Quite a year—OREPA members rose up to meet the greatest financial challenge in our 30-year history, raising more than $50,000 in less than 60 days to fund a lawsuit to stop the Uranium Processing Facility nuclear bomb plant planned for Oak Ridge. At the same time, it was the year the future broke open with new possibilities—the UN passed the Ban Treaty that outlaws all nuclear weapons development, production, possession, deployment, testing, use, threat of use…

It was the year that we traveled to Germany and came to a new collaboration with colleagues in Europe who are aggressively resisting the deployment of US nuclear weapons in five countries there.

It was the year we went to the United Nations to help lead a workshop on US nuclear weapons production and participate in the initial negotiating stages of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weap-
ons—it was exciting and humbling to watch the deliberations and realize history was turning before our eyes because of the courage of the delegates and the leadership of Costa Rica’s Elayne Whyte Gómez.

It was the year we turned our eyes to the future with determination to develop a new generation of leaders in the struggle to abolish nuclear weapons as we began to implement the goals of our Next Generation Leadership Fund.

Meanwhile, we continued to do the many things that has made OREPA a strong and effective organization—publishing a newsletter that Ralph Nader called, in his year-end blog, a “must-read.”

And we maintained our on-line presence; celebrated the conclusion of the 18th year of uninterrupted Sunday vigils at the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex by launching year 19; published the Reflection Booklet; kept our staff and our bills paid; took seven people to Washington, DC, to oppose the UPF bomb plant in meetings with Congress and Administration officials; and worked with our colleagues in the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability to develop and carry out strategies to oppose new bomb plants and new bombs while we advocate for responsible policies for nuclear waste and cleanup programs.

Oh, yes—we also sued the National Nuclear Security Administration and celebrated the Nobel Peace Prize going to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. Most important of all—not one bit of OREPA’s work this past year would have been possible without the persistent, amazing support of our members. Many of you not only sent money, but wrote letters to the editor, pressured your elected officials, invited OREPA to make presentations, held fundraising events for the lawsuit, and educated yourselves about the trillion dollar plan to “modernize” the US nuclear arsenal.

So our year-in-review closes with a huge Thank You to everyone who took part in this grand year.

Our success was our success—all of us, working together.
Resistance to nuclear weapons in Oak Ridge took many forms during the year 2017. In April, OREPA’s Board of Directors sat in a small circle in the Church of the Savior youth room and discussed the possibility of suing the government to stop the UPF bomb plant. The lawyers in Washington, DC, said we had grounds and a chance of winning.

If we won, the NNSA would be forced to complete a full Supplement to the 2011 Environmental Impact Statement and include the public in the process, and they would be constrained from starting construction until they had finished the S-EIS.

But even after the law firm cut their rates in half and capped their fees, the pricetag was a daunting $50,000 plus expenses—that’s what we work hard to raise every year just to keep the organization going.

After discussion, Bill Myers, the board President said,
“We can’t look back and say we didn’t do everything we possibly could.” Everyone agreed. Still, the money… Someone said, “I think we have to trust the members to know how important this is. They will step up.”

And with that confidence, we signed a contract, and on July 20, the lawsuit was filed in federal court. There are three organizations—OREPA, Nuclear Watch New Mexico, strong allies for the last five years of the stop-the-UPF battle, and we got a boost when the Natural Resources Defense Council joined the suit at the last minute. There are also several individuals listed—local people who are potentially impacted by the outcome of the lawsuit. On paper, it looks like that is who is suing.

But in the real world, it is all of us who clicked the Donate button or sent a check and said, “I want to be part of this moment.” We all have a stake in this vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. And if we can stop the government from building a new generation of bomb plants, we make our vision an inevitability.

In early December, the DC Court reassigned the case to a new judge there, a Trump appointee. So we are now awaiting a ruling on the government’s motion to move the case to Knoxville.

Just before Christmas, the government provided the “Administrative Record,” a trove of documents that we are sorting through and reading while we wait for the court’s ruling on venue.
If 2017 is remembered as the year nuclear weapons re-entered the public imagination, thanks to North Korea and Donald Trump, it should also be remembered as the year the abolition movement went global.

While OREPA has always maintained a clear and dedicated focus on the work of nuclear weapons production in Oak Ridge, we have also understood our work’s importance in the larger context of abolishing all nuclear weapons.

For twenty years we have worked with Footprints for Peace colleagues in Australia and the US; participated in peace pilgrimages with the Buddhist Nipponzan Myohoji order around the globe; presented at workshops at the United Nations; and provided support for (and walked/rode in) three Footprints treks from Oak Ridge to New York City.

