



FEB 2020

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Contact info



If you need to reach us, please leave a message with our office at 403 270 7366 or email us.

We will only be able to return calls with an Alberta area code.



Save the date!

**Please join us on February 12, 2020, at Parkdale United Church,
2919 – 8th Ave. N.W., Calgary, from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

Dr. Doreen Barrie, University of Calgary

E-voting & other shiny objects: The use of technology in elections

Dr Doreen Barrie (Political Science, U of C) will speak about the risks of recent technology uses in electoral processes, including voter registration and vote counting. Doreen has been studying this issue in connection with an analysis to be presented in an upcoming text. There are dangers! An excellent speaker, Doreen Barrie has often been a commentator for the CBC. She is the author of the 2006, *The Other Alberta*, which is an account of civil society groups in Alberta, and has herself worked extensively with such groups.

Our events are free, but we gratefully accept donations.
We'd love to see you—why not bring a friend with you?



UPCOMING EVENTS

March 11 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Keep your money away from nuclear weapons developments!

Parkdale United Church, 2919 – 8th Ave. N.W., Calgary
Conference room, lower level

John Rose (investment advisor, Royal Bank) will explore this topic and offer advice. Members will add a description of some initiatives undertaken by national and international peace organizations. Please join us for what promises to be an interesting and informative talk on a topic of great interest to our members.

Saturday, April 25, 2:00 p.m.
What would a feminist foreign policy look like?

Venue to be announced

Peggy Mason, president of the Rideau Institute in Ottawa and a former ambassador to the United Nations for Canada, will speak in the afternoon on the topic “What would a feminist foreign policy look like?”

Save the date for this dynamic, knowledgeable, and widely respected speaker.

Saturday, May 9
Fake news and the future of democracy

Note that the Calgary Association for Lifelong Learners, CALL, is planning a conference on ‘**Fake News and the Future of Democracy**’ for **May 9**. Watch for notices of this timely event, which is already attracting considerable interest. Ploughshares is not a co-sponsor of the event, but several of our members are on the organizing committee.

May 13
Ploughshares meeting

No firm plans have been made yet for the May meeting, but we are hoping to arrange a discussion of the many connections between militarism and climate change.



Announcements

10,000 Villages. Sadly, the Mennonite Central Committee will end its social enterprise Ten Thousand Villages Canada, with most stores set to close within several months. These closures will also include the head office and the distribution centre. Founded in 1946, the initiative has helped some 100,000 artisans around the world to distribute their works and be fairly paid for them. Some independently owned locations will remain open. Fortunately for us, those include the store at Crowchild Trail and 2nd Ave. N.W. Other independently owned stores will remain open in Edmonton; Abbotsford, B.C.; Steinbach and Brandon, Manitoba; Port Colborne, Ontario; and Point Claire, Quebec.



Chair's message

Greetings to all for 2020, and regrets that this newsletter is slightly delayed. Board members have been managing extra duties since Sultana Virani had to leave her position at the end of October. Health concerns were the major reason: we all wish Sultana the best for improved health and wellbeing. As well as routine office matters, the board has been busy advertising a part-time five month position that began at the end of January. A hiring committee of three (David Boutland, Al Coats, and myself) considered some 90 applications and interviewed four people. The process was rather demanding, but we are delighted to report a positive ending to it. Danica Derksen, offered the position, was able to accept it and has already begun working for our group.

Danica is a recent U of C graduate with an excellent record. She majored in cultural anthropology and development studies and completed an internship with the Mennonite Central Committee. She is experienced in the use of social media and was successful in organizing many volunteers for the Ranchlands Community Association. We look forward to having her skills and passion to increase participation in our events and hope to undertake new projects with her skilled and efficient assistance. Welcome, Danica!

Our January meeting was held on Wednesday the 8th. Dr Abdie Kazemipur, Sociology, U of C, spoke about the global tide of migration over the recent decade and data about the successful integration of immigrants to Canada. Sadly, there is significant evidence that Muslim immigrants fare worse than others in key respects. Abdie, an Iranian Canadian, was very concerned about the volatile situation between Iran and the United States. He expressed to me privately his experience about the ease in which countries could slide into war, as he witnessed personally when he lived in Iran at the time of the Iran/Iraq war in the 1980s.

Best wishes,

Trudy Govier



Due to our staffing issue and demands on board members, we have to keep this section short this month.

- ❖ **Iran and the United States.** The situation between **Iran and the United States** was very alarming in the early weeks of January after the U.S. targeted killing of the Iranian general Qasem Soleimani. It remains so. This killing was followed by an act of reprisal against U.S. bases in Iraq. Amid the resulting tension and fears that war between the U.S. and Iran could break out, a Ukrainian Airlines civilian plane was shot down by Iranian missiles near the Tehran airport. All passengers were killed, including 57 Canadians of Iranian background and others with strong connections to Canada and, in particular, Canadian universities.
- ❖ **The Doomsday Clock.** On January 23, the staff of the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists set their famous **Doomsday Clock** at 100 seconds to midnight. The clock is a visual device for representing threats to humanity and our survival on this planet. It serves as an indicator of the world's vulnerability to catastrophe (midnight). The clock has never been set closer than 100 seconds to midnight. Threats to survival were explained as (a) risks of nuclear war, (b) climate change, (c) cyber-enabled information warfare that undercuts the ability to respond to these threats, and (d) inadequate responses to these challenges by political leaders. (*The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists was founded in 1945, after World War II. The clock image has been used since 1947 as an indicator of the world's vulnerability to catastrophe.*)
- ❖ **A Trump 'Peace Plan' for Israel/Palestine?** U.S. President Donald Trump announced such a plan on January 26. The plan, worked out in collaboration with Israeli officials, was welcomed by Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu and strongly rejected by the Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas. It would recognize and legitimize Jewish settlements located on occupied Palestinian territory; the occupation is illegal under international law, though Israel denies that status. It would enable Israel to annex large swathes of fertile Palestinian land and control security in the West Bank. The Palestinian territory of Gaza could be linked to the West Bank by road, and a Palestinian state could be established provided strict conditions were met. Many observers found the timing of the release of this plan suspicious, given that Netanyahu faces criminal charges of corruption and a March 22 election and there are impeachment hearings in the U.S. Senate regarding charges of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress against Trump. The plan has been widely deemed as one-sided.

We are very grateful for your loyal moral and financial support. over the years that has allowed us to continue working for and educating about peace. Please consider supporting us monthly in 2020. If you have already sent in your donation for 2020, we thank you.

Please make your cheque payable to Ploughshares Calgary Society.

If you write the cheque to the name of Project Ploughshares, the bank *will not* honour it for us, so please write it to “Ploughshares Calgary Society.”

Yes, I am interested in supporting the peace work of the Ploughshares Calgary Society.
I'd like to make a donation in the following amount:

\$10 _____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$250 _____ or an amount of _____

or a monthly donation of _____ or I am interested in volunteering _____

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov _____ Postal Code _____ Email: _____

Payment Options

Cheque _____ PayPal _____ Cash _____

Make cheques payable to **Ploughshares Calgary Society** or go to www.ploughsharescalgary.ca to make your payment via PayPal. Please mail completed form with donation to the Ploughshares Calgary Society, 2919 – 8 Ave. N.W., Calgary, AB, T2N 1C8.

Please note that we are unable to provide tax receipts at this time.



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