



MIDLAND, MICHIGAN, UNITED STATES: INTERNATIONAL CITY OF PEACE

We welcome the citizens of Midland, Michigan, United States as they establish their community as an International City of Peace. The Liaison between the community and the association of International Cities of Peace is Jeanne Lound Schaller, the leader of the Nonviolent Peaceforce Midland Chapter (NPMC).

Note: Introduction page with information primarily at the time of joining International Cities of Peace. For updates, please contact the liaison.

Our Community's Vision Statement:

Together. Forward. Bold.

An Exceptional Place Where Everyone Thrives

Our Community Partnership:

Nonviolent Peaceforce Midland Chapter & Rotary of Midland, Michigan



Vision:

To foster a culture of peace both locally and globally whereby conflict is managed through nonviolent means guided by principles of nonviolence, non-partisanship, primacy of local actors, and civilian-to-civilian action.

Mission:

To inspire educational programs, services, and events that will empower our community to establish an inclusive, enduring, and sustainable culture of peace.

Goals:

1. Work with local agencies in their endeavors to create a culture of peace.
2. Support peace education for our youth and all citizens.
3. Build peace globally by acting locally.



Asha Asokan, Rotarian, Nonviolent Peaceforce member, and former Director of NuclearBan.US, came to Midland on Sept. 29, 2021, to both educate and challenge attendees to think about the presence and impact of nuclear weapons in our world.



Midlanders Gather for Peace on International Peace Day, September 21, 2021. Nonviolent Peaceforce Midland Chapter and Midland Rotary work towards making Midland a City of Peace.

Bringing Conflict Resolution Training to the Midland Community



NPMC and Midland Rotary collaborate to teach Conflict Resolution Training at First United Methodist Church in Midland, MI (2017).



"Creating Peace by Practicing Peace"
Conflict Resolution Training provided by NPMC and Midland Rotary at St. John's Episcopal Church in Midland, MI (2016)

Training provided by Jen Batton, Director, Global Issues Resource Center

Photos provided by Tom Lane

Our Community Connections:

Nonviolent Peaceforce and Violence Prevention Partnership

Build Peace in Area Classrooms



The Midland Area Community Foundation's Violence Prevention Partnership. Nearly 150 students from 19 schools met on the topic of building togetherness in a physically distant world, engaging in the topics of building empathy, using your voice for change, and social/emotional health (2020).



Students take part in a "Peace Building Circle" at Bullock Creek Middle School, discussing issues important to them and learning how to make positive differences (2019).

Nonviolent Peaceforce Midland Chapter has worked in multiple area schools including Dow High School, Meridian High School, Blessed Sacrament, Carpenter Elementary, Plymouth Elementary, and St. Brigid's in Midland; Coleman Elementary in Coleman; and Freeland Elementary in Freeland.

Our Relationship with International Nonviolent Peaceforce:

"Transforming the World's Response to Conflict"



Nonviolent Peaceforce negotiates the release of child soldiers.



As of October 2020, there are close to 2,500 women who form a total of 67 Women's Protection Teams in South Sudan. The women in these teams are helping women prevent gender-based violence and participate in peacebuilding and the political processes.

Midland Peace Legacy



Speakers detail peace efforts around the globe, part of an annual Nonviolent Peaceforce fundraiser in Midland, MI (2019).



Nonviolent Peaceforce Director of Development and Communications, Marna Anderson, talking to large crowd at Midland Country Club (2016).

The City of Midland, Michigan, has a peace heritage that reaches back more than 50 years. Two examples illustrate Midland's early path on its journey to becoming a City of Peace.

It began with an early trailblazer in the 1960s. Helen M. Casey, Midlander and Peace Activist, educated community members about the need for peace and nonviolence initiatives both locally and internationally. She helped form the Michigan Faith Resistance Organization, as well as the Michigan Peace Team that evolved to become the Meta Peace Team (www.metapeaceteam.org). Helen's peacebuilding efforts led her to oppose nuclear weapons and militarism. In fact, she was arrested ten times for peace and justice actions and jailed three times.

To honor and continue the work Helen Casey started, Midland residents, Jeanne and George Schaller and Marge and Dick Darger, along with many other committed citizens, established The Helen M. Casey Center for Nonviolence in 2003. Its mission statement was aspirational: "To promote the practice of nonviolence and nonviolent conflict resolution as a way of life at the personal, local, state, and global levels". Throughout 15 years, The Helen M. Casey Center for Nonviolence grew to become an organization dedicated to developing the understanding of nonviolent conflict resolution as a way of life. Early on, the organization held events that supported Interfaith Gatherings, Art as an Avenue to Understanding Others, and presentations on Mindfulness and Dialogue as avenues to conflict resolution.

The second example began in 1998, was known as the Midland County Gang and Violence Prevention Partnership. It educated community members about the need for peace and nonviolence. The Pledge of Nonviolence was a tangible product of that work. It is now known as the Midland Area Community Foundation Violence Prevention Partnership (VPP). Since its inception, roughly 12,000 students have been impacted each year. It recently held its annual planning meeting to "actively promote the safety and wellbeing of its citizens by preventing youth violence through awareness, education, collaboration, and involvement." www.midlandfoundation.org/initiative/violenceprevention

The nonviolence movement continued to gain momentum. Nonviolent Peaceforce, an international nongovernmental organization, formed with the mission, "Transforming the World's Response to Conflict". It held a 2002 Convening Event in Surajkund, India, with peace advocates from 49 countries. The first team was on the ground in Sri Lanka in 2003 www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org.

