



# FNVW

Friends for a NonViolent World

## E-Letter

August 2025

Hello FNVW community!

This past month has been especially full—marked by the loss of a beloved community member whose spirit and contributions touched so many of us. Alongside our grief, we've also shared moments of joy and connection, from the lively People Camp gathering to the steady work of preparing for the months ahead. As summer draws to a close and the pace of fall begins to take hold, we are reminded of the cycles of change, resilience, and renewal that shape our community.

Please see the table of contents below to get a quick glimpse of August's updates.

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### A Note from the Executive Director's Desk

Dear Friends,

I want to take a moment to update you on two important matters for our FNVW community.

#### Transition Progress

I understand that some members have expressed frustration with the pace of our transition process. I want to reassure you that steady progress is being made. The FNVW Board is navigating this important process with care, ensuring that the outcome will be two stable and sustainable organizations:

- A strong and enduring FNVW, continuing its work in social activism guided by nonviolent principles.
- An independent AVP organization, championing nonviolence through experiential workshops and creative programming.

During this transition, all FNVW systems, contracts, and programming remain fully functional and uninterrupted. While the process requires thoughtful reflection and deliberate steps, the Board has prioritized the separation and approved a core team to accelerate the shaping of AVP's organizational structure in readiness for independence. I ask for your continued patience and trust as we move forward, and I thank you for your unwavering support of FNVW and AVP. Together, we are advancing the mission of nonviolence in our communities and beyond. Please continue to support this great work in any way you can, large or small; it makes a difference.

#### Remembering Brucie Hawkins

It is with deep sadness that I share the news of the passing of Brucie Hawkins, a beloved member of our community, who died on September 6th. Brucie's service to FNVW spanned many roles: former Executive Director, Board member, devoted AVP lead facilitator, and, most recently, a member of the Holiday Fair planning team.

Brucie's wisdom, leadership, and unwavering dedication to the mission of nonviolence touched countless lives. Her contributions will leave a lasting legacy in both FNVW and AVP. We do not yet have details regarding funeral arrangements, but we will keep you informed as soon as more information is available. Please hold Brucie's family and loved ones in the Light during this time.

Thank you again for being part of this community and for carrying forward the shared vision of a more peaceful world.

In peace and gratitude,

John Ewu, Ph.D.  
Executive Director  
Friends For A NonViolent World

### Until Our Paths Cross Again

*A Tribute to Brucie Hawkins, written by her adopted son Gary Brownlie*

Bleeding isn't something I normally do in public, but this is different. I'm sad to say we lost a one-of-a-kind this past weekend. Some might have known her as Bodacious Brucie, others as Belinda. To me, she was Mom. Unfortunately, Brucie passed away due to health issues, but I'm here to make sure she gets the send-off she deserves.

I met Brucie through AVP. She loved AVP; it was her true passion. She was my mentor, my friend, my mom, my rock. Brucie always considered her own problems smaller than the problems of others. I want this to be about her, to give her the place in the stars she deserves.

Brucie was a highly accomplished woman: educated, professional, well-traveled, cultured, with a heart of gold. But I'd like to shine a light on a part of her that may have been unknown to others. Brucie would do anything for anyone. She believed that we choose our lives before we are born, and if that's the case, then we were all destined to be part of hers. I'd say we walk beside each other until the time comes to walk our own path.

Brucie taught me to forgive and to cut the chains of the past, to be kind to myself and others. I was once a drug addict and made many other bad choices, but the reason I am no longer an addict and able to understand emotions is all because of Brucie. Through the withdrawals, the pain, the sickness, she never left my side.

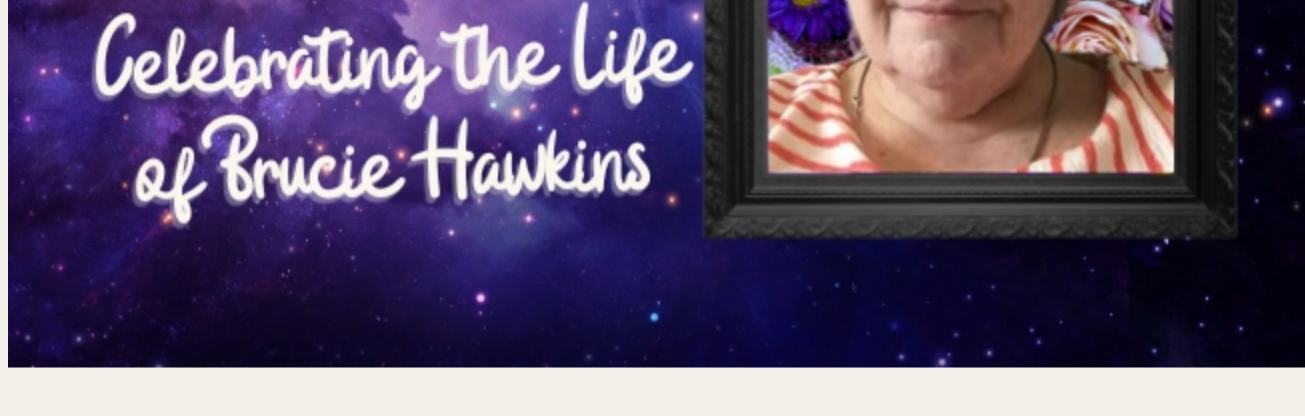
Brucie believed we are all equal, and I never once heard her judge anyone. She encouraged difference and saw beauty in us all. Even when I pushed her away, she would simply wait for my return with words of safety and encouragement. If I wanted to go to the moon, in her eyes it was possible.

