

January/February 2009

Peace Matters

There Is No
Peace Without
Justice

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

By Holly Dzyban, NFP Member,
and Mark Welsch, Omaha Coordinator

Alternatives to the Military

The Omaha chapter of Nebraskans for Peace is expanding its work, seeking to go back into area high schools with the Alternatives to the Military project. So volunteers are needed!

These tasks can use help:

1. Calling school superintendents and principals to arrange school visits and increase understanding about the legal issues that surround military recruiting.
2. Visiting high schools to distribute information and answer questions about the military and alternatives to military service. This option requires a commitment of an hour or two.

Volunteers can choose their own days and hours. NFP will provide materials and informal training on military recruitment and career alternatives.

Those interested in joining this effort should contact Holly Dzyban at 408-6580 or fractone@yahoo.com. Or contact Mark Welsch at 453-0776 or [NFPOmaha@NebraskansForPeace.org](mailto:NFPomaha@NebraskansForPeace.org).

**Some may have only minutes,
not hours to help!**

Pass Better Legislation

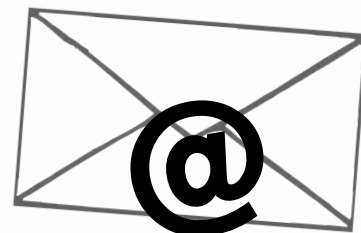
The Nebraska Unicameral started its 90-day session on January 7, 2009. Nebraskans for Peace will work to pass or to stop some of the bills. Our strength is in our members, supporters and friends who contact their

state senator and governor at critical times. That can be very easy if NFP has the email addresses of its members.

We send notes to our email list that summarize the issue, include links to the Uniform Resource Locator, known as URL, for the full bill and email addresses of your senator and the governor. Just click on your elected official's email address and send them a short note asking them to support or work against the bill. It takes just a few minutes, and it is a very effective way to influence the vote of your representative.

Legislators have reported that if they get just five emails about a bill, that can change their vote!

If you haven't gotten an email message from Mark Welsch, Omaha coordinator, at [NFPOmaha@NebraskansForPeace.org](mailto:NFPomaha@NebraskansForPeace.org) in the last week, please send your email address to him so the list can be updated. Or call Mark Welsch at 453-0776 to learn more about this opportunity. Your contact information is kept confidential—it is not sold.



Public Safety Auditor

By Mark Welsch, Omaha Coordinator

All who responded to the email Action Alert in December and either wrote or called or emailed your Omaha City Council member opposing the Independent Citizen Advocate proposal are to be commended! This quick action resulted in a delay by the city council. Those who didn't get that message should send their current email address to [NFPOmaha@NebraskansForPeace.org](mailto:NFPomaha@NebraskansForPeace.org) so you can help on this fast-moving issue.

After the public hearing, the Omaha City Council voted 7-0 to delay the final vote on the ordinance

Peace Matters

(Continued from page 1)

until January 27, 2009. They want to have meetings with the police union and real citizen advocates to create an ordinance that everyone will like.

Please write to or call your Omaha city council member and mayor and ask them to support what



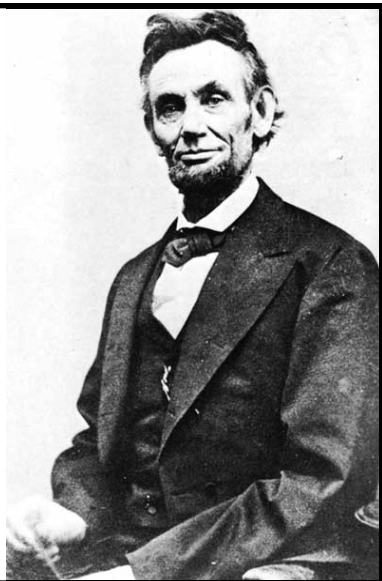
Christine Brandt behind Ben Salazar, Charles Parks and Willie Hamilton being interviewed by KETV reporter Todd Andrews at the Omaha City Council public hearing on Public Safety Auditor

the real citizen advocates like the Omahans For Justice Alliance, Omaha Together One Community, known as OTOC, Progressive Omaha and Nebraskans for Peace are asking them to do--simply fund the current public safety auditor's position.

