learning from the writings and life-work of Thomas Merton, Danilo Dolci, Mubarak Awad, Richard Deats, and so many other people, and working with Witness for Peace and Middle East Witness, and choosing to live and work in one place, have deeply impacted my life and work. Having coworkers and friends too numerous to mention, working shoulder to shoulder on various campaigns and initiatives, make this work rewarding, sustainable and fun.

Do you have ways of relaxing in the midst of your manifold activities?

I enjoy reading, taking our dog "Barack" to the dog park, watching films, following the San Francisco Giants, spending time with friends and family, writing, and traveling with Kris.

Have your friends and co-workers been a helpful influence in your life and commitment to causes?

I have been very fortunate, with the FOR, RCNV and other organizations, to have had many opportunities to work in the company of friends on worthwhile projects, and to make such work my life work. I've especially enjoyed the many experiments with developing organizations and structures that sustain and nourish people committed to political work over the long haul. ❖