

CONNECTING THE DOTS...NO BAN, NO WALL, NO KILLER DRONES at Hancock Airport/Air Base

Thank God for the great crowd of 1,000 protesting Trump's Ban of Immigrants at Syracuse International Airport, as thousands flooded airports all across the US last Saturday night, Jan. 28th, when the ban first went into effect!

We have a beautiful foto of a member of the Afghan Youth Peace Team with a poster saying "We Wish to Live Without War". The youth sent a bolt of the sky blue fabric to US drone activists to wear as blue scarves to remember their wish for blue skies...skies safe without killer and surveillance drones hovering over them and assassinating them causing people to flee and become refugees.

Ironically on the other side of the same Hancock Airport campus of Syracuse is Hancock Air National Guard Drone Base. Many locals are not aware that the US assassinates people from Hancock Drone Base. Our US drone policy of execution without due process is a part of the driving force for the refugee crisis throughout the seven countries Trump has listed in his ban of people from the Middle East.

Lets work together to connect the dots....drone assassinations cause people to flee...who become refugees... who need asylum in other countries...countries who shut their borders to refugees...like the US under Trump.

I invite that great crowd of 1,000 to come around the corner to the other entrance of the same airport campus...to the Hancock Drone Base on East Malloy Rd, in DeWitt, East Syracuse, and demand that Hancock end their drone killings with MQ9-Reaper drones. We violate our US Constitution and International Law when we kill with drones.

We, who gather, would be giving a message of peace to the world and to the parents and children of the Middle East, saying "You can stay and live in peace in your own homes. You don't have to flee the drones and become refugees. We, too, wish that you live without war."

Please join us as we continue to say #NOKILLERDRONES Hancock Air National Guard Base -4:15-5pm 1st Tues. every month @ 6001 East Molloy Road, Mattydale, NY 13211.

You are welcome to attend the trial of the Big Books defendants, who were arrested March 10, 2015.

They are charged with Trespass, Disorderly Conduct and Obstructing Government Administration

A jury trial is scheduled for:

5 PM, February 28th, 2017

@ DeWitt Town Court

5400 Butternut Dr, East Syracuse, NY 13057

Codefendants in the trial (from the left): Ed Kinane (Syracuse, NY), Fr. Bill Pickard (Scranton, PA), Brian Hynes (Bronx, NY), Daniel Burns (Ithaca, NY) and James Ricks



(Ithaca, NY) on the far right, Attorney's Jonathan Wallace and Daire Irwin of Buffalo, NY. (2nd and 3rd from the right) will advise them.

For info call: (607) 280-8797 -Mary Anne Grady Flores

upstatedroneaction.org

#dirtywars

#loveistheonlysolution

#groundthedronesandendthewars

Grandma Drone Protester's Second Jail Letter

Grandma Drone Protester's Second Jail Letter:

**>> Talk Nation Radio with David Swanson: One-Hour Special:
Mary Anne Grady Flores from Jail on Why She Protested Killer
Drones**

On January 19, 2016 I was remanded after a county court decision upheld a lower court verdict that I was guilty of violating the terms of an order of protection while photographing 8 Catholic drone protestors at Hancock Air force Base. Orders of protection were originally created to protect domestic violence victims and witnesses who might be subject to intimidation.

A month later while in jail I realized that Friday, Feb. 19 was important to me for four reasons. *First*, it was the seventh anniversary of my brother-in-law Peter DeMott's sudden passing, leaving my widowed sister Ellen with four daughters to raise. Peter was a rock in our family and is sorely missed. We miss his energy, his wit, his deep bass radio voice, his random acts of kindness, his recitation of poetry, his mixing hot sauce with all his food. We miss his tireless efforts of

putting his body at many gates, or climbing over fences or driving into military bases or witnessing at corporate military contractors' facilities like Lockheed Martin, to end the madness of the never ending racist colonial wars of the U.S. empire. I hold Ellen, the tireless organizer of anti-killer-drone actions at Hancock Airbase, and each of their gifted daughters in prayer and in love.

