

photo: Phyllis Bretholtz



*Peace day, June 2, 2007*

**In recognition of the 25th anniversary of the Peace Commission**, the Cambridge City Council declared Cambridge as a “City of Peace” in the year 2007. The commission reached out to all of Cambridge - community groups, civic institutions, businesses, families, faith communities - and its public institutions and city departments to make connections to peace building through activities, exhibitions, and resource sharing. A banner declaring Cambridge as a City of Peace in 7 languages, poster and bumper stickers and Peace Day at City Hall extended the message.

Cambridge as a city of peace becomes the vision for what is possible.

**For more information:**

[www.cambridgema.gov/dept/peace.html](http://www.cambridgema.gov/dept/peace.html)

[peace@cambridgema.gov](mailto:peace@cambridgema.gov)

51 Inman St. Cambridge, MA 02139  
617-349-4694 FAX 617-349-4766

# ***THE CAMBRIDGE PEACE COMMISSION***

The Cambridge Peace Commission's mission is to promote peacemaking within Cambridge, at the personal, neighborhood and citywide level. It was established in 1982 as the Cambridge Commission for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace Education. It came into being in reaction to a federal government request to the city to draw up an evacuation plan in the event of nuclear attack. Rather than comply with this undoable and alarmist request, the city created a booklet “No Where To Hide” on the need to prevent nuclear attack, and the City Council, in support of a Peace Education Project citizen’s group, created an official Commission.

Since its initial mandate to confront the concerns of nuclear war, the Commission has expanded its mission to challenge local forms of discrimination that foster violence and division and to promote ideas and programs that affirm diversity and build community within our city. Dedicated to the concept of thinking globally and acting locally, the Commission connects state, national and international issues which affect the city with Cambridge. The Commission pays special attention to the concerns of young people and the schools by collaborating with others to design creative programs to prevent further violence and promote peacebuilding. The Commission acts as a link between peace organizations, social justice efforts, anti-violence coalitions, communities and the municipal government.

It has one paid staff member and a volunteer Commission which represents the diversity of the city.



# 25 YEARS OF PEACEMAKING IN CAMBRIDGE.

**Here are some of the accomplishments:**

## **Creating a culture of peace in the schools by**

Facilitating collaborations with educators on peace and multicultural education; Creating K-6 Resolution of Conflict Kits, Peace Days in the schools and educational materials for Middle Eastern Culture, Central America, Haiti and Discovering Columbus ; Sponsoring a Toy Gun Swap with educational materials on Toys of Violence; Collaborating for 15 years of Peaceable School Institutes for teachers at Lesley University; Teaching Bullying, Harassment and Homophobia Workshops; Authoring a Cable TV Series on Alternatives to Violence; Introducing restorative justice principles and practices to staff and students through presentations, meetings, summer workshops to evaluate different models and pilot ideas of circles and panels; Sustaining a resource library on peacemaking/non-violence.

## **Creating a culture of peace in the community by**

Honoring Martin Luther King's birthday with a vigil and community gathering to celebrate peace making in a time of war; Sponsoring annual inclusive Holocaust commemorations; celebrating community members through Peace and Justice Awards; Promoting a facilitated dialogue on the Middle East "See(k)ing Higher Ground" now used as a model for other communities; Collecting shoes for the anti-gun violence project and organizing the reception for the local Million Mom Marchers; hosting Middle Passage Peace walkers; Staging a reading of the play "Guantanamo" and a Concert of "banned" music

## **Building a city-wide network for peace, safety and equality**

**by sponsoring** the city's Safe Neighborhoods Campaign; city-wide initiatives such as Activist Network Teas, Sing out for Peace, educational events on the principles and practices of nonviolence and nonviolent communication; a series of forums looking at race and class as they impact individuals, neighborhoods and city institutions; Chairing 8 years of the Violence Prevention Task Force ; Undertaking a restorative justice initiative to promote accountability, inclusion and all voices over punishment; Initiating peace circles for connection across ages, neighborhoods and ethnicities; Passing Sanctuary resolutions including opposition to the USA PATRIOT Act and welcoming statements for immigrant communities

## **Fostering youth leadership for peace and justice by**

Creating and sustaining the Youth Peace and Justice Corps, a multiracial, multi-issue team of CRLS students building community for social justice, now being led by former members; Sponsoring a Summer Peace Camp for twelve years with international volunteers living, working and in dialogue with Cambridge youth.

## **Thinking globally, acting locally by**

Creating sister city relationships with Yerevan, Armenia, San Jose Las Flores, El Salvador, and Cienfuegos, Cuba; Joining the International Association of Peace Messenger Cities, hosting anti-base activists from Okinawa; Passing selective purchasing resolutions against injustice in Burma, East Timor, Nigeria and for human rights for Tibet, N. Ireland, Chiapas, and Kosovo; Building friendship through delegations and people-to-people efforts with Haiti and Bethlehem; Hosting international effort for "Mayors for Peace".

## **Challenging the destructive consequences of war by**

Spearheading coalitions, community gatherings, vigils and teach-ins seeking alternatives to war ; Videotaping stories by veterans opposed to war ; Organizing hearing during the Gulf War ending High School military recruitment; Offering materials and alternatives against violence in the aftermath of September 11 and opt out information ; Supporting United for Justice With Peace and the campaign for civil liberties; Being a consistent municipal voice for peace as the only path to real security.

## **Building a consensus for peace and disarmament by**

Participating in the Disarmament Action Network focused on issues ranging from Middle East justice work to nuclear weapons abolition; Researching and writing an Economic Diversification Report on Cambridge military contractors; Sending a brochure to all Cambridge residents on the use of tax dollars for the military; Sponsoring Hiroshima recognition events; Hosting the New England conference on Abolition of Nuclear Weapons; promoting Cities for Peace.

