

The New Jersey PEACE Maker

Publication of NJ Peace Action and NJ Peace Action Education Fund



Founded 1957—51 Years of Citizen Action

Volume 13 Issue 1, Winter 2008

PEACE TRAIN ROLLS ON



NJPA's Seventh Annual Peace Train on Dec. 8 featured, for the first time, an actual peace train. Not one that you ride but large cardboard cut-outs of train cars that we carried as we marched from Peter Francisco Park behind Newark Penn Station to the nearby offices of Senators Frank Lautenberg and Robert Menendez.

The cutouts, signed by many NJPA members and friends, contained a Holiday Wish List of what we want from our Senators, including an end to the occupation of Iraq. (The complete list appears on page 2.)

We were not allowed to deliver the list to the Senators that day so we urge members and supporters to send them a copy.

The Peace Train will

continue its travels throughout 2008. We obtained additional signatures at the Jan. 19 People's Peace Conference in Newark and at a Martin Luther King Day anti-war event in Teaneck. On Feb. 15, a "Color the Peace Train" party in Wayne spruced up the train for its year-long ride.

We will add more cars to the train as we obtain more signatures from chapters, vigils, peace sites and at peace events. Let's keep adding cars and signatures as we "ride" the Peace Train together during this important election year!

To arrange for the Peace Train at a local event, please contact the NJPA office.

NJPA HONORS SOLDIER WHO CHOSE NOT TO KILL

At our 50th Soup Lunch on Nov. 17, we honored Sgt. Camilo Mejia, the first officer who became a conscientious objector and refused to return to Iraq. He was tried for desertion and sentenced to a year in jail. Amnesty International declared him a Prisoner of Conscience.

Mejia was a worthy recipient of the first Dave Cline Winter Soldier Award, presented by Jerry Caprio, a veteran of the

Vietnam War. Like Dave Cline, a decorated Vietnam veteran turned peace and justice activist who died last fall, Mejia has devoted himself since his release to opposing the Iraq occupation.

He has written a book about his experiences, *Road from Ar Ramadi: The Private Rebellion of Staff Sergeant Mejia*.

A DVD of Mejia's talk is available from NJPA.

SAVE THE DATE!

April 27

NJPA Annual Dinner

HONORING WOMEN PEACEMAKERS

COL. (ret.) ANN WRIGHT

Highest ranking U.S. official to resign in protest of the invasion of Iraq

and

MEDEA BENJAMIN

Co-Founder of CodePink and Global Exchange



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.



Officers and Staff

President NJPA—Anna Nelson

President NJPAEF—Ed Lewinson

Vice President—Kit Marlowe

Secretary—Howard Lipoff

Treasurer—Dave Bressen

Director—Madelyn Hoffman

Phonebankers—Virginia Ahearn, Ron DeStefano

Administrative Assistant—Ron DeStefano



How to Get Involved



PEACE TRAIN WISH LIST

Please help the Peace Train reach its destination by sending a copy of the Wish List to your U.S. Senators and Congressman (contact information is on page 3). Tell them to get on board!

1. Bring the Troops Home from Iraq NOW!
2. Oppose military intervention in Iran
3. Repeal the Military Commissions Act
4. Oppose Amnesty for telecoms' complicity in government spying
5. Restore Habeas Corpus
6. Close Guantanamo
7. Renounce waterboarding and other forms of torture
8. Oppose Complex 2030, a massive new nukes program
9. Oppose any other effort to expand our nuclear weapons arsenal
10. Move toward a world free of nuclear weapons
11. Take steps to ensure the integrity of the voting process in New Jersey
12. Remove all U.S. military bases on foreign soil
13. Downsize the U.S. embassy in Iraq for diplomacy, not occupation
14. Investigate Executive Branch violations of the U.S. Constitution

Volunteers Needed!

Last year's 50th Anniversary celebration powerfully reinvigorated our peace-making efforts for the next half-century. Plans for making peace and justice key issues in this important election year are already under way.

Help us carry out these plans and increase our people power by becoming a volunteer!