Second, on that Friday, our 88-year-old mom, Teresa Grady, was officially accepted into Hospice. This past December, mom broke her hip and has declined since then. My siblings and I have been blessed caring for her 24/7 in her home for almost two years. It's been a struggle since January 19, when I entered jail, especially as she nears her final days. My mother, along with my dad taught us that our faith meant we were supposed to stand up for human rights and justice. I learned that the jail might provide a death bed visit. First, they told me I had to prove that mom is my mother by getting my birth certificate. My counselor, Ms. Kash, has to handle a caseload of about 140 cases. Nevertheless, doing the best she could, she responded to my request to speak about mom's decline, coming to the busy hub of the Pod – the guard desk – instead of the counselor's office two feet away respecting confidentiality or sensitivity to the situation. The counselor asked me

"What's your mom's name and her doctor's name? "What's your mom's date of birth where is she? Who's caring for her? When I explained that Mon is being cared for at home by the family she responded. "Oh, that's going to be a problem! It's a security risk. You can't have any family members with you while you're there." I said, "Mom can't be left alone. I'll be in shackles!"

Some other sergeants said it's highly unlikely they would let me go to the house. Whether I stole a band aid, murdered someone, or photographed non-violent drone protesters, my transport guards would treat me the same.

Within the jail, there are different security levels designated to us inmates, but it doesn't apply as we leave the prison walls.

This past Friday, Feb. 25, I was surprised by the jail authorities announcing they were taking me to see mom at home! I couldn't believe it! I couldn't tell anyone ahead of time. When the unmarked car pulled up by mom's house Clare, who was on duty for mom, noticed us and ran in to tell mom, who was in the living room in her hospital bed. When we entered the house Clare was jumping up and down with tears streaming down her cheeks. The two officers informed her that she couldn't call anyone or the half-hour visit would be over. I walked, shackled, wrists to waist and ankles, to be at mom's side, leaning over her to kiss her big smiling face. I told her over and over that I loved her, my tears wetting her soft cheeks. I asked if she was in any pain. "No, I'm not in pain. I'm o.k." She kept smiling and fell asleep. What a precious, blessed moment. Mom slept through the rest of the visit. We left Clare with mom and drove back to Jamesville in brilliant sunshine passing Lake Cayuga in gratitude, marveling at all of creation and in thanksgiving for mom's life.

This situation reminds me of when Peter was in federal prison in Brooklyn. Before the sentencing of the St. Patrick's Four, Peter and Ellen had been caring for his brother, Father Steve DeMott, who died two months after Peter's sentencing.

The prison officials wouldn't allow Peter to come 45 minutes north of New York City to the funeral in Maryknoll, New York. During this Lent we remember Uncle Steve's passing, on March 30, 2006, and all the loving care that fell on Ellen's shoulders till Steve passed.

A few weeks ago, the mother of one of the women in my pod, 19-year-old Clairrissa, died on a Wednesday of a heroin overdose. Clairissa only learned on Saturday that her mom had died. While shackled and in an empty funeral home she was allowed to

spend one half hour with her mom's body. She wasn't allowed to be at the funeral. The New York State Department of Correction rules and regulations state that inmates have the right to both a death bed visit and to be at the funeral dependent upon the discretion of the jail or prison officials.

And who is in prison? The poor! Disproportionately, people of color! Who isn't in jail? You don't see the bankers who pulled down our economy in 2008! You don't see the mortgage company swindlers who stole millions from poor and hardworking people. You don't see those committing war crimes – those who have killed with drones and Hellfire missiles sent from U.S. air bases, nor those who gave them their orders. You don't see the officials who poisoned the water in Flint, Michigan or the corporate executives who kill people with their unsafe products. You don't see the cops who murder unarmed black men, women, teenagers and children.

Thirdly, on Friday, February 19, my appeal was submitted to the New York State Court of Appeals, the highest court in the state by my attorney Lance Salisbury. Lance also submitted a request that I be released on bail pending the decision on whether the court will take my case. If the court decides in a month that it won't take the case, I return to Jamesville to finish my six months' sentence. I've witnessed many of the women anxiously awaiting court or jail administrators' decisions of whether or not, or when, they'd be released. Going in and out of prisons is not a simple matter. It takes a tremendous amount of energy to get in and get acclimated each time.

The main points of my appeal challenge the validity of the orders of protection that have been given to 50 people, including myself. These orders of protection have been designed to block our First Amendment right; to ask our government to redress our grievance, specifically, to end the killer drone policy, which killed over 6,000 people in 2015 alone. As Colonel Evans, who requested the original 17 orders

of protection, including mine, testified during my trial, he just wanted the protesters away from his base.