You can see the ordinance and the accompanying analysis written up by Professor Sam Walker in the forum "East of 72nd Street" at <http://www.progressiveomaha.com/tikidir/tiki-forums.php>.

Answer:

**Abraham
Lincoln**



GIFTS FOR HOLIDAY, BIRTHDAY OR ANY TIME

By Anne Else,
Chairperson NFP Palestinian Rights Group

There's still time to buy olive oil and olive oil soap to share with family and friends as holiday, birthday or for any reason throughout the year. Because the purchase price provides fair trade wages to folks suffering from trade embargoes imposed by the Israeli government and buys olive trees to replace some of those destroyed and provides art and cultural classes for Palestinian youths, these items give twice: (1) to those with whom you share the olive oil and soap; and (2) to the Palestinian people.

A bottle of oil sells for \$20 and a bar of soap is \$5. We are also selling the Cat Lovers Against the Bomb Calendars for \$10.70 as a fundraiser for the Nebraska Peace Foundation. Call 556-5184 and double your giving!



WILL OMAHANS DRINK CONTAMINATED WATER FROM SUPERFUND SITE?

By Lorus Luetkenhaus and Melissa Konecky,
Community Co-chairs Restoration Advisory Board

The Mead Superfund site that state Sen. Don Preister talked about in the September 2008 Nebraska Report, has contaminated 11 square miles of groundwater, according to the Kansas City Corps of Engineers, the party responsible for cleanup. Some suspect there are more than 11 square miles contaminated now.

The site was not adequately characterized originally, and containment of the contamination has been elusive, resulting in ever more and larger water filter plants being built as new contaminants and Dense Non-Aqueous Phase and Liquids (DNAPLES) have been found. This reactive approach is not cost effective! The Kansas City Corps 8-13-2007 Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) presentation highlights three areas of non-containment. This is troubling--one of these areas is on the east side of the plume, not far from where the Metropolitan Utilities District's well field could conceivably pull contamination into the Omaha water supply. According to a July 2008 Kansas City Corps report, containment will not be achieved before the summer of 2011. However, after state Sen. Preister's

press conference last summer highlighting these dangers to Omaha's water, the Kansas City Corps



Over 60 people attended a meeting in Ashland about the superfund site that may be contaminating Omaha's water supply.

issued another report in August 2008 miraculously absolving the eastern side of the plume--it IS in containment after all!

The regulators are attempting to limit the public's "embarrassing" questions at RAB meetings. As manager of the Lower Platte North-Natural Resource District, John Miyoshi stated in his report dated Oct. 10, 2008, "There are a group of citizens who are trying to control the RAB and make it a forum for their personal views on the cleanup operation. We are working with the Corps, Department of Environmental Quality and Environmental Protection Agency to bring the RAB meetings back to a productive setting." Is asking follow-up questions about this very technical topic, and holding regulators to their promises "trying to control the RAB?" Is expecting honest answers to questions about water quality non-productive? People living near the contamination don't think so. This group of citizens is worried about their health and that of their neighbors.

For more information about this or ways to get involved in stopping the pollution from reaching Omaha's water supply, contact Melissa at 402-624-5580 or melissakonecky@yahoo.com.

"Yes, there is a Santa Clause" and His First Name is Sam

By Elaine Wells, State Board,
Nebraskans for Peace

Americans organize when kids have no toys for Christmas--but around the world **25,200 children DIE EVERY DAY** from malnutrition and preventable diseases. RESULTS and its founder Sam Daley-Harris are working steadily toward the Millennium Development Goal of slashing this rate in half by 2015.

