



Death of Larry Apsey

AVP lost one of its founders on November 30 as Larry Apsey died in his sleep at the age of 96. He was a peace activist, civil rights worker, a dedicated follower of the principles of Gandhi and at the same time a talented attorney who helped to prosecute anti-trust suits and served as the corporate counsel for a large multi-national firm.

Larry was always led by the spirit (a.k.a. Transforming Power). In the late 50's and 60's, Larry became involved in demonstrations at military bases and in Washington against biological weapons and the Vietnam War. He worked in the civil rights movement and served as a lawyer defending demonstrators who had been arrested and jailed.

A life-changing message came to Larry during a meditation one night in 1966 at 2:00am:

"Do not plan in order to make the project grow. Follow the light from day to day and let the project do its own growing. Deadlines and goals do not have to be met by you... You are a tool in his hands; your task the same whether humble or great."

Larry did not even know what the "project" was at this time, but after his retirement from the corporate world, there was a need for a full-time volunteer Office Administrator for the Quaker Project on Community Conflict.

This gave him many opportunities to use Transforming Power leading a staff of volunteers that who often were marching to the beat of very different drums.

Eventually, the Quaker Project on Community Conflict transformed itself into the Alter-

natives to Violence Project.

The opportunity came when Larry attended a spiritual study group at Green Haven Prison in New York. There he met Roger Whitfield, an inmate from the "Think Tank Concept." Roger knew of Larry's nonviolence work and asked him to lead a workshop for the Think Tank.

The first prison workshop team included Larry Apsey, Bernard LaFayette and Steve Stalones in March 1975. Meanwhile, a second workshop was being organized by Janet Lugo at Auburn Prison in July 1975. The team included Larry Apsey, Janet Lugo, Ellen Flanners, Bernard LaFayette and Ed Stabler.

In the late 70's, as the requests for more and more workshops grew, Larry saw that an independent organization was needed. He took the legal steps to incorporate the program as the Alternatives to Violence Project. Steve Levinski assisted in building the structure and creating much of what we know today as the Basic Workshop.

In the early 80's, Larry served as the volunteer Administrative Officer for AVP and he built a solid organizational structure and an effective office.

Some of Larry's many gifts to AVP were:

1. To be led by the spirit and to trust Transforming Power to work with individuals whom others considered hopeless.
2. A sense of organization and structure that enabled him to build an enduring organization.

Larry Apsey has passed this great legacy on to us and asks us to walk in his shoes.

A memorial service will be held at Poughkeepsie Friends Meeting at 2:00pm on December 27, 1997.