The appeal contends that you can't ask for an order of protection on behalf of a military base. The order must be given on behalf of a victim or a witness. A separate appeal was submitted by Attorney Kathy Manley on behalf of 13 of us (originally the Hancock 17) addressing the same issues of the improper application of the orders of protection.

And finally, the *fourth* reason, this day is special is the very good news for both drone resisters and fracktivists that attorney Jonathan Wallace, who has been successfully defending many of the Hancock resisters has now proposed legislation to limit the scope of these orders so they do not apply to peaceful protestors. This legislation would exempt military and corporate personnel in New York State from using the orders of protection to deprive people of their First Amendment rights. The proposed legislation is as follows:

"Nothing herein contained shall be construed to authorize issuance of a temporary order of protection or order of protection, designating as a "victim" or "witness" any federal, state or local government employee (including serving or reserve members of the military or members of any police force), or any corporate employee, against any individual arrested at a demonstration or protest against the employer of such victim or witness, in the absence of an actual or threatened act of physical violence, or a true threat issued, by such individual against such victim or witness."

We hope to have a New York State legislator to propose this change in the law and a statewide petition for you to sign and circulate encouraging our legislators to support the bill when it is ready for a vote.

Again, I'd like to thank all of you who've sent great letters and cards lifting my spirits each morning. Even the guards

laugh at some of the jokes you've sent especially Scott Schaeffer Deffy. It is so wonderful to feel the waves of love through your letters, poems, art work, etc. I'm thrilled with great hope when I receive your letters telling me of actions you take for justice's sake combatting the triples of militarism, racism and economic exploitation. My friend Russell Rickford calls these the 3 w's – war, wealth inequality and white supremacy.

I'm especially moved by the love and motivation expressed by young people hearing of my jail witness, like my California friend Sequoia Cohen. Sequoia is a student at Sierra Nevada College in Lake Tahoe where she is organizing 3 events to raise awareness of drone warfare and its consequences. Two whistleblower drone pilots, Cian Westmoreland and Stephen Lewis, have accepted her invitation to speak. Soon after, students and community members will join the "Shut Down Creech Air Force Base" rally, at the base, outside of Las Vegas, Nevada. Since 2005 this facility has been the place from which remotely controlled drones take off on killing missions for Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq. Many of those killed are civilians.

Go Sequoia! This is a fine example of the 3 A's, awareness, acceptance, and action.

On March 30th at the University of Nevada there will be a symposium titled **"Inside Drone Warfare: Perspectives of Whistleblowers, Families of Drone Victims and Their Lawyers."** The participants will also go to Creech Air Force base to join the protest there. For more information go to <http://www.knowdrones.com/>.

You are invited to be part of the Creech AFB protest, joining with peace activists from the Northeast, including a number from the Syracuse area.

I send you my greetings and thanks to you all and to the ever

widening awareness and embracing of the beloved community.

Not by might

Nor by power

But by spirit

Mary Anne

To make a donation

–Checks are preferred. Please make them out to the Ithaca Catholic Worker, 514 North Plain Street, Ithaca, NY 14850. Put Mary Anne Grady Flores in the memo line.

–Donations will be accepted at the GoFundMe page: <https://www.gofundme.com/bjmk9gf8>. They take 5% of the donation.

To write to Mary Anne

–Put your return address in the body of your letter or in your card; envelopes are removed before Mary Anne receives correspondence.

–Please don't send cards with glitter or stick ons.

–Send letters to:

Mary Anne Grady Flores #12001966
Onondaga County Department of Correction
PO Box 143
Jamesville, NY 13078

Please Get Involved in the Resistance to Drones:

Grandma Drone Resister's Letter from Jail

Ithaca Catholic Worker Mary Anne Grady Flores' first letter,
Feb.11, 2016

Greetings, Dear Friends—

Joy swept through our cell block, Jamesville County Jail, Pod 4, Thursday, January 28.

That evening some of the fifty-nine women in our Pod rushed up and knocked on my cell door. They reported the six o'clock news had shown twelve drone resisters handcuffed, sitting on a roadside curb, waiting to be taken into custody.

I just started my six-month sentence on January 19, for photographing protesters of the drone warfare directed out of Hancock Air Base in nearby Syracuse, New York. These eight protesters, many of whom are Catholic Workers, were later acquitted. (See my January 19 press conference statement.)