*Reach out to potential new members and help make peace an election issue by tabling at street fairs and festivals, handing out voter guides, and encouraging voter registration as part of Peace Voter 2008.

*Contribute to the success of major events with headline speakers. Help at the events themselves, with preparations, and providing transportation.

*Help with membership recruitment mailings, reminder calls before upcoming events, and data entry.

To volunteer or to learn more about volunteering, please contact the office at 973-744-3263 or director@njpeaceaction.org.

By all working together, we can make real progress toward peace in this election year and for years to come!

MEMORIAL SERVICE for

Alibeth Howell
Longtime NJPA volunteer

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2 PM

Unitarian Church, 67 Church St., Montclair

PEACE SITES TO CALL FOR PEACE ON FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF WAR



In the early 1980s, NJ SANE (NJPA predecessor) member Lou Kousin came up with the idea of Peace Sites. Concerned that his young granddaughter was growing up in an increasingly militaristic world, he envisioned Peace Sites as an antidote.

Any place can become a Peace Site—a school, a church, a synagogue, a mosque, a home, a place of business — as long as there are ongoing discussions on how to work for peace at every level — from the world and the nation to your own town.

NJPA has asked its 30 current Peace Sites to plan an event in March to mark the 5th Anniversary of the Iraq War and invites all Peace Sites to take part in the Second Annual Interfaith Peace Parade on International Peace Day, Sun., Sept. 21, from 2 to 5:30 PM at the Somerset County Courthouse in Somerville.

If you know of a place that would like to become a Peace Site, please contact us at 973-744-3263 or director@njpeaceaction.org and we will send an information packet. Or visit www.njpeacesites.org.





Legislative Action Alert



Make a difference by making yourself heard on these important issues affecting our peace and freedom.

OPPOSE NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROLIFERATION—The U.S. should never have rewarded India for developing nukes and testing them by agreeing to help it develop a nuclear energy program but at least conditions were placed on the aid to deter proliferation. The Bush Administration has ignored those conditions. Please ask your Congressman to support H. Res. 711, which calls on the Administration to enforce them.

WE NEED GREEN ENERGY NOT NEW NUKES—The Department of Energy is accepting public comment on the Bush Administration’s plan to spend \$150 million on a program that will produce 125 new nuclear weapons every year for the next 25 years, starting a new nuclear arms race in the process. Speak out against this insane policy by visiting www.peace-action.org and clicking on the link “Join Our Campaign Against New Nukes.”

NO MORE HIDING BEHIND FALSE CLAIMS OF NATIONAL SECURITY—Please call your Senators and ask them to support S.2583, the State Secrets Protection Act, to prevent the Executive Branch from using the State Secrets Privilege to cover up wrongdoing such as torture, secret renditions and illegal spying.

STOP USE OF BLACKWATER AND OTHER MERCENARIES IN IRAQ—Please ask your Congressman to support H.R. 412, the Stop Outsourcing Security Act, which would phase out use of private military contractors.

KEEP NJ NATIONAL GUARD AT HOME WHERE THEY’RE NEEDED—Support petition calling on Gov. Jon Corzine to oppose the call-up of 3,000 NJ National Guard members (50% of the total) to Iraq in June. To obtain a copy of the petition, call the NJPA office or go online to www.njpeaceaction.org.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Sen. Frank Lautenberg	202-224-3224	973-639-8700	www.lautenberg.senate.gov
Sen. Robert Menendez	202-224-4744	973-645-3030	www.menendez.senate.gov
Rep. Mike Ferguson	202-225-5361	908-757-7835	www.ferguson.house.gov
Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen	202-225-5034	973-984-0711	www.frelinghuysen.house.gov
Rep. E. Scott Garrett	202-225-4465	201-712-0930	www.garrett.house.gov
Rep. Bill Pascrell Jr.	202-225-5751	973-532-5152	ww.pascrell.house.gov
Rep. Donald Payne	202-225-3436	973-645-3213	www.payne.house.gov
Rep. Steven Rothman	202 225-5061	201-646-1944	www.rothman.house.gov
Rep. Albio Sires	202-225-7919	201-222-2828	www.sires.house.gov

Please return coupon with check/credit card info to NJPA, 673 Bloomfield Ave., Bloomfield, NJ 07003.

