



Lois met Peggy Schirmer and the recently formed CEASE (now P.E.A.C.E.) at the NAEYC National Conference in 1981. Dr. Helen Caldicott was invited to a workshop organized by the group to speak on the dangers of nuclear testing and exposure to nuclear radiation. Lois formed a bond with Peggy around their shared interest in caring for all children and all of creation. They met year after year at the NAEYC Conferences, Lois coming from Indiana and Peggy from Massachusetts.

I met Lois in 1995 at the NAEYC conference when I shared a hotel room with her and Peggy. Their lively conversation went on into the night recounting all they were doing in their work for children and peace. Peggy had news from the campaign to end toy handguns and Lois described a banner covered with the handprints of children in her Head Start program entitled "Hands without Guns". During the day she enthusiastically joined in handing out CEASE materials from the table set up to attract conference goers. As I stood beside her I could feel the depth of her commitment reaching out to others.

Lois began as a Head Start social service worker in 1967 two years after its founding. During her 31 year career she supported children and families. She describes her commitment to a peaceful world as growing from her roots in home and early childhood education. Caring for others is what sustains her. She is grateful that her life has allowed her to be part of activities which make a difference, striving for her goal of giving people better lives and creating a better world. She continues now in her nineties participating in all that she can. Her table at the MLK Breakfast has been going for 25 years as she joins with Martin Luther King Jr.'s determination. "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice," she quotes from him

Peggy would have loved to join her at the Women's March



*At our 30th Celebration in Washington 2009,
Lois is in the center with her wide smile.*

in South Bend which Lois attended in a wheelchair. And also on Trump's Inauguration Day when she participated in a gathering of Christian, Jewish and Muslim women held in a mosque. Sitting next to her was a woman from Syria living with fear. Lois believes "You cannot kill hope", but she asks, "How do they keep hope in the Middle East?"

She says, "Hope came with the creation- Keep asking the questions. How?" She reported searching on Google that morning for the meaning of dystopia, a word she had been hearing lately in discussions of 1984 and current threats. The definition she told me is "An imaginary place where people lead dehumanized and often fearful lives." With Lois and her spirit, we can hope to avoid such a future!

(Compiled from a telephone interview with Lois in late January.)

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