

Performing for Peace: Partera International hosting fundraiser in Mono on July 27

Written By MARNI WALSH

Partera International's fifth annual summer fundraiser will take place Saturday, July 27 from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m.. Partera is a project partner with the Shelburne Primrose United Church Pastoral Charge. The performance event takes place at 715572 1st Line EHS in Mono, the farm of Sabine and Jeff Rohner-Tensee, allies in the pastoral charge's work with refugees.

Partera International's mission is to promote the use of peace and social change to renew communities, organisations, workplaces and societies by supporting non-violent solutions. "Partera brings a unique toolbox to support the notion that non-violence is not just a solution to civil and international conflicts," says founder Rev. LeeAnn McKenna, "but a way of life, of living, of being."

Rev. McKenna told the Free Press, Partera responds to four to five requests annually for support and training from places like Uganda, Congo, Myanmar, North East India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Sudan and South Sudan.

"This is more than our resources permit," says Rev. McKenna. For this reason, Partera holds two main fundraisers per year - the summer fundraiser and the Christmas show "A Dickens of an Evening."

Most recently, Ms. McKenna returned from Israel-Palestine where she spent three weeks working with Israeli, Palestinian and UN human rights organisations and met with and listened to the stories of Palestinians living under occupation. "It was for me," she says, "a uniquely difficult piece of work. I assisted with training in non-violent direct action and the challenges of returning home with a story that stands at odds with the prevailing narrative."

This week, Rev. McKenna will go to Colombia. "I have worked there in the past for the Canadian Council of Churches Human Rights Committee monitoring and documenting human rights violations by the Colombia government. This time I am at a faith-based global peace conference where I will be doing trainings in how to use our sacred text, the Bible, as a tool for peacemaking"not an easy task," she says. In the fall, Rev. McKenna says she will return to the Philippines where she has been "working with communities looking for nonviolent solutions to protracted and violent conflict."

Partera International's summer fundraising event is called "Come to the Cabaret," and features the magic of Steve Baker, as well as comedy, spoken word, instrumental music, and choreographed show tunes, including some encores from "Primrose's Got Talent" show a few weeks ago. There will be yard games set up around the barn, drinks and food, and a silent auction which is slotted in for 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. For more information on Partera International, the fund raising event, and to support the organisation's important peace work visit: <http://www.partera.ca>