



# Hoosiers Concerned About Gun Violence

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[www.hcgv.org](http://www.hcgv.org)

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## QUARTERLY BULLETIN #41

Fall 2010

David Mason and Marian Towne, editors

### HCGV Garden Party

As a member of Hoosiers Concerned About Gun Violence, you are invited to a Garden Party at the home of one of our board members on Saturday, **October 2, at 4 p.m.** Stephen Dunlop, M.D., and his wife, Charlene, who reside at 5105 North Illinois Street in Indianapolis, are happy to share their lovely back yard with us so that we may become better acquainted with one another. Other board members will be furnishing food and beverages. Music will be provided by Loring Prosser. (See back page for clip-out invitation.)

The Garden Party Committee, consisting of Loring Prosser, Joyce Bowman, Joe Zelenka, and Marian Towne are happy to announce that our guest speaker will be Tim Nation,

Director of the Peace Learning in Indianapolis.

### Peace Learning Center

Peace Learning Center programs address critical issues not addressed in classrooms. The majority of schools served are in low-income neighborhoods and in areas with gangs, drop-outs, and a high crime rating. Fifty-six per cent of the 18-24 year-olds in these neighborhoods have no high school diploma.

Tim Nation, Director of this program in Indianapolis, will explain how it is making a difference in the lives of many students. **(See back page for the clip-out invitation to the Garden Party, which is due by September 20 in our office, 3535 Kessler Boulevard, North Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46222).**

## On Violence

An Opinion by

The Rev. Robert N. Sanders

Just when we are on the verge of discarding some of the traditional methods of international diplomacy as obsolete--in favor of civilized treaties--history's changing cycles create situations that encourage heads of state to renew old policies of militarism.

Theologically, I am committed to the biblical perspective that God is at work in the world bringing it to wholeness and fulfillment. God has invited human beings to become "junior partners" in that unfinished universe. So, if we are working together, God's will can be accomplished in history. Yet, there are times when it seems that God's ultimate purpose isn't making progress. When ominous clouds roll across the horizon, I am tempted to shed my basic optimism in favor of the view that some apocalyptic holocaust is imminent.

I need to remember that God hasn't given up on the world, and I must not give up. I need to remember that gun violence isn't God's way, and it must not be our way. No end justifies a means that makes violence essential.

George Orwell's novel, *1984*, is filled with sarcasm and exaggeration. Yet, it is undeniable that human beings have learned to hate. The central figure of Orwell's book is Winston Smith, and this book demonstrates that this hate can corrupt the human mind, will, emotions, and spirit. The fact is that we humans have a tremendous capacity to hurt one another deliberately. I am astounded at recent statistics indicating how this is expressed in statistics concerning gun violence.

In 2006 guns murdered:

27 in Australia

59 in England and Wales

60 in Spain

190 in Canada

194 in Germany

10,177 in the United States of America

A recent article in *The Indianapolis Star* gives another statistic from Wishard Hospital:

521 violent injuries

233 gunshot wounds

199 stabbings

89 other forms of assault.

Roland Bainton was right when he wrote, "Fighting violence with violence increases the violence."

(Sanders is a retired pastor in the American Baptist Church. He was educated at Union University, Jackson, Tennessee; Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville; Vanderbilt University; and was a Merrill Fellow at Harvard University Divinity School. He served American Baptist Churches in Indiana, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Honduras. He taught at St. Meinrad School of Theology.)

## Join the Church Federation's Effort

The Church Federation of Greater Indianapolis, founded in 1912 by downtown churches, has developed a ministry of great meaning to persons concerned about gun violence.

Under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Angelique Walker-Smith, Executive Director, the Federation in the 1990s

called church and community to a unified faith response to a Northside disturbance. It created the Sanctuary Church Movement involving prayer vigils at sites of violent homicides and bi-annual services of remembrance and peacemaking for families of victims of violence.

After every homicide in Indianapolis, family members, friends, and other caring Christians from across the city gather together at the site of the violent death to pray for victims and survivors. "To stand in prayer with families who have lost a loved one is a grace-filled moment," says Coordinator Joe Zelenka. "To hear the prayers of families who are asking for grace from God to truly forgive the perpetrator is for me a sign of God's presence."

In 1996 the Ecumenical Project for Reconciliation and Healing (EPRH) was born to make the community aware of each tragedy, and to bring healing to the families, including reconciliation with the perpetrators when possible and desired. In 1999 EPRH added a mentoring program to expand services and follow-up to the families of those killed.

In June of 2003 Zelenka was asked to coordinate the prayer vigils. After he receives information on a homicide from the Indianapolis Police Department Chaplain's office, he attempts to make contact with the family and establishes a time and date to gather at the homicide site to pray for and with the family as well as to pray for an end to the violence. He continues to be overwhelmed by the degree of violence, especially gun violence.

If anyone wishes to be notified of these prayer vigils, please e-mail Zelenka at [jze@att.net](mailto:jze@att.net). Please consider

attending a vigil to pray with and for the grieving families.

For more information contact the Church Federation, 1100 West 42nd Street, Suite 345, Indianapolis, IN 46208, phone (317) 926-5371, e-mail [churches@churchfederationindy.org](mailto:churches@churchfederationindy.org) or visit [www.churchfederationindy.org](http://www.churchfederationindy.org).

## **HCGV Board Members to Address Shepherd's Center**

On Wednesday, November 3, at 11 a.m., Stephen Dunlop and David Mason, both long-time board members of HCGV, will speak on gun violence to those gathered for one in the eight-week series, "Domestic Decisions," sponsored by the Mid-North Shepherd's Center located at North United Methodist Church, 3808 North Meridian Street in Indianapolis. The series brings highly qualified local experts to the podium to address serious issues in our neighborhoods, cities, and state. Admission is free and open to the public.

Stephen Dunlop, M.D., will draw on his experience as a psychiatrist, where he has become all too aware of the tragic consequences of gun violence. "As president of Hoosiers Concerned About Gun Violence, I am trying to do something about it," he says.

Dr. David Mason, Emeritus Professor of Political Science at Butler University and past president of HCGV, will respond to Dunlop's remarks and discuss what can be done to address these problems in our community.

## HCGV Garden Party Invitation

Please clip the coupon below and mail it to the address provided.

☐ Yes, I am accepting the invitation to the Garden Party at 5105 N. Illinois St. on Oct. 2.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Donation of \$25.00 per person contribution **by September 20** to:

Hoosiers Concerned About Gun  
Violence  
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You can also respond by emailing us at  
info@hcgv.org and donating at our  
website at:

**<http://www.hcgv.org/donation.html>**