In October of 2016, German nuclear campaigner Marion Küpker came to Knoxville to explain what nuclear weapons are in Europe and what citizens there are doing about them.

She also told us about a twenty-week long action in 2017 in opposition to the 20 nuclear bombs deployed at the Büchel Air Base in Germany, including a week of international action in July.

OREPA’s coordinator Ralph Hutchison and board member Carmella Cole went to Germany for that international week as part of an 11 member US delegation organized by John LaForge of Nukewatch. It turned out to be a lovely peace encampment. We met activists from Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, France, Britain and other countries. We held vigils, “go-in” actions, and spoke at a large concert about the work of Y12 (which is scheduled to begin refurbishing the B61 bombs that are deployed at Büchel).
Just before our visit, a prominent Catholic bishop visited Büchel and called for the removal of the nuclear bombs; after we left, the Defense Minister of Germany and the Green party candidate for Chancellor both called for US nukes to be withdrawn.

It became clear, with the passage of the nuclear Ban Treaty, that the grassroots efforts to abolish nuclear weapons around the globe need to be connected. As the Ban Treaty goes into effect, activists in Europe will have additional leverage to insist their governments comply with international law. Bringing the power of their argument to the United States will be our job.

Already we are in the process of introducing the Yellow X as an international symbol of the nuclear weapons ban—it has been used in Europe to oppose nuclear weapons and nuclear power for decades.

The globalization of the grassroots nuclear abolition movement coincides with efforts to engage a new generation of nuclear abolition campaigners in Europe and the US—the Ban generation can develop new and exciting strategies based on the humanitarian and legal implications of nuclear weapons.

In December we witnessed the power of a global movement when the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) received the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo. Accepting the prize, Beatrice Fihn and Setsuko Thurlow were unyielding in their insistence that nuclear abolition is an existential imperative.

They reminded us all that the nuclear age will end in one of two ways—either we get rid of the nuclear weapons, all of them, of they will get rid of us.
“Every second of every minute of every day and every instant is filled with the opportunity and the room to make a difference.”

“We ask you directly: How can you think that you have the power to bring us closer to nuclear war?”

The Next Generation Youth Organizing Fund
When the current, graying generation of US nuclear activists turns to pass the torch to the next generation, who will be there?

In 2016, OREPA's Board of Directors laid out a campaign to establish a Next Generation Leadership Fund which will support organizing among young people (ages 18-30). Many of us in the US nuclear abolition movement were drawn to our calling when we recognized, during the days of the Reagan arms build-up, the existential threat posed by these weapons of mass destruction.

Since those days, many came to believe, mistakenly, that the nuclear danger was no longer the great threat it once was. But the recent hardening of attitudes and the threatening actions of North Korea have rekindled concerns for many.

In general, the generation of young men and women coming of age today have no concept of the existential threat of nuclear weapons. They have not heard of nuclear winter. No one has told them the entire planet can be rendered uninhabitable in the space of an afternoon. They have been permitted to grow up in a world where nuclear annihilation has not been spoken of—if they have any knowledge at all, it is likely an uneasiness, or perhaps an awareness of a threat that is often portrayed in unrealistic ways on television—a rogue actor who gets a nuclear
device and is discovered, tracked and disarmed in the space of an hour.

OREPA’s commitment to the Next Generation Leadership Fund is strong. We put our active efforts on hold this summer in order to raise the urgently needed funds for the lawsuit challenging the UPF, but in 2018, we expect to roll out the campaign and reach out to everyone who is concerned about the future.

Two years ago, we asked our Board and a handful of select members of OREPA to make an initial commitment to the Next Generation Fund, and that initial request raised more than $30,000. Our ultimate goal is $150,000—to allow us to hire an organizer and develop a program over two years.

In the meantime, we have received a small grant from the Jane Addams Peace Association and we have begun to talk about how we will build a Next Generation movement here in East Tennessee and connect our young people with others across the country and around the globe. (We are also working to create a similar commitment by the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability.)

We aren’t waiting to get started. This past May, in addition to our usual OREPA old-timers, OREPA’s two newest Board members, Flo Paquet and Carmella Cole, came to DC Days. In July, Carmella also traveled to Germany and spoke at the concert there about OREPA’s work to stop the UPF bomb plant. We expect to build on this initial effort during 2018 and beyond.