In 2011, also in memory of Helen Casey, the Midland Chapter of the International Nonviolent Peaceforce was created under the leadership of Jeanne Lound Schaller. Its goal is helping people locally and internationally inbuilding better communities for individuals and families.

Nonviolent Peaceforce Midland Chapter, NPMC meets throughout the year and brings in speakers from the international organization to share the vision and accomplishments that NP is implementing around the world. Funds

are raised for the international organization. Chapter members frequently submit letters to the editor of the Midland Daily News on the importance of nonviolence in our city, the nation, and the world.

Midland Chapter (NPMC) creates public awareness in various other ways. Beginning in 2014, several chapter members volunteered in Midland-area elementary, middle, and high schools to educate and develop skills in nonviolent practices. Interactive and engaging, the lesson topics include anti-bullying, empathy, and leadership. Our mission is to give students an opportunity to integrate tools for creating peace in their lives and to help others do the same.

Nonviolent Peaceforce Midland Chapter is proud of our city's peace heritage, and we are committed to supporting those peace efforts locally, nationally, and around the world.

Building Connections for Peacebuilding In Broader Midland

- Nonviolent Peaceforce Midland Chapter
- Midland Rotary
- Midland Area Community Foundation (MACF)
- “We Hear You” Coalition
- DEI Advisory Group
- Anti-Racist Midland
- Midland Area Wellbeing Coalition
- MACF Violence Prevention Partnership
- Cultural Awareness Coalition
- Midland Business Alliance
- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority
- Delta Sigma Theta Sorority
- International Interfaith
- MCFTA “Windows on the World”
- Northwood University
- Delta College, Global Peace Studies
- Saginaw Valley State University
- People to People
- Chinese Culture Ongoing Program (CCOP)



LETTER OF INTENT

The undersigned, as independent citizens of Midland, Michigan, U.S.A., hereby acknowledge our intention to help build a City of Peace.

A City of Peace, as officially defined by International Cities of Peace, is a community that endeavors to make progress against violence and foster a culture of peace.

As a guideline, United Nations Resolution A/RES/52/13 defines a Culture of Peace as a set of values, attitudes, modes of behavior and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups, and nations. For peace and non-violence to prevail, we endeavor to:

- Foster a culture of peace through education
- Promote sustainable economic and social development
 - Promote respect for all human rights
 - Ensure equality between women and men
 - Foster democratic participation
- Advance understanding, tolerance, and solidarity
- Support participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge
- Promote international peace and security

In addition to the UNESCO statement on a culture of peace, the Golden Rule—variously stated including “*do for others as you would have them to do for you*”—provides a universal statement for compassion and respect among a community’s diverse and nonviolent philosophies, religions, and personal creeds.

Dated: September 9, 2021

A Culture of Peace is determined by the citizens of each community.

Jeanne Lound Schaller
Jeanne Lound Schaller; Leader, Nonviolent Peaceforce Midland Chapter

Gail Hoffman
Gail Hoffman, Midland Rotary & Nonviolent Peaceforce Midland Chapter

Betty B. Jones S. Preston Jones
Betty B. Jones and S. Preston Jones, Midland Rotarians

Michael Sharrow
Michael Sharrow

Kathy Snyder
Kathy Snyder; Coordinator, Midland Area Wellbeing Coalition

Maureen Donker
Maureen Donker; Executive Director, Reece Endeavor of Midland

About the Liaison

Jeanne Lound Schaller, leader of the Nonviolent Peaceforce Midland Chapter, has a local history of education and action since 2000:

1. Mediating in Midland and in other counties for the Community Resolution Center
2. Participating in the Midland Restorative Practices in Education Committee
3. Participating in the Violence Prevention Partnership
4. Teaching positive conflict resolution skills to students and adults as a commitment to help build a more peaceful community and world.



Jeanne co-initiated and then led these Midland, Michigan, organizations:

1. Midland Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice that focused on the UN Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World
2. Helen M. Casey Center for Nonviolence to promote the practice of nonviolence as a way of life at the personal, local, state, national, and global levels
3. Choosing a Culture of Understanding with Christians, Muslims, and Jews
4. Nonviolent Peaceforce Midland Chapter (NPMC) with the goals of:
 - Raising funds (over \$181,000 to date) to support NP's International work of training Unarmed Civilian Peacekeepers and local community members in conflict transformation.
 - Since 2014, NPMC members have taught students to deal positively with conflict resolution.
 - NPMC has also collaborated with Midland Rotary to hire trainers to teach Rotarians and others in the community.

In 2015 Jeanne became a Rotary Peace Fellow and received a Professional Development Certificate in Peace and Conflict Resolution after studying at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand. She is now an Honorary Rotarian.

In 2019, Jeanne received the Midland County Martin Luther King Jr. Drum Major Award for exemplifying King's vision.

Contact Information

To contact or support this initiative:

timmonsj45@icloud.com

About Midland, Michigan (from Wikipedia)



Midland is a city in the U.S. state of Michigan in the Tri-Cities region of Central Michigan. It is the county seat of Midland County. The city's population was 41,701 as of the 2019 census estimate. It is the principal city of the Midland Micropolitan Statistical Area, part of the larger Saginaw-Midland-Bay City Combined Statistical Area.

Midland has many cultural opportunities in fields ranging from music and theater to science and the arts. The Midland Center for the Arts delivers hands-on exhibits in science, art and technology at the Alden B. Dow Museum of Science and Art. The Center also provides two state-of-the-art auditoriums for audiences of 400 to 1500 to enjoy everything from the Midland Symphony Orchestra and Center Stage Theatre to professional programming through MATRIX: Midland.

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