



PSR
WISCONSIN
Physicians for Social Responsibility



WISCONSIN
ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH
NETWORK

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Physicians for Social
Responsibility Wisconsin
&
Wisconsin
Environmental Health
Network



Abolishing nuclear weapons, protecting public health & advocating for safe, renewable energy in Wisconsin



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PSR WISCONSIN BOARD

Amy Schulz, RN, President

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Alfred Meyer

Mary Doherty

Paula Rogge, MD

WEHN STEERING COMMITTEE

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Beth Neary, MD, MS, Co-president

Ann Behrmann, MD, Treasurer

Henry Anderson III, MD

Jed Downs, MPH, MD, DOMP (Can.)

Susan Davidson, MD, MS

STAFF

Grace VanDerhei, Administrative Coordinator

PSR Wisconsin and WEHN welcome new ideas, perspectives, and personalities. If you are interested in joining our leadership teams, please contact us at info@psrwisconsin.org or wehnmail@gmail.com

Note from PSR

This year has been full of changes and activity. It began with news that our amazing Executive Director, Hannah Mortenson, was leaving PSR WI/WEHN to become the Development Coordinator for Aurora Health Care Foundation. Hannah's four years with PSR WI/WEHN enabled our organization to thrive. Hannah is very proud of all the events that she coordinated for us and enjoyed working with so many inspiring people. We appreciate Hannah's contributions!

We welcomed Grace VanDerhei as our new Administrative Coordinator in May. Her enthusiasm and hard work helped make our annual Lanterns for Peace event and our fall *Golden Rule* event successful. The *Golden Rule* has sailed US waterways, urging Americans to call on our government to join the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Our greatest achievement was the unanimous passage of the **Back from the Brink** Resolution by the Madison Common Council, thanks to the leadership and tenacity of PSR WI's Dr. Paula Rogge. These events reflect the hard work of PSR volunteers, while building coalitions with other activist groups and engaging Wisconsin residents to advocate for positive changes to our community. We're looking forward to another year of peace building and activism.

Amy Schulz
PSR Wisconsin President



Note from WEHN

It has been an incredible year for WEHN. I will mention a few activities that highlight our goals of education and advocacy for the health of Wisconsinites. For the second year, Drs Anderson, Davidson, Gervais, and Neary lectured in Environmental Health and Advocacy, course for 3rd and 4th year medical students at UWSMPH. For the 6th year, we participated in the pediatric residency community health rotation. Additionally, Dr. Davidson spoke to the WI Association for Perinatal Care on reproductive health and the environment, reaching rural hospitals across the state. I spoke on PFAS at conferences in Green Bay and Wausau and testified on a bill at the Capitol.

Five members of our group attended WI Conversation Lobby Days at the Capitol this past fall. WEHN is a member of a statewide coalition on PFAS, with participation by environmental groups and advocates from Marinette and French Island. Working with such a dedicated group of environmental advocates at WEHN over these past 11 years has enriched my life. I look forward to another year of connecting with other environmental groups, reaching out to rural communities, advocating on legislation and educating health professionals.

Beth Neary
WEHN Co-president



2023 AT A GLANCE

Your financial support made all of this possible in 2023!

Advocacy & Outreach 18

times PSR WI & WEHN members received a news media mention or quoted in an interview

6

official comments submitted to state and federal agencies

8

times PSR WI & WEHN members shared their expertise as speakers at public events



2023 Lanterns for Peace event. Photo credit: Joshua Abraham

13

signatures to support legislative initiatives and expert comments led by partner organizations

WEHN steering committee members at Wisconsin Conservation Voters' Lobby Day at the State Capitol.



7

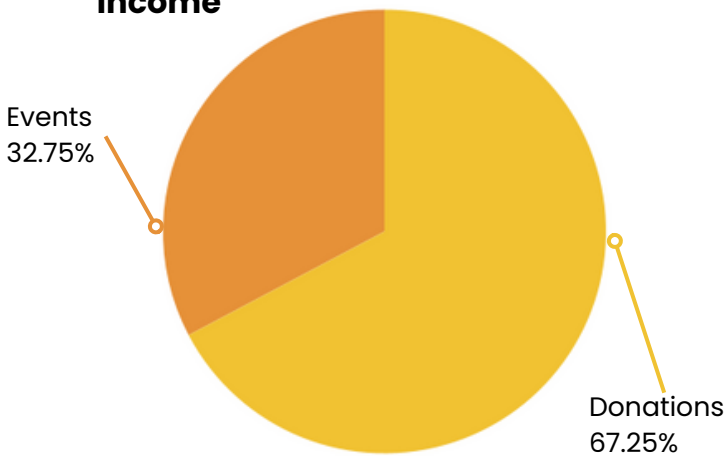
meetings with senators and government representatives

