

May/June 2008

# Peace Matters

There Is No  
Peace Without  
Justice

## Annual Rice and Beans Potluck "Picnic" Sunday June 1, 2008, 2:00 P.M. Hanscom Park Pavilion, 32<sup>nd</sup> and Woolworth Avenue, Omaha

The annual rice and beans dinner is a chance to share a meal in solidarity with people in the world who survive each day with so much less than we enjoy. It is also the major fund-raising event for the Omaha chapter of Nebraskans for Peace, so please bring your checkbook and an open heart.

A special presentation by University of Nebraska at Lincoln Economics Professor Hendrik (Hank) van den Berg will address the cost of war to the United States and Iraq. He will talk about the estimates of \$3 trillion that the war in Iraq will cost the United States--if we leave that country soon. The much smaller country of Iraq with 25 million people will likely pay the same amount as the United States.

Van den Berg has written college textbooks titled "International Economics," "Economic Growth and Development" and "International Trade and Economic Growth," which explores if an open or closed economy grows faster. He has been at UNL for 19 years, and previously he lived and worked in Nicaragua, Brazil, Mexico and Portugal. He is a regular writer for the NFP Nebraska Report newsletter.

This rice and beans event should be more fun for entire families than our past dinners because it is in a park. Please bring your entire family and outdoor toys for the kids, such as a Frisbee or a ball to share, . . .

**Please bring a bean dish, salad or dessert. NFP will supply the rice, drinks, and place settings (or you may bring your own). We do need you to R.S.V.P. to [nfpOmaha@NebraskansForPeace.org](mailto:nfpOmaha@NebraskansForPeace.org) or 453-0776 so we will know how much rice to make. Please send an email message with a subject of: "R.S.V.P. Rice and Beans, \_\_\_ persons," letting us know the number of people who will attend from your home.**



Joan Costello and Holly Dzyban at Nebraskans for Peace Earth Day Booth

## HEAR FORMER ISRAELI SOLDIER, NOW A PEACE ACTIVIST

By Anne Else, Co-chairwoman, Nebraskans for Peace Palestinian Rights Group

Chen Alon, a former Israeli soldier discharged when he signed a statement refusing to participate in military action against the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, will talk about his peace work. The Omaha event featuring Chen, who uses Theatre of the Oppressed activities in his work, is free. It will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Friday May 23 and will take place at Rejoice Lutheran Church, 2556 South 138th Street (West Center Road and 138th Street).

Chen is a member of Combatants for Peace, who describe themselves as follows:

"We are a group of Israeli and Palestinian individuals who were actively involved in the cycle of violence in our area. The Israelis served as combat soldiers in the Israel Defense Forces and the Palestinians were involved in acts of violence in the name of Palestinian liberation.

*(continued on page 2)*

# Peace Matters

"We all used weapons against one another, and looked at each other only through weapon sights; however today we cooperate and commit ourselves to the following:

- ✎ \*We no longer believe that the conflict can be resolved through violence
- ✎ \*We believe that the blood bath will not end unless we act together to terminate the occupation and stop all forms of violence.
- ✎ \*We call for the establishment of a Palestinian State, alongside the State of Israel. The two states can exist in peace and security one by the other.
- ✎ \*We will use only non violent means to achieve our goals and call for both societies to end violence."

## FOURTH OMAHA PEACE AND JUSTICE EXPO SMALLER TURNOUT BUT PROMISING RESULTS

By Elaine Wells, Chairwoman of the Peacemakers Group and Expo Committee Member

Do you have more than one pair of shoes, more than one set of underwear, and a choice about what you will eat for each meal? If so, you are among the most affluent 10 percent of people who ever lived.

Maybe we are so well-off that it is hard to imagine life in the slums of Kenya, where people have to "walk over plastic bags of human waste, used needles, sewage and pig droppings" to get to their windowless mud shanties that are too small to stand up in. (From the February 2008 issue of Brio and Beyond in an article titled "Touching Poverty: Kenya Changed My Life.") Maybe that inability to empathize with such an alien existence was the reason for a smaller turnout at Expo 2008--or maybe people want to avoid feeling disheartened and helpless when they hear that **26,500 children die every day from malnutrition and preventable diseases.**



The enormity of such problems in Kenya and other places does not intimidate Sam Daley-Harris, keynote speaker at the April 26 expo held at Lewis and Clark Middle School. . He actually rejoices when he learns that the daily death toll is only 26,500; for that number is DOWN from 41,000 just a few years ago. This amazing decrease is one of the tangible results of the efforts of ordinary people who participate in RESULTS, the grassroots lobbying organization started by him in 1980.

Later Daley-Harris heard of "microcredit" and the Grameen (village) Bank, which was started in Bangladesh when Professor Mohammad Yunus loaned a total of \$27.00 to 45 impoverished borrowers. In addition to the small loans, Yunus provided relevant business training and organized the borrowers (mostly women) into support groups that kept members on track and resulted in a 98 percent repayment rate.

What do these women do when they start to earn a livable income? They provide better shelter and feed their families every day--but first they bring their children home and out of indentured servitude, which is the fate of so many destitute children around the world.

Recognizing the power of microcredit, Daley-Harris organized the Microcredit Summit in 1995, and in 1997 it attracted 2,900 representatives from 137 countries. They set a goal of giving 100 million micro loans to the world's poorest families by 2005. By the end of 2006, Mohammad Yunus had won the Nobel Peace Prize, the Grameen Bank had 7.5 million borrowers, and the Microcredit Summit Campaign had made 133 million loans, with 93 million of them going to the poorest of the poor.

Can you imagine the spectacular changes in the lives of these millions of families?