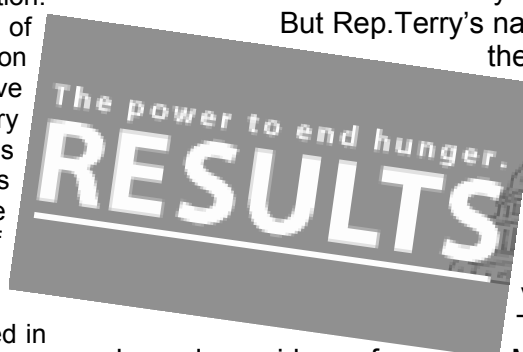
We care about thousands of people losing their jobs--but globally **almost a BILLION people live on less**

than \$1 per day. Yet the World Bank's research shows that "micro" credit loans (starting around \$50) can effectively address the worst aspects of poverty. Mohammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank and winner of the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize, stated: "No other organization has been as critical a partner in seeing to it that micro credit is used...to eradicate poverty and empower women as RESULTS and RESULTS Educational Fund's Microcredit Summit Campaign."

Last June ten Omahans became RESULTS partners! Two months later, five asked Congressman Lee Terry to sign a letter from Congress to the World Bank president. They told him how the Grameen Bank started by distributing just \$27 among 42 individuals. Then they read the true story of a five-year-old whose family had sold him into servitude because they couldn't afford to feed him. Someone else adopted a Vietnamese girl whose parents couldn't feed her.

Rep. Terry said, "Yes, I'll sign that letter." He no doubt agreed to sign because RESULTS is nonpartisan and humanitarian and because partners are trained to educate decision makers with the facts, AND to motivate them with the stories of real people whose lives are transformed by RESULTS.

But Rep. Terry's name did not appear on the letter. In November



ten more Omahans enthusiastically became partners. Ten days later two new and three original partners visited Rep. Lee Terry again. They

showed a video of Muhammad Yunus on 60 Minutes, and saw that **billion-dollar World Bank** projects often do nothing for the people they are supposed to help, but small micro credit loans enable people to work their way out of poverty. Rep. Terry signed the letter within an hour.

Call and learn how to help change the lives of millions, 573-1702.

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Question: Who was the first U.S. president to have African-Americans walk in the inaugural parade?
(Answer Inside)

Calendar of Events

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.

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

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

Every First Wednesday of the month, Noon - 1:00 p.m. "The Hungry Club" meeting at Big Mamma's Kitchen & Catering at 3223 North 45th Street, Building A on the Turning Point Campus. Arrive early and be assured a seat. The Hungry Club has interesting guest speakers every month. For more information call 455-MAMA.

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

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 Street

January NFP's Palestinian Task Force meeting. Contact person is Anne Else at 556-5184.

Wednesday, January 14, 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.

Monday, January 19, 6:30 p.m., Amnesty International invites everyone to the movie "Pray the Devil Back to Hell" showing at Film Streams at 1340 Webster Street. Film Streams is free to high school students on Monday showings with valid student ID, and tickets are \$8 general admission, \$6 for seniors, and \$4 for Film Streams' members. The film is a powerful, award-winning account of how a group of brave Liberian women took on the violent warlords and corrupt Charles Taylor regime and won a long-awaited peace for their shattered country. Peace is possible!

Tuesday, January 20, 11:00 a.m. Central time – Noon in Washington DC, Barack Obama and Joe Biden will officially be sworn into office at the United States Capitol Building in Washington DC. All are welcome.

February is Black History Month – Watch your email inbox for notes about events.

Wednesday, February 11, 7:00 p.m., NFP Omaha Leadership meeting at Augustana Lutheran Church, 3647 Lafayette Avenue. All are welcome. Contact person is Mark Welsch at 453-0776.

February NFP's Palestinian Task Force meeting. Contact person is Anne Else at 556-5184.