

# 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 2, Summer 2008

## ANNUAL DINNER HONORS WOMEN, YOUNG ACTIVISTS



At New Jersey Peace Action's 51st Annual Dinner held on April 27, we presented the Dorothy Eldridge Peacemaker Award to two feisty women peacemakers: Medea Benjamin, who co-founded CodePink and Global Exchange, and Ann Wright, a retired U.S. Army Colonel and former diplomat, who resigned her diplomatic post to protest the invasion of Iraq.

We honored these brave women for being so outspoken and placing themselves at risk again and again to speak out against injustice.

We also recognized the work for peace and justice done by a group of young activists, the Bloomfield H.S. chapter of Amnesty

International. The students have protested and rallied against the Iraq War and the abuse of prisoners by the U.S. military at Guantanamo Bay. They have also worked with us on our counterrecruitment campaign.

David Bressen, NJPA's treasurer, who has helped keep us solvent over the years on a shoestring budget, received the Peace Action Person of the Year Award.

Our arrival at the event was greeted by about a dozen protesters, some brought in from out of state, who picketed in support of the war, unfortunately winning more news coverage than the 250 of us assembled inside to hear Benjamin and Wright.

## ANTI-NUKE CONFERENCE SET FOR AUGUST

A partnership of more than a dozen faith-based and secular organizations is planning a public forum to address the dangers of nuclear weapons and the urgent need to avoid any more close calls as have occurred in the past, even if they were not widely reported.

There are 10,000 active nuclear weapons in the U.S. and Russia, many on hair-trigger alert. The goal of the conference is to build broad-based movement to abolish nuclear weapons.

The Aug. 9 conference date is the 63rd anniversary of the destruction of Nagasaki by an atomic bomb.

It will be held at the First Memorial Presbyterian Church of Dover, from 2-9 p.m.

In addition to the church, the sponsors include NJ Peace Action, Northwest Peace Fellowship, Union County Peace Council, Hiroshima-Nagasaki Remembrance Committee, Tikun and the Network of Spiritual Progressives, American Joint Multi-Faith Assn., First Presbyterian Church of Rockaway, Islamic Center of Morris County, Islamic Center of Boonton, and the Presbytery of Newton.

## SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, November 15

## NJPA Annual Soup Lunch

Columbia High School,  
Maplewood

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  
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## More News . . .



### NJPA SUES GEORGE BUSH OVER IRAQ

New Jersey Peace Action joined with the parents of two American soldiers on May 13 in a lawsuit against George W. Bush, alleging that he violated the U.S. Constitution by commencing and waging the war against Iraq.

The complaint alleges that Bush violated Article 1, section 8, which gives Congress the sole authority to start a war. A formal declaration of war is necessary and the Congressional authorization in Oct. 2002, for the use of force was insufficient. The lawsuit does not ask the court to stop the Iraq War but, noting the Bush administration's threats of military action against Iran, seeks a declaration that such a move would be unconstitutional. It urges swift action by the court because of the impending possibility of another war.

Joining NJPA as named plaintiffs in the lawsuit are Anna Berlinrut of Maplewood and Paula Rogovin of Teaneck, both New Jersey spokespersons for the group Military Families Speak Out. Berlinrut has a Marine son who has already done two tours in Iraq. Rogovin's son, also a Marine, is on his second tour.

The lawsuit was filed in federal court in Newark by Prof. Frank Askin of the Rutgers University Law School Constitutional Litigation Clinic. Though the suit is unlikely to succeed, NJPA hopes that it will focus public attention on the real possibility that Bush will expand the disastrous war in Iraq.

Says NJPA Executive Director Madelyn Hoffman: "New Jersey Peace Action believes that it is during difficult times that our resolve to protect our constitutional system of checks and balances is truly put to the test. The cost of war is too high, both in terms of human lives and dollars, to put decisions of such consequence in the hands of just one person."

### ~ 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 including us in your will or life insurance policy, or to learn more about other planned giving options, please contact us.*

### RIDE THE NJPA PEACE TRAIN!



YOU can be part of the NJPA Peace Train in this important election year! We can provide vigil groups, chapters, peace sites, and individuals with a peace train car for members to sign and write messages to our senators on the most important peace issues.

In the fall we will "ride" our peace train to the offices of our U.S. Senators and present them with our Wish List for Peace.

Come join us on the ride with your group's peace train car! For specifications on how to make your own peace train car, contact the NJPA office or check our website.

### DON'T SEND OUR NATIONAL GUARD TO IRAQ—KEEP THEM HOME!

Join the more than 3,500 people who have signed a petition to Gov. Jon Corzine urging him to take a stand against deploying New Jersey National Guard members to Iraq. A massive call-up of over 3,000 guard members, the largest in New Jersey history, is planned for June.

The petition, which also calls for defederalizing the guard, is sponsored by NJ Peace Action, Military Families Speak Out of Bergen and Essex Counties, Veterans for Peace Chapter 21, People's Organization for Progress, NJ Iraq Veterans Against the War and NJ Labor Against the War.

It can be found online at [www.njpetition.org](http://www.njpetition.org). You can also visit [www.njpeaceaction.org](http://www.njpeaceaction.org) to download it for circulation in your community. Additional information about defederalizing the National Guard can be found at [www.peaceandjusticecoalition.org](http://www.peaceandjusticecoalition.org) and [www.libertytreedfr.org/guard.php](http://www.libertytreedfr.org/guard.php)





# Legislative Action Alert



*Several resolutions proposed by New Jersey legislators would keep our soldiers from being sent to fight in Iraq and/or bring home those already there. Please contact your representatives to urge their support.*

**SJR 55**—Would require Gov. Jon Corzine and NJ Legislature to refuse deployment of NJ National Guard to Iraq. The Peace and Justice Coalition (of which NJ Peace Action is a member), together with a national coalition, "Bring the Guard Home (It's the Law!)," worked to develop this state-level initiative to end the Iraq War.

