

WNC -Physicians for Social Responsibility Quarterly Newsletter

PSR Supports Ban on Single Use Plastic Bags

Plastic Bags start out as fossil fuels and end up as deadly waste in landfills and the ocean. PSR supports the growing movement to ban single use plastic bags in our city.

In October 2022, Asheville City Council directed the Sustainability Department to take a phased approach to reduce the consumption of single-use plastic. The first phase included an update to Chapter 15 of the City Code to prohibit the use of plastic bags in curbside brush and leaf collection to be implemented on August 1, 2023.

The second phase includes further analysis and public input to inform a recommendation on additional single-use plastic reduction strategies surrounding plastic bags at point of sale and expanded polystyrene (Styrofoam™) disposable foodware products. Results will be considered by the Council in October.

You can help by completing the on-line survey:

<https://publicinput.com/a7556>

(by D. Jeffers)



Anti Nuclear Weapons Rally on May 18th, 5:30 PM Unicoi County Courthouse, Erwin, Tennessee

Add your voice in opposition to production of bomb grade uranium. Join in the rally in Erwin Tennessee in Opposition to producing nuclear bomb grade uranium.

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A Word from the Chief

In this, the first quarterly newsletter in a long while (and maybe ever!) let me introduce myself to those of you who are new to our work. (And thanks for signing up to receive our newsletter). I am Chair of the Western North Carolina chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility (WNCPSR). This chapter has been in existence for decades, being active in calling for the reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons in our country and around the world.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Next PSR Meeting: May 19th

Climate Change Workgroup: TBD

River Clean Up- TBD

Anti-nuclear Weapons Rally Erwin, TN – May 18th

Recent Events:

WNC-PSR Booth at GreenBuilt Alliance 5K on Earthday- A whopping success



President-Scott Baker

Secretary- Terry Clark

Treasurer- Bert Crain

Editor- Scott Mahan

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A Word from the Chief (continued)

Just this year we have added ending global warming as an additional goal of our chapter. Both of these are goals of the national organization of PSR (see psr.org). It is challenging but gratifying to be actively involved in fighting against two of the gravest existential threats that the world faces today. Global warming threatens the entire ecological balance of the entire planet. Nuclear weapons could bring death and destruction to millions of people at any time.

When I was a young adult packing belongings to go on a journey, I was advised by my parents, “Deal with the big items first.” In addressing the many dangers we face on the journey we are on together as citizens of Planet Earth we also must address the big items first. Ironically these big items are dangers that we, ourselves created: the dual threats of nuclear annihilation and climate catastrophe. You may think these issues are *too* big to deal with. But no. The good news is if we created these dangers we can also eliminate them. We just need the resolve.

PSR’s slogan is: *we must prevent what we cannot cure*. Of course we know that the after-effects of nuclear war are horrendous. Even an isolated nuclear “accident” could well result in thousands of deaths and widespread suffering. Also, climate warming is already causing disruptions in our planet’s delicate eco-system. We are at a critical juncture: either we act now or the effects of atmospheric warming may not be able to be undone for a long, long time.

It is the mission of WNCPSR to speak out about these existential threats, to educate the public the facts about them, and to call for an effective response. In this past year we remembered Hiroshima Day by protesting at Pack Square in Asheville. We celebrated the second anniversary of the Treaty to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons at the same location. At Earth Day’s 5K race in Asheville we handed out “peace plants” grown by Brita Clark containing an anti-nuke message. (Thanks Charles Mahan for paying the registration fee.) In the runners’ packets a colorful magnet was included designed by our “resident artist” Leslie Poplawski publicizing our two main goals. Our booth at the race attracted a lot of attention! One more thing; an accompanying article tells you about our efforts to inform the public about a business in our neighborhood (Erwin, Tennessee) seeking to process uranium for use in nuclear bombs! We are joining with others to protest the licensing required for them to do this terrible work. This is just a brief glimpse of our witness in western North Carolina.

We hope you will join us in this mission. Go to our website at wncpsr.org to stay up to date concerning our activities. Come to our meetings and join in. Contrary to what our name implies, you don’t have to be a doctor! We are meeting at First Congregational Church at 20 Oak Street in downtown Asheville at 12:30 p.m. on the third Friday of the month. We would love to have your involvement.

Let’s take care of the big issues that threaten humanity *first*, and make the world safe to address all of the other issues. Look for more information about our chapter’s important work addressing these concerns in the newsletters to come.

Scott Allan Baker, D.Min. Chair, WNCPSR 8

(from page 1- Anti-nuke rally in Erwin, TN)

The rally will be held prior to Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) meeting to express concerns about the Nuclear Fuel Services (NFS) proposal to purify highly enriched uranium which can then be used in nuclear bombs. Speakers at the rally will address the moral concerns of participation in the production of nuclear weapons as well as safety, health and environmental risks of NFS expanding its work with highly enriched uranium. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is convening the meeting as a review, open to the public, of the performance of the Nuclear Fuel Services, (NFS) on Thursday, May 18th at the Unicoi County Courthouse, 100 North Main St. in Erwin Tennessee