The resisters had fastened together thirty larger-than-life cut-out photos of the late Jerry Berrigan, standing bold in a blue scarf. This line of cut-outs of Jerry was held by the twelve resisters, blockading the main gate at Hancock Air Base, where Jerry had protested for years on a bi-weekly basis.

Shortly before he died at 95 last year, Jerry was asked during a *Syracuse Post-Standard* news interview what he would have done differently. He said: "I would have resisted more and gotten arrested more."

"The Jerry Berrigan Memorial Drone Blockade" was done to honor

Jerry's wishes. It was to protest the ongoing 24-7 drone assassinations initiated by drone operators at Hancock as part of the Obama administration's "kill chain."

Hancock is presently only one of twenty U.S. drone-warfare bases across the U.S., Germany and the U.K. The "Drone Papers"—leaked by an internal military whistleblower—confirm what whistle-blower drone pilots as well as drone victims have reported: The outrageous fact that 90% of all drone victims are bystanders, among them, many children.

That day my friend Carissa from Pod 4 returned excited from the downtown Syracuse "Justice" Center (Jail) because there she 'd met the four drone protester women—Beth Adams, Joan Pleune, Bev Rice, Joan Wages—who were among the twelve at the "Jerry" action.

Carissa learned that Joan and Bev had knowingly violated the same order of protection that fifty other drone protesters have. I had unintentionally violated it, landing me in jail for six months.

The "order of protection" has been issued on behalf of the commander of Hancock Air Base against drone protesters. Usually such orders are issued to protect people from physical violence and even death from their abusive domestic partners.

Currently "protected" by the order is the commander in charge of Hancock Air Base and its 2,000 personnel and armed soldiers—making him the "victim" instead of the real victims, the many people killed by the base's MQ9 Reaper drones, firing "Hellfire" missiles.

The base commander, testifying at my trial, said: "No, I don't know Mary Anne Grady. No, I've never had a conversation with her. I'm not afraid of her. *That's* just a piece of paper. I just want these protesters away from my base."

Carissa told me: "You folks should be protesting in the courts

for the misuse of the order of protection. I'd go with you to protest." That sentiment has been echoed by others here in the pod.

In fact, a team of attorneys is finalizing the points of appeal of my case to the New York State Court of Appeals, to challenge the use of the order of protection. This is the highest court in New York State. The appeal decision will set a precedent for upcoming cases of anyone else charged with violating the order of protection.

Joan and Bev are willing to risk long jail sentences to fight the drones and expose the absurdity of this use of orders of protection. Joan has been part of resistance movements since the Freedom Rides challenged racist segregation during the Civil Rights era.

In a previous drone protest, Catholic Worker Mark Colville and two Yale Divinity students brought a bouquet of roses and the People's Order of Protection on behalf of drone victims to the Hancock's main entrance. The People's Order reads in part: "Stop the terrorizing, menacing, maiming and killing of the children, women, and men of Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen."

Raz Mohammad of Maidan Shahr, Afghanistan, and a friend of drone resisters locally, requested an order of protection on behalf of his village after his brother-in-law was killed by a drone. Raz wrote: "When my nephew was 5 years old, he asked his mother "Where is father?" My sister replied, "He was killed by a computer." [Drones are piloted by people sitting at computers]. These negative effects persist on all of us to this day."

This is a critical moment in the six years of Hancock Resistance. Stopping killer drones is our #1 continued focus, no matter what tool is used to try to chill the movement. We must keep our focus on the voices of the drone victims.

I don't ask for pardon, nor do my fellow drone resisters, because as people of conscience we must speak out, as Jerry did, to stop the death-dealing by our government and military. It is our first amendment right to stand at the gate of Hancock Air Base, asking our government for redress of our grievances, specifically, to end this killer-drone policy, which in 2015 alone killed over six thousand people.

Immediately after the Paris attacks, the four whistleblower drone pilots, sent a letter of criticism to President Obama, defense secretary Ashton Carter and CIA chief John Brennan. In part, their letter said: "We came to the realization that the innocent civilians we were killing only fueled the feelings of hatred that ignited terrorism and groups like Isis, while also serving as a fundamental recruitment tool, similar to Guantánamo Bay. This administration and its predecessors have built a drone program that is one of the most devastating driving forces for terrorism and destabilization around the world."

