Director's Corner

Dear Friends,

We had quite a productive and challenging year in 2003! Official chapters of NJ Peace Action formed in Somerset County and the Highlands. New groups got more organized in Bergen County, Essex County, Hudson County, Morris County, Sussex County and Warren County. We held dozens of additional vigil events, with the Morristown Peace Vigil holding a vigil every Friday since September 21, 2001 and the Montclair Peace Vigil doing the same, except for one exceptionally snowy day in December 2003.

Together with the Morristown Peace Vigil, we organized a protest at a $2000 a plate fundraiser for George W. Bush on December 1st in Hanover, New Jersey. (See article for details.)

The 3rd Annual Peace Train happened in Newark, even in the midst of a blizzard! (See article for details.)
In fact, we organized at least one major event EVERY MONTH of the year and participated in making history on February 15th, when approximately 1000 New Jersey residents traveled by train into New York City and became part of the 30 million people internationally protesting the invasion of Iraq!

As busy as we were, and as active as so many of you were in making your voices heard for peace, 2004 promises to be filled with even more challenges and even more events.

As you know, 2004 is an election year. Emotions will be running high as the elections draw nearer. It will be imperative for us to remember that whatever we think about the elections, we must keep our commitment to peace and justice foremost in our minds. We must continually work to build a strong, unified movement for a new foreign policy and against the highly dangerous doctrine of "pre-emptive strike." We must remain steadfast in our commitment to a world without nuclear weapons. We must remain committed to building a world where economic and political justice allows us to build a genuine peace.

I look forward to a year filled with righteous indignation against the actions of a rogue nation (America) and a year where we build a stronger, more diverse, more cohesive movement against the assaults on our rights and liberties at home.

As I said at our Soup Luncheon on November 15, after a week of having to change venues TWICE, NJ Peace Action is here and we're not going away!

Working together for peace and justice,

Madelyn Hoffman, Director

CONGRATULATIONS

to three members of the NJPA family recognized by national Peace Action at the national Congress in November.

Nadia Akbar, NJPA Organizer — for grassroots organizing

Susan Berkowitz, Morristown Peace Vigil — for increasing the visibility of NJPA

Edgardo Suarez, NJPA board member, Bloomfield Peace Action—for increasing the diversity of NJPA

In Memoriam

Lou Giammarino

We recall with thanks
his work for peace,
we mourn his passing
and we offer our
sincere condolences to his wife
Florence and the rest of
the Giammarino family.