3

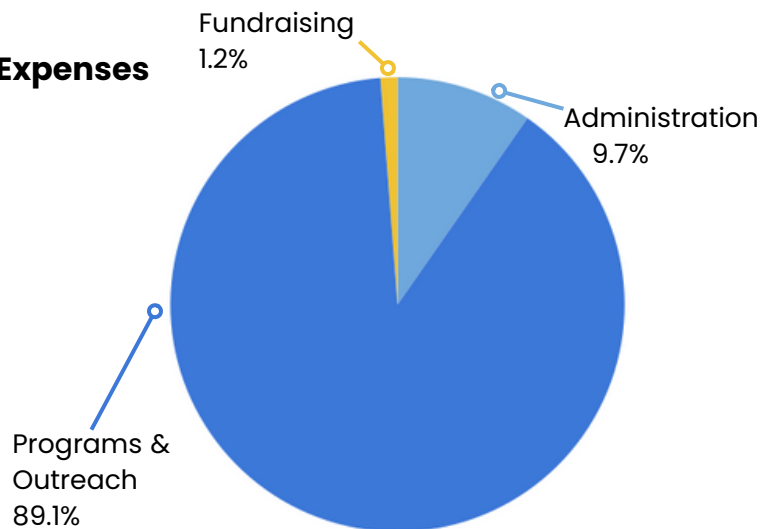
publications authored by PSR WI board member

Financials

Income



Expenses



Donations and grants funded our 20 hours per week administrative coordinator and one paid-fellowship. A full 2023 budget is available upon request, email info@psrwisconsin.org.

PSR WI/WEHN thanks our activist board members and community volunteers for their generous donation of many hours, sharing their expertise and enthusiasm to plan and prepare all our 2023 events, teaching, and medical testimonies.

Wisconsin Environmental Health Network

Igniting Change

WEHN launched a blog series, *Igniting Change*, which showcases interviews with environmental leaders across Wisconsin, highlighting their efforts to improve sustainability and health!



Cover images of Igniting Change blog posts. Available to read on www.wehnonline.org/igniting-change

Supporting Local Advocates

Adrienne Nienow of the *Stoughton Health Children and Neighborhood Alliance* reached out to WEHN for a representative to speak about the health effects of volatile organic compounds associated with petroleum products (BTEX) as they sought to prevent a gas station from being built within 500 ft of a daycare. The effort was successful.

Connecting Statewide



WEHN steering committee members participated in conferences, medical grand rounds, and webinars. Pictured above is Dr. Beth Neary, at the Clean Water Action Council conference held at UW-Green Bay. Dr. Neary spoke of the health implications of PFAS.

Educating Physicians and Medical Students

WEHN members lectured on reproductive health, climate change, and environmental toxicants to students and residents at UW School of Medicine and Public Health.

Health & Environment Series

Making the Connection Conference 2023



GRAHAM PEASLEE, PhD

University of Notre Dame
"PFAS in Consumer Goods and Firefighting Gear"



EDWARD MAIBACH, MPH, PhD
Henry Anderson Distinguished Lecture

George Mason University
"Using your trusted voice to deliver simple, clear, effective messages about climate and health."



JO HANDELSMAN, PhD

University of Wisconsin - Madison
"The Soil Crisis and Implications for Human Health"

WEHN's annual conference was held in November, including an environmental justice panel featuring representatives from the following groups:



French Island faces PFAS water crisis

Lee Donahue
Town of Campbell Supervisor



Lanterns for Peace



2023 Lanterns for Peace event. Photo credits by Joshua Abraham

We commemorate the lives lost in the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings 78 years ago and pledge to work towards a world where such nuclear attacks never take place again.



