



Lois Barton, "a force to be reckoned with" in the Eugene Peace Center since 1966, sits in the soon-to-be-demolished headquarters. Eugene Urban Renewal is tearing down the entire block of buildings at

the Center's present 10th Ave. location. The Center's new office will be at 3800 Hilyard St.

Photo by Phil Waldstein

Peace Center carries on in new location

A landmark in downtown Eugene is being "urban renewed" to a new location at the end of this month.

The Eugene Peace Center is moving from its location for the past three years at 119 E. 10th to a building owned by a Presbyterian Church at 3800 Hilyard St.

The Center, which has been in operation in different forms at various locations in Eugene since 1962, has had three main functions. Operated by the World Without War Council, it has served as a resource center for peace education, a communications center for individuals and organizations active in peace education, and as an action center for local peace work.

In 1962, the Eugene branch of a national umbrella organization for community peace centers called Turn Toward Peace opened the first Eugene office on the second floor of the Hampton Bldg. This office was closed because there wasn't enough demand in the community for the materials to justify paying rent.

The national Turn Toward Peace flopped in the middle sixties, and local people involved in it—Quakers, pacifists, and anti-Vietnam-war activists—formed the World Without War Council in Eugene. In 1967 and 1968 the organization shared office space on W. 8th with the Congress on Racial Equality (before that group became all-Black), the Citizens for Sane Foreign Policy, and with an anti-war ad hoc group. The following years saw these people in an old house on Lincoln St.

The Eugene Peace Center has operated in its 10th St. office on a budget of \$6,000-\$7,000 per year. This money comes from dues, voluntary contributions from people in the community, from the sale of peace materials, and from fund-raising events.

One such event used to be an annual children's book fair which netted as much as \$1200, but which was discontinued when the Center lost its relationship with its distributor of books. Another

money-raiser was the May Ball, which brought in over \$500 when it was held in 1965. The WWWC became a dues-assessing organization in 1969. Annual dues are \$6. There are approximately 100 members.

The Peace Center has three paid staff, each of whom is paid \$200 per month. Other fixed expenditures have been the rent and utilities at about \$100 per month.

The center has had a series of peace interns on its paid staff. The Emerald interviewed Rick Ritch, 25, a conscientious objector and a '69 graduate of the

By JOYCE BOLES
Of the Emerald

UO School of Journalism, who is the current peace intern. Fitch works with Debbie Gordon, 25, a Eugene woman active in the peace movement for many years.

But the force to be reckoned with at the Eugene Peace Center has been Lois Barton, 55, Quaker mother of eight who has worked for the Center since 1966. Barton lives with her family on a farm near Eugene. The farm was originally bought by a group of pacifists after the McCarthy era in the early fifties. Barton does not work at the Center in the summer months when her children are home from school.

Barton says the anti-Vietnam-war feeling and activism is not all gone, but that the "average person thinks the war is over and has gone fishing. This is what

Nixon would like us to believe, and a lot of people have bought that," Barton told the Emerald.

Barton cited a survey of the American people that said only about 10 per cent of Americans care about foreign policy, and that many of these are academics. Another 10 per cent feel some responsibility for or about domestic policy, while at the other end of the scale, 10 per cent believe "there's nothing you can do."

The Center fulfills its resource function by renting audio-visual materials, selling and lending a wide range of books, distributing flyers and pamphlets, supplying a selection of "peace periodicals" for people to read in the office, and keeping files on peace activities locally and nationally. The Center also operates a speakers bureau and cooperates with other local peace organizations on bringing speakers into the community.

Local peace organizations currently active include the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Clergy and Laity Concerned, Peace Investors of Eugene, Peace-Concerned Tax Consultants, the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, and Medical Aid for Indochina.

The Center publishes a monthly newsletter for the "peace constituency" and arranges periodic meetings of the groups. It also publicizes the activities of the "peace people," and allows various groups to use its office. Communications to the public

involved a referral service to get people together with the proper organization, bulletin boards, booths at public events, and regular contact with the news media.

The WWWC operated the first place in Eugene which provided draft counseling, and it still functions an employment office for conscientious objectors seeking alternative service.

Currently the Center is working jointly with the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom to get peace education materials into the public schools. The School Resource Committee gathers educational materials and makes contacts with teachers.

The Center also promotes appropriate legislation, although as a tax-exempt organization it is not allowed to lobby. The Center directs its activities at educating the community about the existence of the bills.

Although the Center is very quiet now, Fitch and Barton listed a wide range of other projects the center is involved in:

a Planetary Citizenship Drive in cooperation with the World Federalists and local churches; sponsorship of a consumer boycott of corporations responsible for the "electronic battlefield" in Vietnam; a survey of community attitudes toward the United Nations, in cooperation with the Mayor's Committee for International Cooperation; an education campaign about the state of the political prisoners in South Vietnamese prisons; efforts to repeal the draft laws altogether; and leadership training in peace work—the WWWC Peace Intern Program.

Fitch said the Center has experienced very little harassment, and that the indifference of the community is the main problem. He said sometimes "outraged citizens" come to the office, and that they have had a few crank phone calls. About the possibility of government surveillance, he said, "If they were Feds, we didn't know it."

The Emerald asked Fitch to (Continued on Page 14)

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