“We declare ourselves the last generation to live in the shadow of the bomb. We want to live in a world free of nuclear weapons.”
When the history of nuclear abolition is written, 2018 may well be the year of the pivot—when the power of citizen activism, allied with non-nuclear states, equipped with the Nuclear Ban Treaty, compelled nuclear weapons states to shift their policies away from arms reduction to arms elimination.

It will require a perfect storm of effort, bringing pressures to bear from all quarters. Grassroots groups teaming with faith communities, international colleagues, professional associations, key elected officials, and forces we don’t even yet know.

We will have to push forward, persisting even when we can’t see the outcome. “Nonviolence,” Gandhi said, “when it becomes active, travels with extraordinary velocity, and then it becomes a miracle.”

OREPA plans to build on the foundation we have laid over the past 30 years to provide leadership to the disarmament movement.

Near the end of 2017, Gloria Mencer, a Presbyterian pastor and former Y12 worker, came to OREPA’s Board and talked about her vision of bringing a nuclear disarmament overture to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church which has largely been silent on nuclear weapons for three decades.

OREPA has helped craft the language of an overture that we hope will come before the entire Presbyterian Church this summer, calling on the church to educate and activate its members, and calling on the United States government to sign, ratify and abide by the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

It is a first step in what we hope will be a sweeping movement among US faith communities (the Pope has already spoken powerfully about the need for abolition) to demand our government comply with the rule of international law.

We will also be pushing forward with our lawsuit; if we win, we would expect public hearings before the end of the year, and we would launch an organizing effort to make these hearings the largest in the history of Oak Ridge.

We’ll be working hard to create a future filled with new activists who will bring their own ideas and energy to the movement to rid the world of the scourge of nuclear weapons. We are hoping the next generation will not be bound by the policies and fears of the past, but will chart a new course.

We will continue our resistance to ongoing weapons production activities in Oak Ridge, commemorating Hiroshima Day and maintaining our schedule of Sunday vigils—last November we began our nineteenth year of uninterrupted Sunday vigils at the main entrance to the bomb plant.

You are invited to be part of these activities in every way you can. Come to any and all of our events and actions. We welcome—and need—your financial support. We hope you will write letters and take action when it is especially timely. We are always looking for people to help us build bridges to other communities that will join in the effort to abolish nuclear weapons.

Keep track of what OREPA is doing and stay informed by subscribing to our newsletter, monitoring our website (www.orepa.org) or following us on facebook. You can also sign up for our listserv which sends out periodic updates.

You can contact us by email at orep@earthlink.net or by snail mail: P O Box 5743, Oak Ridge, TN 37831.
OREPA Finance Report 2017*

### INCOME
- Contributions $ 55,910.00
- Community Shares 4,400.00
- Peacemaker Award Dinner 4,200.00
- Events/Actions 440.00
- Foundation Grants 3,000.00
- Religious Organizations 3,300.00
- Reimbursements/Rebates 565.00
- Honoraria 1,375.00
- Next Generation Fund 5,000.00
- Defining Moment Legal Fund 52,098.00
- Miscellaneous (MLK) 300.00
- Interest Income 144.00

**TOTAL INCOME** $ 130,732.00

### EXPENSES
- Administrative 497.00
- Conference Fees (ANA) 1,510.00
- Dues 800.00
- Equipment purchase 100.00
- Fundraising
  - Appeal Letters 200.00
  - Peacemaker Award 447.00
- Organizational Development 350.00
- Professional Expenses
  - Accounting 330.00
  - Legal (UPF challenge) 25,765.00
- MLK activities 400.00
- Payroll
  - Wages 52,020.00
  - Employer expenses 3,721.00
  - Employee health insurance reimb 5,300.00
  - Employee pension 5,000.00
- Postage and Shipping 992.00
- Printing and Publications 5,865.00
- Action expenses 374.00
- Supplies 1,180.00
- Telecommunications/web site 503.00
- Travel 4,792.00
- Other 500.00

**TOTAL EXPENSES** $ 110,646.00

**Net Profit/Loss** $ 20,086.00

Next Generation Leadership Fund balance $ 28,800.00
Defining Moment Legal Fund balance $ 35,011.00

* OREPA's fiscal year is from July-June; this report summarizes calendar year 2017
Yes, we’ve been at it for thirty years. And we will pause during this year to look back and celebrate. But our energy and focus is on the future, this year and the next thirty. The work has never been more crucial—stopping the UPF bomb plant is our highest priority. Right behind it is nurturing a new generation of nuclear abolitionists and working with our international colleagues. Together, we move forward.

“This is our world and we have a right to be safe. We renounce the false security of weapons, rejecting their use as a means of self-defense.”

OAK RIDGE, TN