I am not yet a member and would like to join. Enclosed is my check or credit card number for:
_____ \$ 35 Regular dues _____ \$ 52 Dollar-a-week for Peace _____ \$100 Supporter
_____ \$250 Sponsor _____ \$500 Patron _____ \$1000 Benefactor

Name on Card _____ Exp. Date _____ Credit Card No. _____

I would like to make a special contribution to NJPA’s 2008 Peace Voter campaign.
_____ \$200 _____ \$100 _____ \$75 _____ \$50 _____ \$25 _____ \$10 other \$ _____

For a contribution of \$75 or more, choose one of these premiums:
_____ DVD of Camilo Mejia speech OR _____ BOOK: *Peace Action: Past, Present and Future* OR _____ Both (\$100)
_____ DVD of Camilo Mejia speech and his book, *Road from Ar Ramadi* (\$125 gift)

_____ Please add me to the e-mail legislative action alert.

Name _____

Address _____

City/Town _____ ZIP _____ Tel. No. _____

E-mail Address _____

New Jersey Peace Action
673 Bloomfield Ave.
Bloomfield, NJ 07003



Jerry Caprio presents Camilo Mejia with 1st Dave Cline Winter Soldier Award

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 618
Bloomfield, NJ

Contact Information:
Phone: (973) 744-3263
Fax: (973) 509-9774
E-mail:
nj_peaceaction@yahoo.com
www.njpeaceaction.org

Quote for the Season . . .

"I'd rather go to prison for desertion than kill a child by mistake. Prison ends, but you never get over killing a kid."

—Sgt. Camilo Mejia, U.S. Army
who spent 9 months in prison
for refusing to return to Iraq

Upcoming Events

- Feb. 22, Fri. 7 pm **Teach-In on School of the Americas in support of Ed Lewinson**, sentenced to 90 days in prison for protesting the school. At Ethical Culture Society, Prospect St., Maplewood.
- March 8, Sat. 2-4 pm **Speaker on Iraqi Refugees**. Catholic Worker Cathy Breen at St. Peter Claver Ch., Montclair. Sponsored by NJPA Peace Educ. Cttee, St. Peter Claver Parishioners for Peace and Justice.
- March 16, Sun. 10 am **Special Service to Commemorate 5th Anniversary of Iraq Invasion**. Lakeland Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. 231 Parish Drive, Wayne.
- March 19, Wed. **Actions Against the War** across the U.S., incl. day of non-violent civil disobedience in DC. For info, visit www.unitedforpeace.org. If planning action, contact director@njpeaceaction.org.
- March 19
4:30 pm **War Anniversary Events Sponsored by Military Families Speak Out**
5 pm Vigil at National Guard Armory in Teaneck.
6 pm Stop the War Vigil in Spiotta Park, South Orange.
Demonstrate at Rep. Scott Garrett's office and at Bergen Mall, Route 4 Paramus.
- March 29, Sat. 10 am-1 pm **Second Annual Mother-Daughter Walk for Peace**. Meet at NJPA office, 673 Bloomfield Ave., at 9:30 am to sign in. Register online at www.njpeaceaction.org.
- March 29, Sat. **South Mountain Peace Action's 4th Annual Be About Peace Day**. Afternoon Arts and Crafts for kids and evening program and vigil. In Maplewood. Info at www.beaboutpeace.com.
- April 5, Sat. 9:30-3:30 **Tools for Democracy Workshop**. Full day of workshops dedicated to skills building, organizing and lobbying around peace and justice issues during this election year. At Unitarian Church of Montclair, 67 Church Street, Montclair. Please contact NJPA office for details.
- April 27, Sun. 11:45 am to 4 pm **NJPA's 51st ANNUAL DINNER**. Honoring Women Peacemakers—U.S. Colonel (ret.) Ann Wright and Medea Benjamin of Code Pink—and Amnesty International's Bloomfield H.S. chapter. At the Regency House, 140 Route 23, Pompton Plains.