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Group kicks off Season for Nonviolence

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Shannon Richmond, center, and David Platoff, both of Rochester, and Jessie Benson, a visitor from North Carolina, light a sparkler in remembrance of the victims of violence at Wednesday's kickoff of the Season for Nonviolence at the Liberty Pole. / MARIE DE JESUS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Written by
Justin Murphy
Staff writer

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season had arrived — and in fact, one had.

Jan. 30 was the beginning of the 64-day Season for Nonviolence. The date marks the assassination of Mohandas Gandhi in 1948; Martin Luther King Jr. was killed 64 calendar days later on April 4, 1968.

In between is an international campaign to promote tolerance and communication in communities and within individuals.

“We’re basically really asking people to step up in their own lives,” said Kit Miller, director of the M.K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence on South Plymouth Avenue. “We sometimes think violence is something that happens in that neighborhood over there; we’re asking people to hold a mirror up to themselves.”

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Peace activists kick off Season For Non-Violence: Jan. 30 was the beginning of the 64-day Season for Nonviolence. The date marks the assassination of Mohandas Gandhi in 1948; Martin Luther King Jr. was killed 64 calendar days later on April 4, 1968. Video by Justin Murphy



Paul Kahawatte of Rochester contemplates the light of a sparkler lit in memory of the victims of violence in Rochester. / MARIE DE JESUS/staff photographer

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Robert Holmes, a philosophy professor at the University of Rochester and a expert on issues of peace and

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Mayor Thomas Richards was among those celebrating the season kickoff Wednesday at the Liberty Pole. In the next two months, there will be an array of speeches, activities and conversations hosted by churches and peace groups across the county.

One local organizer, Rashid Muhammad, spent more than two decades in the military before returning home to Rochester. He saw firsthand how violence in all its forms can injure victims and perpetrators alike.

"The impact of violence has serious implications for the doer, not just the receiver," he said.

With this week's warm weather came a disturbing preview of the senseless shootings that plague Rochester in the summer. Even as the demonstrators listened to music and ate pizza at the Liberty Pole, Rochester police were investigating a shooting on Hudson Avenue.

That tragedy only underscores the need for action on the personal level, Miller said.

"There's a tremendous amount of distress out there and a lot of potential for conflict," she said. "We've got a lot of work to do."

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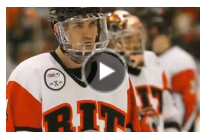


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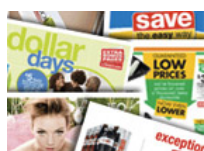
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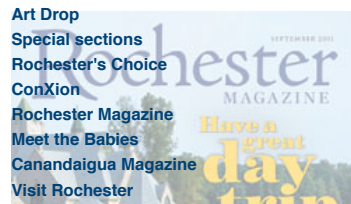
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Group kicks off Season for Nonviolence

Written by Justin Murphy Staff writer
Jan. 30 democratand



Shannon Richmond, center, and David Platoff, both of Rochester, light a sparkler in the victims of violence at Wednesday's kickoff of the Season for Nonviolence at the Liberty Pole. / MARIE DE JESUS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

If you go

Robert Holmes, a philosophy professor at the University of Rochester and a expert on issues of peace and justice, will give a lecture on “The Challenge of Nonviolence” at 7 p.m. Thursday at the Rochester Friends Meeting, 84 Scio St. For a full schedule of events, go to www.bethechangerochester.org.

Temperatures in the 60s Wednesday made it feel like the new season had arrived — and in fact, one has.

Jan. 30 was the beginning of the 64-day Season for Nonviolence. The date marks the assassination of Mohandas Gandhi in 1948; Martin Luther King Jr. was killed 64 calendar days later on April 4, 1968.

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