I am filled with gratitude that the local resistance continues, joining drone resistance around the world, We here in Central New York have had 172 arrests since 2010 and over 1000 people have protested and vigiled at Hancock Air Base. I affirm the statement of "The Jerry Berrigan Memorial Drone Blockade."

From my jail cell, I invite us all to take a step beyond our comfort zones into deeper solidarity with all those struggling for justice, including the Black Lives Matter movement, ending climate change, ending immigrant deportations and the Free Palestine movement. Keep in mind the drone killing is only one tool to keep the people here at home and around the world under U.S. control. We must reject the death dealings of empire, and are called to celebrate love, life and creativity, seeking to live nonviolently. As Cornel West says, "Justice is what love looks like in public."

Many thanks to all of you who have written to me in jail, sending poems, articles, artwork and jokes, bringing light and laughter to me and the women here. Thanks for your photos and reports of your anti drone witnesses! Thanks to all the vets old and young sending me letters of their peace witnesses. Thanks for the MLK quotes and others and your own as well. I'm a slow writer, so forgive me if I don't get back to you. Each of your letters (except the ones held back) are read and treasured.

Thanks to folks bringing meals to Mom. I know many of you have written to me at my home and I look forward to reading your cards when I return. Also thanks to folks who have generously donated towards my home and jail expenses and Mom's care. Thank you for those gifts. I'm feeling so much gratitude for all that you have showered upon me.

I am warm. I am fed. I have good people around me. I'm so grateful for all your prayers and thoughts. I feel so lifted by you and God's grace. I hold you in my thoughts and prayers.

I'll be sending more letters, please keep an eye out for them
In gratitude,
Mary Anne Grady Flores

Please Get Involved in the Resistance to Drones:

For information on how to get involved, please refer to upstatedroneaction.org and knowdrones.org.

Watch the film Unmanned: America's Drone Wars and share it with your friends.

View a short video on Drones of Upstate New York (English, with Spanish subtitles)

March 30, 2016 Symposium in Nevada : Inside Drone Warfare:

Perspectives of Whistleblowers, Families of Drone Victims and Their Lawyers. This will be videotaped and is part of Shut Down Creech Air Force Base (March 27-April 2)

Get involved with ongoing drone resistance at these following air bases:

- Beale (outside Marysville, California), Occupy Beale
- Creech (Indian Springs, Nevada), Shut Down Creech!
- Hancock (outside Syracuse, NY), Syracuse Peace Council and Upstate Coalition to Ground the Drones and End the Wars
- Horsham (Horsham, Pennsylvania), Brandywine Peace Community
- Niagara Falls (Niagara Falls, NY), No Drones Niagara and Upstate Coalition to Ground the Drones and End the Wars
- Volk (Camp Douglas, Wisconsin), Wisconsin Coalition to Ground the Drones

Start resisting drones at these following air bases:

—Arizona Air National Guard; Cannon (New Mexico); California ANG; Davis-Monthan (Arizona); Ellsworth (South Dakota); Grand Forks (North Dakota); Holloman (New Mexico); Nellis (Nevada); Ohio ANG; Hickam (Hawaii); Randolph (Texas); Tennessee ANG; Texas ANG; Whiteman (Missouri); also RAF Waddington (United Kingdom), and Ramstein (Germany); and—with plans for 110 new bases throughout the U.S.—more, coming to a neighborhood near you.

Join a few friends, and come out to your town's busy corner holding signs like "Stop Killer Drones" or whatever message you want to end the wars. (Ithaca's route 13 bridge has 39,000 cars which pass daily. Our local vigil is Saturdays from 10-11am).

More suggestions will be included in upcoming letters.

For Jail Correspondence:

- Put your return address in the body of your letter or in your card; envelopes are removed before Mary Anne receives correspondence.
- Please don't send cards with glitter or stick ons.
- Send letters to:

Mary Anne Grady Flores #12001966
Onondaga County Department of Correction
PO Box 143
Jamesville, NY 13078

To make a donation:

- Checks are preferred. Please make them out to the Ithaca Catholic Worker, 514 North Plain Street, Ithaca, NY 14850. Put Mary Anne Grady Flores in the memo line.
- Donations will be accepted at the Go Fund Me Page (they take 5%)