On August 6, PSR WI hosted our annual event to remember the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Over 130 participants created and decorated paper lanterns to float on the Tenney Park Lagoon, enjoyed music from Backyard String Band and the Raging Grannies, connected with local co-sponsors, and heard a presentation on a short nuclear security by Dr. Tara Drozdenko, Director of the Global Security Program for the Union of Concerned Scientists (pictured on the left).

The Golden Rule Sails to Sheboygan, WI



Sheboygan Mayor, Ryan Sorenson.



Model of spent nuclear fuel cask.



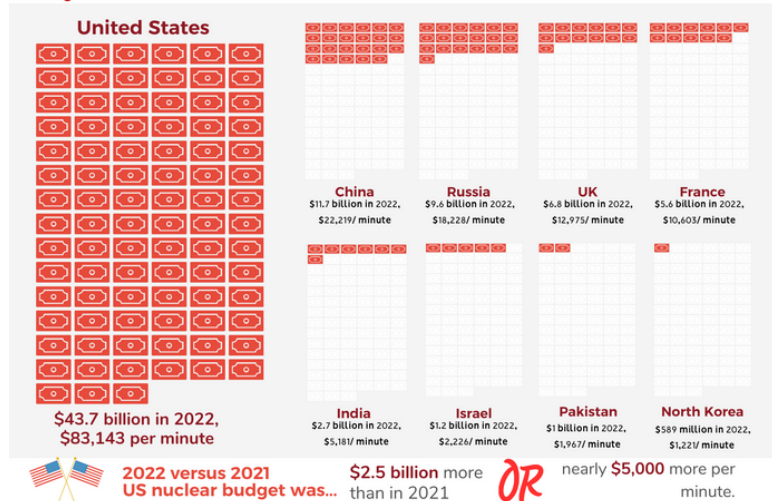
Alfred Meyer presents a poster on the nuclear fuel chain.



Veterans for Peace Golden Rule sailboat.

WHAT ARE THE COSTS OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS?

In 2022, 9 countries were responsible for the \$82.9 billion dollar contribution to nuclear weapons. The nine countries, as well as their respective budgets, are shown below. The United States leads the majority with the highest nuclear budget in 2022.



Poster by NukeWatch and PSR WI presented at the Sheboygan event.

On August 26, PSR Wisconsin joined forces with Casa Esther Catholic Worker House, Sheboygan Veterans for Peace, and NukeWatch to celebrate the Golden Rule sailboat's voyage through US waterways. The *Golden Rule* has been urging the public to call on the US to join the UN's **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons**. PSR WI members gave poster presentations focusing on the urgent need for nuclear disarmament as well as the environmental and health hazards associated with the Point Beach Nuclear Power Plant. An estimated 110 people joined us for a traditional brat-fry, live music and tour of the Golden Rule sailboat.



For the last 5 years, PSR WI has led a coalition of 16 Madison peace, justice, environmental and faith groups, urging the Madison mayor and Common Council to support the **Back from the Brink (BftB) Resolution**. This was a lengthy process because the COVID pandemic took precedence in 2020 to 2021. Madison's BftB resolution includes a commitment to nuclear weapon free investments and contracts.

Grassroots Approach



Above: *Back from the Brink* coalition members meet with Dr. Ira Helfand. Left: Constituents write their Alders.

PSR WI and 16 coalition members used a “bottom-up” approach, recruiting residents in over half of the 20 Madison Common Council districts. Our process included...

- personal contact with the other 10 Alders, making sure that no alder was left behind.
- speaking events with nuclear abolitionist, Drs. Ira Helfand and Bob Dodge, to educate the public about the risks of nuclear war.
- interviews on WORT-FM radio
- outreach to church and community groups, the mayor's office, and at Lanterns for Peace.

Rep. Pocan Co-sponsors *Back from the Brink* Resolution

PSR and Veterans for Peace representatives spoke to Rep. Mark Pocan at a Town Hall meeting via Zoom in April 2023 and asked him to co-sponsor House Resolution 77, which calls on the US to act on the **Back from the Brink** campaign recommendations. Within a week he had signed on as a co-sponsor and agreed to meet with local **BftB** coalition members. During this meeting, we thanked him and learned of his efforts to work with Republicans for an audit of Pentagon spending.

