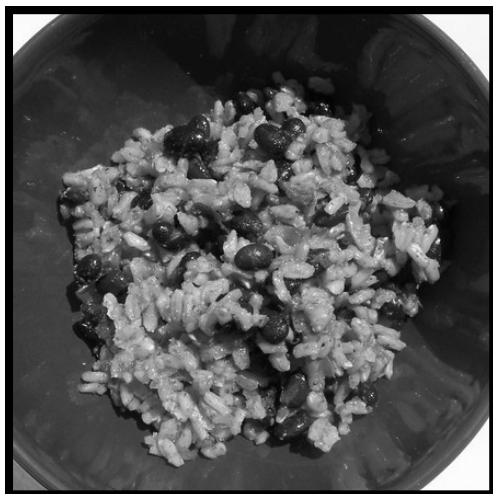


March/April 2009

Peace Matters

There Is No
Peace Without
Justice

Rice and Beans Fundraising Dinner on May 1 By Holly Dzyban, NFP Member



The annual Nebraskans For Peace Rice and Beans Fundraising Dinner will be on Friday May 1, starting with social time at 5:30 p.m. and the meal at 5:45. The location is the First United Methodist Church at 7020 Cass Street (five

blocks north of Dodge Street) in Cary Hall, with entrance on the east side of the church. The 2009 theme is **"U.S. Health Care, Today and Tomorrow"**. Please invite your friends and family to join you at the dinner.

The evening begins with a community potluck dinner. We will provide enough rice for all, but participants should bring a dish to share. Toward the end of the meal, we will briefly recap NFP's recent accomplishments and discuss future plans. Our main program features two speakers: Richard L. Brown from the Charles Drew Health Center and Andrea Skolkin of OneWorld Community Health Centers, Inc.

Richard L. Brown, Ph.D. FACHE has served as the chief executive officer for the Charles Drew Health Center since 2001. For 25 years Charles Drew Health Center has provided high quality medical and mental health care to Omaha's uninsured and underinsured, and to those who live and work in its neighborhood.

Brown brought to Charles Drew Health Center more than 20 years of experience in managing health services organizations and 10 years experience teaching health care management. Under Brown's leadership, the center has experienced tremendous growth and change. The CDHC staff grew from 60

employees to over 90. The center launched a \$4 million capital campaign and completed construction of a 13,500 square-foot expansion in September 2007. Brown also secured funds to establish a sexually transmitted disease and partner notification program. Brown was the recipient of the 2006 Senior Health Services Executive of the Year Award.

Andrea Skolkin has served as chief executive officer at OneWorld Community Health Centers, Inc. since 2004. OneWorld provides culturally respectful, quality health care to the community, with special attention to the underserved.

Skolkin previously served as executive director of Hope Medical Outreach Coalition, where she grew a specialty health care network and developed a pharmacy for the uninsured. Since coming on board with OneWorld, Skolkin has led the center through significant growth. She secured private funds for capital to move the clinic to the historic Livestock Exchange Building. OneWorld expanded to include a satellite clinic in Plattsmouth, NE. The center also partnered with the Ronald McDonald House Charities to develop the Caremobile, a full-service dental clinic that travels to schools throughout the region to provide care to kids.

After the speakers, Jennifer A. Carter will moderate a question-and-answer session. Carter is attorney/director for the Health Care Access Program of the Nebraska Appleseed Center based in Lincoln.

ANNA BALTZER WILL VISIT NEBRASKA IN APRIL By Anne Else, Chairperson NFP Palestinian Rights Group

The Palestinian Rights Task Force of Nebraskans for Peace has arranged a tour of several Nebraska cities for Anna Baltzer, a Jewish-American Columbia graduate, granddaughter of holocaust refugees, Fulbright scholar and three-time volunteer with the International Women's Peace Service.

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(Continued from page 1)

Anna is still in the Middle East, where she has been for the last two months, so she will bring current first-hand knowledge to her presentations.

On April 1, Anna will make presentations about "*Life in Occupied Palestine: Eyewitness Stories and Photos*" at Hastings College and at the First St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Hastings. The next afternoon she will speak to students and faculty at Doane College.

On Friday and Saturday, April 3-4, she will be the featured resource person at the annual Peacemaking Conference in Lincoln. The conference, organized by a consortium of denominations, is free to the public. Anna will make a presentation about the history of Palestine and Israel on Friday afternoon, and at 7:00 p.m. at First United Methodist Church she will show her slide presentation on

"*Life in Occupied Palestine.*" The workshop sessions on Saturday will be held at First Mennonite Church beginning at 8:30 a.m.

