



PEACE SITE NETWORK CONTINUES TO GROW



Judith Arnold presents Church of the Holy Redeemer with a Peace Site certificate.

Thirty years after New Jersey peace activists invented peace sites—places designated for promoting peace in a world of ongoing war and violence—the concept is alive and well as Peace Action's roster of peace sites continues to expand.

On Sept. 21, the United Nations International Day of Peace, St. Mary's Church of Pompton Lakes was dedicated as a peace site for the work of their People of Peace mission.

One month later, on Oct. 21, the Academy of Holy Angels, a high

school in Demarest, held a special assembly at which a peace site certificate was presented.

In addition, an existing peace site, the Church of the Redeemer in Morristown, recently celebrated its 5th anniversary as a peace site with a rededication (see photo).

Most peace sites are houses of worship and schools, but they can be many kinds of places, including private homes and even websites.

At the moment, NJ Peace Action is working with a number of public schools in our area to supplement the new New Jersey anti-bullying initiative. Our goal is to help students understand that cooperation in the school community can carry through to the wider community and the world. We hope to facilitate projects that will benefit the wider community and declare these schools as peace sites.

Along with schools and religious institutions, we are working with mayors of several municipalities and also hoping to have several ongoing peace vigils declared peace sites.

We can also provide certificates to households who would like to be declared a peace sites any place where people gather together to talk about peace and the best way to achieve it.

Each site determines its own way to work for peace. Some hold Peace Fair Days, sharing ethnic food, song

and dance to bring a community together for a day of celebration; Peace Succoths in parks; and annual affairs honoring a local outstanding worker for peace. Others provide film showings and speakers at community meetings; join peace groups like NJ Peace Action in their actions; and share space for other peace groups to meet.

For more information about becoming a peace site, visit the NJPA website at www.njpeaceaction.org or call Peace Site coordinator Judith Arnold, at 973-259-1126.

SAVE THE DATE!

NEW JERSEY PEACE ACTION'S ANNUAL SOUP LUNCH

with **PHYLLIS BENNIS**,
Institute for Policy Studies
and **JUDITH LeBLANC**,
National Peace Action

MOVE THE MONEY: STOP THE WAR MACHINE!

Saturday, November 12 12-4 p.m.
Bloomfield High School,
Bloomfield, NJ

www.njpeaceaction.org
973-259-1126

New Jersey Peace Action and the New Jersey Peace Action Education Fund—founded in 1957—are committed to working through grassroots citizen action to abolish nuclear weapons, end domestic and international weapons trafficking, demilitarize the federal budget and teach non-violent conflict resolution.



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MARTIN BLOOM: Nearly a Century of Working for Peace

So many NJ Peace Action members have amazing stories to tell, and there is so much to learn from them and the lives they have lived. We plan to bring you some of these stories in the next several newsletters.

We start with the story of longtime NJ Peace Action member Martin Bloom, who passed away this past July at the age of 95½—as told by his son-in-law, Milt Horowitz. Both usually attended NJ Peace Action annual dinners together.

Martin was born in Springfield, Mass. in November, 1915 and became involved in social justice issues when he was quite young. He majored in Phys. Ed. and Math at Springfield College. He was an ardent union activist, growing up in an atmosphere of discussion and debate about politics and unionism. He volunteered for World War II, but turned down being an officer. He fought in the Battle of Okinawa and was awarded the Soldier's Medal, the highest award for bravery during a nonmilitary event, having almost lost his life in saving another soldier from drowning.

He went for his M.A. and his Ed.D. and taught in Springfield for a while. His union activism took him to New Jersey, where he became Vice Principal and Head of Guidance at Rutherford High School from which he retired in 1979. Martin had a progressive view of guidance counseling that addressed the value of discipline vs. punishment: It is easy to punish a student, but he does not learn anything from being punished. If you discipline him, it is harder for you, the disciplinarian, but the student learns something from the experience. He wrote several books on the subject.

Martin understood and always talked with people about what our government was doing—be it in Vietnam, Korea, or Palestine—and how it affected the poorest.