**SR 76**— Urges the President and Secretary of Defense to recall all NJ National Guard troops from Iraq.

**AJR 89**—Urges the President and Congress to withdraw troops from Iraq and end war funding.

**CONTACT INFO** (check [www.njleg.state.nj.us](http://www.njleg.state.nj.us) for the name of your legislator and other tel. nos. & e-mail addresses)

District Senator

17 Bob Smith 732-752-0770  
 18 Barbara Buono 732-205-1372  
 19 Joseph Vitale 732-855-7441  
 20 Raymond Lesniak 908-624-0880  
 21 Thomas Kean Jr. 908-232-3673  
 22 Nicholas Scutari 908-587-0404  
 23 Leonard Lance 908-788-6900  
 24 Steven Oroho 973-300-0200  
 25 Anthony Bucco 973-627-9700  
 26 Joseph Pennacchio 973-984-0922  
 27 Richard Codey 973-731-6770  
 28 Ronald Rice 973-371-5665  
 29 M. Teresa Ruiz 973-484-1000  
 31 Sandra Cunningham 201-451-5100  
 32 Nicholas Sacco 201-295-0200  
 33 Brian Stack 201-330-3233  
 34 Nia Gill 973-509-0388  
 36 Paul Sarlo 201-804-8118  
 37 Loretta Weinberg 201-928-0100

Assemblywoman/Assemblyman

Upendra Chivukula 732-247-3999 Joseph Egan 732-249-4550  
 Peter Barnes 732-548-1406 Patrick Diegnan 908-757-1677  
 Joseph Vas 732-324-5955 John Wisniewski 732-316-1885  
 Neil Cohen 908-624-0880 Joseph Cryan 908-624-0880  
 Jon Bramnick 908-232-2073 Eric Munoz 908-232-2073  
 Jerry Green 908-561-5757 Linda Stender 908-668-1900  
 Michael Doherty 908-835-0552 Marcia Karrow 908-782-5127  
 Gary Chiusano 973-300-0200 Alison McHose 973-300-0200  
 Michael Carroll 973-539-8113 Richard Merkt 973-895-9100  
 Alex DeCroce 973-984-0922 Jay Webber 973-984-0922  
 Mila Jasey 973-762-1886 John McKeon 973-275-1113  
 Ralph Caputo 973-450-0484 Cleopatra Tucker 973-926-4320  
 Albert Coutinho 973-589-0713 L. Grace Spencer 973-624-1730  
 Anthony Chiappone 201-436-0473 L. Harvey Smith 201-536-7851  
 Vincent Prieto 201-770-1303 Joan Quigley 201-217-4614  
 Ruben Ramos Jr. 201-714-4960 Caridad Rodriguez 201-854-0900  
 Thomas Giblin 973-779-3125 Sheila Oliver 973-395-1166  
 Frederick Scalera 973-667-4431 Gary Schaer 973-249-3665  
 Gordon Johnson 201-928-0100 Valerie Huttler 201-928-0100

**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 or any two for \$125 (please check which one):

DVD Ann Wright and Medea Benjamin at NJPA 2008 Dinner \_\_\_\_\_  
 BOOK Ann Wright's *Dissent: Voices of Conscience* \_\_\_\_\_ OR *Peace Action: Past, Present, and Future* \_\_\_\_\_

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**



**Women Peacemakers:  
Col. (ret.) Ann Wright and  
Medea Benjamin**

**Contact Information:**

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www.njpeaceaction.org**

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**Quote for the Season . . .**

*"Peace Action's message is one of empowerment. We can and need to be in the vanguard of reclaiming the power of the citizenry. Ours is NOT a consumer politics. We must hold our politicians accountable by being engaged and persistent."*

**Kevin Martin, President, national Peace Action  
speaking at June 7 Tools for Democracy event**

**Tools for Democracy Workshop Builds the Foundation for Peace Voter 2008**

New Jersey Peace Action's Political Action Committee sponsored a Tools for Democracy Workshop for Elections 2008 at Bloomfield College to provide activists with the skills necessary to help make peace issues part of the election process in this significant election year. Workshop sessions at the June 7 event focused on enhancing communication with the media, local community organizing, public speaking, tabling, getting out the vote, and lobbying our elected representatives.

The keynote address by Kevin Martin, Executive Director of Peace Action National, discussed the Peace Voter 2008 campaign. Through its presidential candidate voter guides, the campaign will highlight how the candidates stand on key peace issues and hold them accountable for their positions, even on those issues where they appear to be in line with Peace Action's stance. Kevin also presented an Issues Workshop on the military budget and its impact on programs for community needs.

Participants in the workshop sessions created action plans covering areas such as use of the Internet for communications; tabling and voter registration; and the development and distribution of Voter Guides. Participants in the local community organizing session plan to join a newly formed progressive list serve and website (name to be determined). The list serve and website will be a clearinghouse for information, events, and links for groups working for peace in New Jersey communities. Other plans include getting out the vote by providing voter registration at various tabling events throughout the summer and fall and at college campuses.

NJPA is currently looking for volunteers to table at various festivals and street fairs throughout the summer and fall to help get out the vote and be part of our Peace Voter 2008 campaign. Specific information on training for building web skills and tabling training will be available by late summer. In addition, NJPA is available to send people to provide training for local groups. And don't forget to order a Peace Train car to appear at one of your summer events. We now have about 15 cars filled with signatures, but hope for at least 25. For more information on volunteering for tabling or about the trainings, contact the NJ Peace Action office.

