It Was Called Women and Life on Earth

By ANNA GYORGY

WENDELL — Forty years ago this month, 680 women came together at Umoja on the ver- nal equinox weekend, the start of spring 1980. The gathering was the first of its kind, a conference on eco-feminist themes.

More than 40 years later, women will once again meet to organize a conference around the new term “eco-feminism.”

Back in 1980 we were concerned with more than stopping nuclear power, ecological and milit- ary dangers. We were also deeply involved in projects for life. These included forming food.co-ops, building and operating projects in towns, and com- munity solar and weatherization projects.

By make no bones about it, the purpose of the Women for Life on Earth move- ment in England established a Women’s Peace Camp at the Greenham Common airbase. There they protested against the stationing of nuclear cruise missiles, eventually successfully. The cruise missiles were part of a batch of nuclear weapons, a Cold War danger that had spread worldwide. Now the stakes are even higher.

The public hearing on the Green- field proposal, hosted jointly by its EDC and planning board, was on February 11 and was continued to March 5.

In an interview this week, Montague town planner Walter Ramsey explained that the town “amended our bylaw” making it easier for the town to consider requests of people who may live in a dwelling, John Bailey spoke up. “I’ve had experi- ence building and in a phone interview, Wedegartner explained her view that there are “too many different things here, one package of zoning, that really desire our attention and their own review.”

The Public Weighs In

A public hearing on the Montague zoning changes proposed here not to come into town.”

The Neighbors Look On

In recent years, Montague went through a lengthy public hearing process, resulting in changes that were to affect the town. Among these changes was the proposal to increase the number of on-street parking; after a storm, greenfields would be open and accessible, and residents would have access to other parking. I think we are coming to a time when we should reconsider how hard it is to have a car, or do we really need one for our daily needs? Women are active and reclaiming our city. They are involved in more. Forty years later, the nuclear threat remains real, with a massive build-up of nuclear bombs, large and small.

The nuclear/military danger and the cli- mate crisis affect lower income and extreme- ries of color, the most, in the US and worldwide. The income inequality that has reached obscene levels is paralleled by generating income pol- ition inequality. The intensified industrialized nations produce only a fraction of harmful greenhouse gases, yet they suffer its effects more than wealthy countries. Oxfam reports that 10% of the world’s population creates 50% of harmful greenhouse gases, yet they suffer its effects more than wealthy countries.

So, what to do in this new decade?

We need a new model of cooperation and care about peace, ecological, racial and Campus police for common use. This will join a 9 AM and 2:30 pm meeting at Greenfield Community College on Saturday, March 28. We need to organize a gathering of groups and 100 women as a start, with reporting at www.top- rock.org and www.wloe.org.

March is Women’s History Month, a good time to remember the history of women and their communities, as we look forward to making more.

Wendell resident Anna Gyorgy was one of the planners of the 1980 conference and Women’s Peace Action. She’s now part of the Top- rock Center for Peace and Justice, organizing the March 28 event. She can be reached at info@wloe.org.