News



Campaign Nonviolence witness action in Memphis, Tennessee, part of Pace e Bene's 2017 campaign for the International Day of Peace (Courtesy of Pace e Bene)



by Maria Benevento

View Author Profile
mbenevento@ncronline.org

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

September 26, 2017
Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

Editor's note: Welcome to NCR's Justice Action Bulletin, where every Tuesday we bring you the latest news on active nonviolence in the service of peace and justice. Do you have news you would like to share? Contact Maria Benevento at mbenevento@ncronline.org.

UNITED STATES — Pace e Bene, an organization founded by Franciscan Friars and devoted to promoting justice, peace and well-being through non-violent action, announced Sept. 24 that its fourth annual Campaign Nonviolence Week of Actions concluded with a total of more than 1,600 actions, including marches, prayers, vigils, peace picnics, seminars and plays.

According to its website, Campaign Nonviolence is "a long-term grassroots movement for a culture of peace and nonviolence free from war, poverty, racism, environmental destruction and the epidemic of violence."

The Week of Action was organized around the International Day of Peace with the goal of encouraging at least 1,000 non-violent actions. Actions took place in all 50 states and 16 other countries, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Kenya and Nigeria.

Highlights included the launching of a Nonviolent Cities Project in Cincinnati, Ohio, weeks of non-violent actions in Wilmington, Delaware, and Little Rock, Arkansas, and an interfaith peace gathering and event at the Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee.



Campaign Nonviolence in Buffalo, New York, 2017 (Courtesy of Pace e Bene)

LONDON, ENGLAND — Faith-based groups, including Catholic peace group Pax Christi, the Anglican Peace Fellowship, nearly 200 British Quakers and Wake Up London, a Thich Nhat Hanh-inspired mindfulness group, joined thousands in protesting the world's largest arms fair, the Defense and Security Equipment

International exhibition in London.

At least 102 people were arrested during the week of non-violent direct actions, which included performances, speeches and daily blockades which disrupted preparations for the arms fair enough to push the set-up schedule back for days, the Nuclear Resistor reported Sept. 21.

Themed days included "Free Movement for People Not Weapons!" and "No Faith in War Day" which included meditation, a Quaker meeting, readings from the Torah, music, speakers, a picnic and a Pax Christi-sponsored liturgy.

The protests culminated in a flash mob die-in on Sept. 11 accompanied by a soundtrack of gunshots, explosions and the "cha-ching" of a cash register as the arms dealers entered to prepare for the fair's Sept. 12 opening, but continued throughout the fair, leading to several more arrests.

Advertisement

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA — Catholic Workers and interfaith groups were among hundreds who gathered at seven Virginia Department of Environmental Quality offices for the "People's Pipeline Protest" on Sept 13-14 to engage in nonviolent direction action against two proposed gas pipelines, the Atlantic Coast and Mountain Valley pipelines, the Augusta Free Press reported Sept. 14.

In Richmond, 19 activists, including landowners, physicians and faith leaders were arrested after engaging in a peaceful sit-in which blocked the entrance of the office for an hour. Protestors called on Gov. Terry McAuliffe to deny water permits to the pipelines which they oppose on the basis that they will exacerbate climate change, destroy mountain ridgetops, threaten property rights and harm drinking water.

According to a Sept. 19 press release from Greenpeace, over 100 activists also gathered the following weekend for a three-day "No Pipelines" training camp where they learned tactics for non-violent direct action as well as safety and rescue techniques.

North Carolina's governor has already delayed its decision to issue a Clean Water Act permit to the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, originally scheduled for Sept. 18, after public outcry, including protests and prayer vigils by local clergy outside Department

of Environmental Quality offices. Meanwhile, the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection rescinded the water quality certification for the Mountain Valley Pipeline.

The proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline would go through George Washington National Forest and affect the Appalachian Trail and Blue Ridge Parkway, while the Mountain Valley Pipeline would cut through the Jefferson National Forest, cross the Appalachian Trail and Blue Ridge Parkway and affect three major aquifers.

[Maria Benevento is a NCR Bertelsen intern. Her email address is mbenevento@ncronline.org.]

This story appears in the **Justice Action Bulletin** feature series. View the full series
.