

Marjorie F. Prince

Marjorie F. Prince was an activist for racial and economic justice for much of her lifetime. She was a working class white woman who marched alongside striking African American garbage workers in Tennessee in 1968, organized for divestment from companies doing business in Apartheid South Africa in the 1980's, and most recently waved signs outside the Mount St Vincent Nursing Home in West Seattle several days a week that read, "I Stand With Immigrants," "Fund Healthcare, Not ICE," and "Palestine Must Be Free."

Born in Pittsburgh in 1938, Marjorie attended her first union meeting with her father, a lineman for the local electric company, at age 5. Not long after, she went door-to-door with her mother flyering for Democratic Party candidates. "We left our flyers on the mat, and if we saw opposition flyers, we picked them up on our way off the porch," she recalled, chuckling.

After taking a teaching job at Tennessee State University in the late 1960's, Marjorie became a supporter of the Civil Rights Movement. She said she couldn't help but learn from her students' experiences. After Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated, she marched with the striking garbage workers whom King had

traveled to Memphis to support. Marjorie was always clear on her role as a white woman in the struggle against racism, “They wore signs that said, ‘I am a man.’” But I didn’t wear one. Because I wasn’t African American, and I wasn’t a man.”

Marjorie then completed a master’s degree in African American history at Atlanta University, a historically Black college, in the early 1970’s. When asked how many other white students were in the program at that time, she laughed and said, “Probably just me.”

After meeting Garry Prince, her great love, in Texas in the 1970’s, Marjorie left academia to become a legislative aide to Wilhelmina Delco, one of a few African American women in the Texas state legislature. She and Garry then moved to Seattle in 1982, and she took a job as a legal secretary at a labor law firm.

Marjorie and Garry joined the New Hope Baptist Church in the Central Area where they were a part of the Black Dollar Days Talk Force - an effort in the 1990s to halt displacement by supporting Black-owned businesses and African American-led economic development. They also participated for nearly 40 years in the annual Martin Luther King Day March and Rally held at Garfield High School.

After 9/11, Marjorie and Garry helped start West Seattle Neighbors for Peace.

Rain or shine, they held signs opposing the Iraq War, and many other wars, outside the Sunday West Seattle Farmers' Market for close to two decades.

Marjorie lost Garry, her life partner in activism for justice, in January, 2025, a few weeks before Trump's second inauguration. But soon thereafter, she began standing at the corner of 35th Ave SW outside the Mount St. Vincent nursing home with signs that spoke to the current political moment. "I Stand With Immigrants," "Defend the Voting Rights Act," and "Defeat Fascism," were just a few. She was bolstered when neighbors from West Seattle Indivisible began joining her on the corner.

Marjorie and Garry Prince will be remembered by Seattle's people's movements as stalwarts for justice. If you needed phonebankers, volunteers to leaflet a movie theater, or bodies on a picket line, you called Marjorie and Garry. Through their life long commitment, humility, and hard work, they modeled what true solidarity looks like. Marjorie and Garry Prince, Présenté!

Written by Marjorie's fellow activist, Kristyn Joy (kristyn.hcea@gmail.com)