**If you want to invest your time, energy or money in a project that really produces positive results, consider joining the new RESULTS chapter in Omaha and contact me at 573-1702 or [mmwells1@cox.net](mailto:mmwells1@cox.net). Our first meeting will be a conference call with Daley-Harris on May 29 at 7:00 p.m. at Northside Christian Church, 5555 Larimore Ave (a few blocks north of Ames on 56th St.).**

The Omaha Peace and Justice Expo was started by Nebraskans for Peace member Steve Thyberg in 2004. In addition to keynote speaker Sam Daley-Harris, there were twelve workshops and delightful music by Michael Murphy, Kyle Knapp and the choir of First Unitarian Church.

### Answer:

Eleanor Roosevelt, American first lady  
(1884-1962).

(Continued from page 2)

## INTERNATIONAL STRATCOM CONFERENCE

By Mark Welsch, NFP Omaha Coordinator

The 16th Annual International Space Organizing Conference and Protest for the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power In Space was held in Omaha on April 11 through the 13<sup>th</sup>. We started with a large number of people at a peace vigil at Kinney Gate



at Offutt Air Force Base, the home of StratCom. It was a very cold and windy day with a little snow. Fifty brave people rode on Ollie the Trolley to get to StratCom, and others carpoled. Some high school students from New Mexico didn't have proper winter coats but they refused to go back to the Trolley until the vigil was done. Older persons were there too, including 89-year-old Peg Gallagher, who continues to help at vigils like this. Peg and Carol Urner from Portland Oregon, on a walker, were dropped off at the gate, but the police refused to allow them to be picked up at the gate when we were done. So these ladies had to walk about half a mile with the rest of us to get to a side street where they could get a ride home. We sang peace songs and listened to people from around the world talk about why we were there at StratCom and why we should not be in Iraq.

It was the biggest and best conference they have held, and the volunteer work of Nebraskans for Peace people was a factor. About 200 people from 28 states and 12 countries attended. **THANK YOU** to everyone who helped with home-stays, transportation, food, phone calls and everything else. Former Omaha NFP coordinator Cary Vigneri catered the evening meals, and lots of volunteers provided soup and other goodies for Saturday's noon meal. Everyone who helped made a great impression on the Global Network board members, their staff, association members and me. Attendees learned about StratCom and they are now ready to help us shine a brighter light on what StratCom has become.



As things now stand, the next war the White House initiates will be planned, launched and directed by StratCom. Building global awareness is essential if we are to get StratCom to back away from the brink of more wars. Thanks to all who



**Peace Matters Committee:**

Editor: Mark Welsch  
Assistant Editor: Victoria Peterson  
Layout: Carol Windrum and Tim Fickenscher

**NFP-Omaha Office**  
**PO Box 6418**  
**Omaha, NE 68106**  
**402/453-0776**  
**nfpOmaha@NebraskansForPeace.org.**

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Omaha, NE  
Permit #83

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**Question:** Who said, "It isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it."? (Answer Inside)

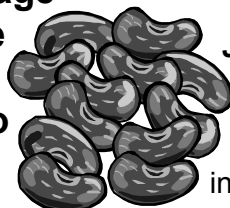
## Calendar of Events

**Every Monday, 7:45-8:15 a.m.** Peace Vigil outside of Kinney Gate at Offutt Air Force Base in Bellevue. Sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters in South Omaha. For more information contact Sr. Marian Klostermann at 731-2910.



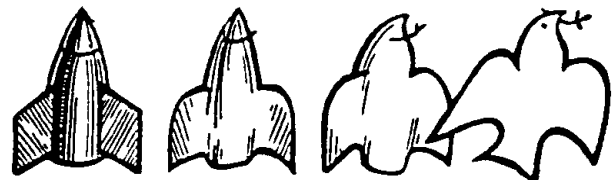
**Every Wednesday, 4:30-5:30 p.m.** Peace Vigil at StratCom/UNO, 6801 Pine Street (east of UNO Scott Technology Center). Contact person is Jerry Ebner at cwomaha@gmail.com or 502-5887.

**June 1, 2008, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.** Rice and Beans "Picnic" in the Hanscom Park Pavilion at 32<sup>nd</sup> and Woolworth Avenue in Omaha (See front page story about this event.) **Please send an email message with a subject of: "R.S.V.P. Rice and Beans, \_\_ persons," letting us know the number of people who will attend from your home.**



**June 6, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m., Clarification of Thought Roundtable Discussion: What is the Catholic Worker Movement after 75 years and after the Death of Dorothy Day?** Brian Terrell and Betsy Kennan of the CW Farm from Maloy, Iowa will speak about the New Dorothy Day Journals and the movement as a whole after Dorothy Day. Showing of a New Documentary **"Don't Call me a Saint"** about the life of Dorothy Day. This is free. Bring a friend, park in back of the Omaha Catholic Worker House, 1104 N. 24th Street, Omaha. Contact person is Jerry Ebner at cwomaha@gmail.com or 502-5887.

**June 11, 6:00 p.m.,** NFP Omaha Leadership meeting at Augustana Lutheran Church, 3647 Lafayette Avenue. All are welcome. Contact person is Mark Welsch at 453-0776.



**June 14, 6:00 p.m.** Peace Seekers and Pizza, **7:00 p.m.** discussion, reflection and leadership support at 4924 Chicago Street. Contact person is Jo Peterson at 350-3019.

**June 30, 7:00 p.m.** Palestinian Task Force meeting in Sisters of Mercy Apartments common room at 1705 S. 72nd Street. Contact Anne Else at 556-5184 for more information.