As a member of NJ Peace Action, Martin was always very supportive of our efforts and offered good ideas about the kind of work we could do, particularly encouraging us to reach out to youth. He was well-informed on foreign policy issues and helped shape our understanding about the history of Afghanistan and the past three decades of war there. In 2007, though he was not getting around so well any more, he joined us on our Mother/Daughter Walk down Bloomfield Ave, with his daughter, granddaughter, and great-granddaughter (in a stroller). Four generations of peace activists walking together for peace!

Martin supported other peace and justice groups, especially Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, to which his wife Clara belonged. Clara also grew up with activism and was arrested at age 16 for demonstrating about the murder of Harry Sims, a union activist.



Moving the Money from War to Peace

Not everyone agrees about what should be done to reduce the \$14.9 trillion national debt but for New Jersey Peace Action and a growing number of labor, civil rights, and social service organizations, the answer is clear. Cut the military budget by at least 25% and move that money to social and community programs. At the same time, taxes must be raised on the super wealthy, while protecting essential programs like Social Security and Medicare. Too many people depend on those programs which, despite claims to the contrary, did not cause the current economic crisis.

Throughout the year, NJPA has been promoting a "Move the Money" campaign. Just before Tax Day in April, a college student volunteer created a 10-ft. banner showing how our tax dollars are spent—60% of discretionary funds are spent on the military, with only 4% for education, 2% for agriculture, and 1% for energy programs. The banner was displayed in front of the Bloomfield Post Office on April 15 and is available for vigils and public meetings if you contact the NJPA office.

On June 4, NJPA helped organize and participate in a "Move the Money: From Swords to Ploughshares" conference at the Boonton Mosque, featuring a panel discussion of the dwindling resources for social programs and efforts to cut the \$800 billion military budget.

Two weeks later, we delivered more than 600 postcards to the offices of Senator Lautenberg and Senator Menendez urging them to move the money from the military budget to community and human needs. We plan to deliver another 1000 postcards at the end of November and invite you to come along and/or help us collect signatures. Go to www.njpeaceaction.org for details.

The Super Committee, made up of six Republicans and six Democrats, is scheduled to release its recommendations for decreasing the debt on Thanksgiving Eve. Failure to meet the deadline or win Congress's approval will trigger \$1.1 trillion in automatic spending cuts over the next 10 years.

One startling fact: the Obama administration requested \$107 billion for Afghanistan this year. It would cost \$103 billion to erase *all* the states' budget deficits—which would mean more money for schools, teachers, health care, environmental protection and more in our local communities.

These next few weeks are critical to determining the kind of country the U.S. will become. The Occupy Wall Street movement has done an excellent job illustrating the stark economic differences between the wealthiest 1% and the remaining 99%. We join them in spirit to call for reducing economic inequality and moving the money from military spending to fund community and human needs.



Legislative Action Alert



TOLL-FREE numbers for Congress: 800-517-5696 * 866-220-0044 * 888-784-0527

Expedited Withdrawal from Afghanistan—

On May 26, the House of Representatives voted down an amendment calling for expedited withdrawal from Afghanistan that would have cut \$33 billion from the military budget to expedite the safe and timely exit of our armed forces. Six NJ House members representing northern NJ voted against it: Representatives **Rodney Frelinghuysen, Scott Garrett, Leonard Lance, Bill Pascrell and Steve Rothman**. If you are in one of their districts, CALL and let them know that after a decade of war, it is time to withdraw from Afghanistan NOW!

Pressuring the Super Committee to Protect Social Security and Medicaid, But Make Cuts to the Overbloated Military Budget: November 17 – A National Day of Action for the 99%

Rallying millions of people to speak out on the jobs crisis in our country, this national day of action will create a dramatic crescendo just prior to anticipated action by the Super Committee on Nov. 23. A broad array of national, state and local organizations will be joining with activists and occupiers in their communities to speak out for the 99%—for jobs, for justice, for cutting military spending, for ending the war, and for making Wall Street pay. The 12-member Super Committee is making significant decisions about what Congress should do to cut over \$1 trillion from the federal budget, and its recommendations will impact funding for our communities. These legislators need to hear from us that we need money for jobs and education and not for war and excessive military spending. **Call your Senators and Representative and tell them to get their priorities straight. Jobs, not wars!**

Will All U.S. Troops Be Withdrawn from Iraq by the End of December 2011?