First Unitarian Church in Sioux City will have Anna speak at its 11:00 a.m. service on Sunday, April 5. That evening she will make a presentation at Morningside College in Sioux City. Her final day on this tour will be in Norfolk, Nebraska, on Monday, April 6, where she will speak at Northeast Nebraska Community College. A potluck supper that evening will welcome people from Norfolk to hear Anna's insights into the conflict causing so much suffering in Palestine and Israel.

Omaha residents are encouraged to attend the Lincoln Peace Conference. For more specific information about times and locations, call 556-5184.



BEGINNING PEACE By Cary Vigneri, NFP Member

"While there is a lower class, I am in it, while there is a criminal element, I am of it, and while there is a soul in prison, I am not free." Eugene V Debs

No matter how much feel-good politics and

propaganda are being thrown our way, the election of Barack Obama is but a fig and must not be construed as a signal to rest or retire vigilance in the advocacy of human progress and world peace.

Unfortunately, "our side" didn't really win. In my opinion, the best that has been achieved so far is that a vestige of hope has entered the public arena in place of despair and outrage. Yet war, pestilence, economic disparity and oppression remain constant. The need to distribute food, clothes, housing, education and medical services to more than half of the earth's six billion humans presses more urgently every day that passes, and every day on planet earth, more than 100 plant and animal species become extinct, lost forever to the whirling gene soup that contributed to the evolution of the cosmos for eons before this, their fateful day of irretrievable loss. Our task remains; its myriad demands vie for attention.

Life itself pleads for its defense against the works of those lost souls who disregard all holiness, all sacred learning, and all of nature's dignity for personal gain and power.

The time to re-dedicate to the work at hand is here and now. And we have an opportunity to move forward within this uniquely historical period. The aforementioned feel-good politics can have great utility in that, through the agency of popular "political activism" that the recent political scene has given rise to, there are now many people connected, inspired and informed enough to begin to assemble critical mass large enough to tip the balance in favor of human progress.

If indeed the peace community is ahead of the curve on the philosophical and informational underpinnings of the need for and the means to achieve social, economic and ecological improvement, our contribution to the process may now be weighty enough to inspire truly useful thinking targeting solutions. Nebraskans for Peace, continue to shine the light on injustice and insane policy, lobby for solutions, join with community in providing relief for the oppressed, create community for ongoing social action and for brainstorming strategies for more equitable global systems. Reach across to touch others with the message of peace and find areas of mutual agreement.

You are important, indispensable. Closely hold the strong belief that a personal contribution is neither small nor insignificant. Redouble your effort. Think and act joyfully in ways that better the soul and the larger society of all consciousness to which the individual is eternally wed. Act in your own behalf, for the good of all.

Celebrate peace in your life, in your family; cultivate peace in your world.

THE HISTORIC INAUGURATION By Mark Welsch, Omaha Coordinator

What a trip, day, hour and minute it was! To be on the mall in Washington D.C. surrounded by 1.5 million people watching Barack Obama sworn in as the first Black president of the United States of America was unforgettable. Hope was in the air. People were talking about it, Black with White. When the Obamas appeared



on the stage people were crying with joy. Cheers went up after he took the oath of office. Then many started the long trip home, full of hope and expectation of a better future. Pictures of the trip are on www.MySpace.com/NebraskansForPeace

My friend and I stayed in D.C. for several days to do some sightseeing after Tuesday's big event, focusing on the history of Blacks in this nation. One of the most memorable stops was Frederick Douglass's home and visitors center just a little north of the mall. Douglass was born a slave with a White father in Maryland in 1818 and died in 1895. At the age of 20 he escaped to New York. After seven years he was making a name for himself as a well-spoken and intelligent Negro working to end slavery. Then he heard that run-away slave hunters were coming after him. He left and spent

a few years in Europe. After two abolitionists purchased his freedom for \$150 he returned to the United States. He wrote and spoke for the abolition of slavery and for women's right to vote.

Many of Douglass' quotes that are on display at his home's visitors center touched my mind and soul and are as appropriate to today's race relations as they were over 100 years ago. Two of them are, "**The American people have this lesson to learn: That where justice is denied, where poverty is enforced, where ignorance prevails, and where any one class is made to feel that society is an organized conspiracy to oppress, rob, and degrade them, neither persons or property will be safe.**" and, "**If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, they want the rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters. This struggle may be a moral one, or it may be a physical one, and it may be both moral and physical, but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did, and it never will.**"

I find those words to be inspiring, and they cause me to agitate, to make a difference, to write letters, or call a congressman, state senator or governor to tell them what I think about an issue. Since I've gotten back I have written to several elected officials. I urge readers to find the fire in your belly that you had during the Vietnam War, the nuclear weapons talks, or any other issue that caused you to take action, or find that fire today about Whiteclay and take action. As Mr. Douglass implored a young Black man to do with his life the day before he died . . . AGITATE, AGITATE, AGITATE! Contact information for our elected officials is in the Nebraska Report newspaper.