There is so much I could say about Brucie, but none of it could fully capture who she was. We lost an amazing lady, and I'd like us all to remember and cherish the times she was in our lives. Brucie taught me that everything is a choice, and it all begins with the seeds we plant. You can fight it, you can try not to listen—trust me, I did—but Brucie sings you a lullaby that slowly enters your soul.

This is a reminder to us all: we are only here for a short time. Friends, family, loved ones can be gone tomorrow. So reach out to the people you love and tell them the things you think you cannot say. Brucie wouldn't have wanted her passing to bring pain and sadness to anyone, but the tears fall all the same.

This isn't goodbye. It's until our paths cross again.

*In loving memory of Brucie Hawkins, 7th September 2025, 00:50.*



### Nonviolent Action & Community Connection at People Camp

*A Recap of People Camp 2025, written by Cynthia Bartoo*

The participation of George Lakey, well-known for writings and trainings in non-violent direct action, and the offering of a week-long workshop on Non-Violent Direct Action Campaigns, resulted in large attendance at People Camp this year. About 100 campers, about 1/3 of them children, ages 3 months to 16 years, along with elders and young families, mixed for a delightful week in the north woods, on the lake shore at Northern Pines Retreat Center, near Park Rapids, MN.

The morning workshop, based on George Lakey's book *How We Win*, and led by EQAT (Earth Quaker Action Teams) trainer Lina Blount, consistently numbered 32 - 35 people. We engaged with principles of analysis (Pillars of Support), opportunities to be effective in achieving a goal (winning), and creativity. We role-played a nonviolent sit-in action, discussed costs of commitment (time, energy, possible arrest and other outcomes), and brainstormed the most important issues in this moment in history. The FNVW workshop leaders were delighted to find that there were four groups with interest in continuing their work outside of People Camp!

Other highlights of the week included swimming and boating opportunities, lakeside sauna, cross-the-lake swim, teen group afternoon canoe trip, volleyball, ping pong, board games and group singing, the delightful talent show, Broadway tunes with George Lakey!, the cooperative work of running the camp, good conversations, and good food!

One sad note was that Sharon Collins passed away only days before camp. She had registered for camp, expressing her excitement to join us again. Her friends held a memorial at the lakeside at sunset to remember our friend; how she will be missed!



### From Stage to Safety: Zamy's Journey with AVP

*A Message from Zamy Theater Project Company Manager Esther Ouray*

Zamy Theater Project had the good fortune to do a training with AVP this summer. Zamy is a theater that uses the powerful combination of lived experience and artistic expression to inspire communities to work towards housing justice. There is an extremely high risk of becoming a victim of violence when homeless. Housing not only ends homelessness but immediately reduces the risk of violence. People who live on the street and in shelters are, unfortunately, not strangers to violence.

Several of our troupe members with lived experience of homelessness, as well as some of the Zamy staff, attended the AVP workshop. Despite the fact that our troupe spends quite a bit of time working together - and many of us have known each other for many years - we got to know each other better and in different ways through the AVP workshops. The safe space created by the facilitators brought an increased trust among us. We got to know each other in deeper and different ways. The games and exercises opened us up to each other.

Troupe members have commented that they gained new communication skills, new listening skills, and new coping skills. The clarity of the facilitation and the agenda made the AVP experience accessible to those with a variety of both disabilities and varying abilities. We have added AVP's 12 principles of transforming power into our new Zamy Playbook in hopes that these principles will feed into our work and nourish our relationships. On top of it all, we got to have some good laughter and play!

Thank you AVP for this opportunity and learning, and for your brave, solid commitment to nonviolence. Here's to housing, safety, and community for all!



### AVP Workshops Inspire Kids in Hopkins

This summer, a team of AVP facilitators brought Alternatives to Violence Project workshops to a housing project in Hopkins, where we worked with an incredible group of children. From the moment we arrived, the kids' energy and openness set the tone for a memorable experience.

Our topic for the night was cooperation. Through games, storytelling, and exercises, we demonstrated how good it is to work together, listen to each other, and find nonviolent solutions to conflicts. The children not only engaged with these ideas but brought their own insights and creativity to the table—reminding us how much young people can teach us about resilience and imagination.

Laughter, teamwork and "aha!" moments filled the room as participants practiced the new communication and coping skills. By the end of the workshop, it was clear that the seeds of transforming power had been planted.

The facilitators left feeling inspired and eager to return to Hopkins to continue this journey. These young people are already showing the power of community and nonviolence, and we can't wait to see how their growth will ripple outward into their families, schools, and neighborhoods.



### Planning in Progress for the 2025 Holiday Fair

Planning for FNVW's Holiday Fair 2025 is officially underway! Our team is busy preparing for another joyful gathering filled with community spirit, handmade gifts, and festive cheer. Stay tuned because more details about this year's event will be shared soon!

FNVW works to promote and create peace and justice in our community by using the principles and practices of nonviolence to transform conflict and to address the root causes of violence. Your financial support will help us move our mission forward into the future!

Donate Today to Support Nonviolence!



Check out our full website [here](#) for more information!