On Oct. 21, President Obama announced that U.S. troops will leave Iraq by the end of this year in accordance with the Status of Forces Agreement signed by George W. Bush in 2008. While we welcome that announcement, many questions remain: Will it actually happen as announced? Will the returning veterans get the jobs, health care, education, and housing they need? Why will at least 5000 contractors remain in Iraq? NJ Peace Action will continue to monitor the situation and send out action alerts as needed to make sure the U.S. keeps to the current timetable.

Yes, I want my voice for peace and justice heard! I will renew my membership today.

\$35 \$52 (\$1 a week) \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1000 \$_____

Become a sustainer. This is an excellent way to help support NJ Peace Action throughout the year. Consider that \$10 a month for peace adds up to \$120 for the year, \$20 a month adds up to \$240 for the year, \$50 a quarter adds up to \$200 for the year, and \$250 a quarter adds up to \$1,000 for the year!

Sign me up! I am enclosing \$_____ as my first month's/quarter's (*circle one*) installment!

I will contribute an extra \$5 to support national Peace Action's important work for peace.

Name _____ E-mail _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Credit Card: Visa MasterCard American Express

Credit Card No. _____ Expiration Date _____

Contribute \$100 or more and receive monthly bulletins, as well as a DVD from NJPA's November 12, 2011 Soup Lunch program.

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Pat Colucci with author Nell Painter and Ingrid Hill at NJPA house party.

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Quotes for the Season . . .

“For the U.S, this is a huge victory for the anti-war movement that has successfully transformed the discourse in this country from a very supportive population of this war to a population that now over 75 percent say this war is not worth fighting and the troops should all be brought home immediately.”

—Phyllis Bennis, Fellow, Institute for Policy Studies

“We may not have prevented the war, but we fundamentally changed the political terrain by mobilizing a politically empowered opposition to the war into the streets, the halls of the Congress and into the voting booth.”

— Judith LeBlanc, Field Director, National Peace Action

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Check the calendar on our website, www.njpeaceaction.org for updated information on these events and for information on additional events and activities.

- Wed., Nov.29 or Fri., Dec.1 (TBA) **“Move the Money” Campaign**—Join NJ Peace Action in delivering 1000+ signed postcards to U.S. Senators Lautenberg and Menendez, urging them to shift spending from the military to human needs. For more information, contact the NJPA office.
- Sat., Dec. 10 Time TBA **Vigil**—Organized by People’s Organization for Progress. At the corner of Broad and Market Sts. in Newark. Come support POP’s ongoing vigils calling for an end to war, civil rights, and peace.
- Wed, Jan. 11 **Rally** in Washington, DC. —“10 Years Too Many: Day of Action against Guantanamo.” We will create a human chain of more than 2,000 people, representing the individuals still detained without charge or fair trial at Guantanamo and Bagram. For more information about joining the NJPA contingent and traveling to D.C., contact the NJ Peace Action office.
- TBA **Film Showing: *You Don't Like the Truth: Four Days Inside Guantanamo***—Documentary of a four-day interrogation of a Canadian teenager, Omar Khadr, imprisoned at Guantanamo. Footage of a seven-hour video recording of the interrogation was recently declassified by the Canadian government and is the only interrogation footage from inside Guantanamo that has ever been released. Details on date and location of film showing are forthcoming.
- Ongoing **Montclair Peace Vigil**—Corner of Bloomfield Ave. and Church St. First Saturday of every month, from 10:30 to noon. Upcoming dates: Dec. 3, Jan. 7, Feb. 4, and March 3.

~LEAVE A LEGACY~

Help perpetuate your commitment to peace and justice by remembering New Jersey Peace Action in your will. Bequests and life insurance to the NJPA Education Fund are tax-deductible. For more information on planned giving options, please contact us at 973-259-1126.