Answer:

The third president and slave owner Thomas Jefferson, 1801–1809, born 1743, died July 4, 1826.



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Question: What former United States president said, "Dissent is the highest form of patriotism"?

(Answer Inside)

Calendar of Events

Wednesday, April 1, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Make Jokes Not War! A UNO-NFP Chapter event in UNO's Milo Bail Student Center hallway near south entrance at 60th & Dodge St. Contact Candella 712-520-4298.

Friday, April 3, 7:00 p.m. "Life in Occupied Palestine Eyewitness Stories and Photos" by Anna Baltzer, a Jewish-American Columbian graduate and Fulbright scholar. At First United Methodist Church, 50th and St. Paul, Lincoln. Info at http://www.fmclincoln.org/peacemaking_workshop/2009

Saturday April 4, 8:30 - 2:00, Peacemaking Workshop XXII at First Mennonite Church, 7300 Holdrege St, Lincoln. Anna Baltzer and others. Info at http://www.fmclincoln.org/peacemaking_workshop/2009

Tuesday, April 7, 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., Election Day – Take friends to the polls! 444-VOTE (8683) www.votedouglascounty.com

Tuesday April 7, 10:00 a.m. until April 9, Peace Fest - Dana College, Blair, Ten speakers, begins with Tim Rinne, State coordinator of NFP speaking on Stratcom and concluding April 9 at 10:00 a.m. with Sr. Maryann Klostermann speaking on Alternatives to Violence. Many other speakers! Schedule at <http://www.progressiveomaha.com/calendar/DanaPeaceFest2009.ppt>

Wednesday, April 8, 3:00 p.m., Peace Conference at Dana College in Blair NE. Noura Erekat has returned from a fact-finding mission to Gaza. Hosted by the Dana NFP Chapter.

Wednesday, April 8, 7:00 p.m., NFP Omaha Leadership meeting at Augustana Lutheran Church, 3647 Lafayette Avenue. Contact Mark Welsch at 453-0776.

Tuesday April 14 6:00–9:00 p.m. 8th Annual Malcolm X Festival and Conference, "An Inaugural Ride to Freedom - Legacy of a People, A Movement, A Mission" at the Great Escape Movie Theatre - 7440 Crown Point Avenue
ADMISSION: \$7 Contact: Felicia Dailey 554-2412

Saturday, April 18, Noon–8:00 p.m., Earth Day Omaha in Elmwood Park. Many family friendly booths, music and food.

Monday, April 27, 7:00 p.m. NFP's Palestinian Task Force meeting. Contact Anne Else at 556-5184.

Friday, May 1, 5:45 p.m., NFP's Rice and Beans Fundraising Dinner, see story on page 1.

Wednesday, May 11, 7:00 p.m., NFP Omaha Leadership meeting at Augustana Lutheran Church, 3647 Lafayette Ave. Contact Mark Welsch at 453-0776.

Every Saturday, 1:00-2:00 p.m. Anti-War and Peace Vigil at 72nd and Dodge Streets Contact Steve Horn at 426-9068.

Every Wednesday, 4:30-5:30 p.m. Peace Vigil at StratCom/UNO, 6801 Pine St. (east of UNO Scott Technology Center). Contact Jerry Ebner at 502-5887.

Every Wednesday, 7:00 p.m. Progressive movies and dinner at McFoster's at 38th and Farnam Streets. See <http://www.progressiveomaha.com/films.htm> for more info.

Every First Wednesday of the month, Noon - 1:00 p.m. "The Hungry Club" meeting at Big Mamma's Kitchen at 3223 N. 45th St., Building A on the Turning Point Campus. Interesting speaker every month. Contact 455-MAMA.

Every Second Saturday of the month, potluck begins at 6:00 p.m., meeting at 7:00 p.m. Progressive Omaha the Organization - A time for networking, discussion and planning. All Omaha progressives invited. Jo's house at 4924 Chicago St.

Every Second Thursday of the month, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. - Peace Seekers and Pizza - Time for discussion, reflection and leadership support, Jo's house at 4924 Chicago St.