The **Back from the Brink** Campaign is a national, grass-roots effort to change US policy on nuclear weapons. To date, 74 cities and counties and 5 state governments have passed **Back from the Brink** resolutions which call on our government to honor the Nonproliferation Treaty of 1970, embrace the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) of 2021 and take the following steps to reduce the risk of nuclear war:

- 1 Pursue a verifiable agreement with 8 other nuclear-armed states to mutually eliminate nuclear arsenals.
- 2 Renounce the option of using nuclear weapons first
- 3 End the President's sole authority to launch a nuclear attack
- 4 Take nuclear weapons of the United States off hair-trigger alert
- 5 Cancel plan to modernize US nuclear arsenal.



Madison Common Council Passes *Back from the Brink* Resolution



BfTB Coalition members celebrate passage of the Resolution with champions: Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway, Alder Marsha Rummel and Alder Yannette Figueroa-Cole.



Dr. Paula Rogge, presents in front of Madison Common Council on 10/03/2023.

Nuclear Free Investments and Contracts

Madison, Wisconsin declared itself a nuclear free zone in a 1983 ordinance and passed a proclamation in 2019 commemorating August 6th as Hiroshima Day and August 9th as Nagasaki Day and calling on the US to live up to its obligations under the 1970 Non-Proliferation Treaty. PSR WI and **BfTB** coalition encouraged Madison to end investments in and contracts with companies involved in nuclear weapons production. We researched the nuts and bolts of nuclear weapon free investments and contracts in Berkeley and Oakland, CA and summarized this information when meeting with Madison's Finance Director, Common Council members, and the Mayor.

Community Support

1

Twelve Alders and the Mayor co-sponsored the Resolution. Alders Marsha Rummel and Yannette Figueroa-Cole were our champions in moving the Resolution along.

2

The Capital Times editorial in support of the Resolution on 09/27/2023.

3

Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway's blog post on nuclear disarmament and divestment on 09/19/2023

Chingari Rehabilitation Center School Lunch Program Fundraisers



Krish and Eshaan Vasudev, student leaders at Assist Bhopal, with Chingari Trust founders, Rashida Bee and Champa Devi Shukla



Walk-a-thon participants, including Assist Bhopal's leadership team, Krish Vasudev, Eshaan Vasudev, Roshni Sharma, and Dr. Henry Wend, Global Scholars faculty advisor.



PSR WI collaborates with Assist Bhopal, a student group of Global Scholars at University School of Milwaukee, to support a school lunch program for 200+ children receiving therapy and special education at the Chingari Rehabilitation Center in Bhopal, India. Assist Bhopal organized a walk-a-thon fundraiser on May 31st with over 75 participants. On December 3rd, Assist Bhopal hosted an Indian dinner and program to commemorate the 39th anniversary and remember the victims of the Bhopal Gas Disaster.



PSR WI and WEHN members at Wisconsin Conservation Lobby Day at the Wisconsin State Capitol.

Looking ahead...

PSR WI and WEHN have big plans in store for 2024. In addition to our annual traditions, Lanterns for Peace and the Making the Connection Conference, our organization hopes to forge connections with new PSR WI/WEHN members and organizations throughout Wisconsin.

Plans for next year

- Developing a **Back from the Brink** toolkit for WI cities, focused on Milwaukee and Sheboygan in 2024, including the costs of nuclear weapons (\$82 million for Madison taxpayers alone) to these communities.
- Development of curriculum about nuclear weapons for high school and community college students.
- Educational programs (with WEHN and our WI environmental partners) including
 - economic and waste problems related to small modular reactors development
 - issues with new technological solutions such as carbon capture
 - the role of renewable energy (solar and wind) and energy conservation to reduce climate change.



We are looking for new PSR WI/WEHN Board members, so let us know if you have interest, energy, and time to join us! We also welcome your suggestions or thoughts on how we can be more effective in extending our educational outreach and membership throughout Wisconsin.

PSR WI is a 501(c)3 organization and registered as a charitable organization with the State of Wisconsin. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

- PSR WI is a chapter affiliate of the national organization, Physicians for Social Responsibility
- PSR WI is a proud member of Community Shares Wisconsin
- WEHN is a proud member of the Clean Economy Coalition of Wisconsin
- WEHN is the environmental group of PSR WI, PSR WI is the fiscal sponsor and umbrella organization for WEHN.
- A detailed list of PSR WI and WEHN activities and financial reports are available upon request.



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