

Update

Broome County
New York



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February 2010

Cindy Sheehan coming to Binghamton

We have confirmed that Cindy Sheehan will be visiting the Binghamton area **April 8, 9, and 10th.**



We are hoping she will make an appearance at Binghamton University, that she will speak at a community appearance and book signing, as well as attend some additional special events. A planning committee is meeting to maximize the time Cindy is here. Everyone is welcome to provide input. To join the committee, contact **Barbara Kane Lewis:** bkanelewis@gmail.com, or 648-8621.

Cindy is the mother of Spc. Casey Sheehan who was killed in the illegal and immoral war in Iraq on 04 April 2004.

Cindy is probably best known for camping in front of George Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas in what became to be known as Camp Casey, named for her son.

Since then, Cindy has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, has been awarded dozens of peace awards from all over the world and even ran for Congress against House Speaker, Nancy Pelosi as an

independent and came in 2nd out of a field of seven candidates.

Currently Cindy is the host of her own internet radio show: *Cindy Sheehan's Soapbox*, weekly columnist for an English Language newspaper in Venezuela, called: *Correo del Orinoco* and is planning an extended anti-war camp in Washington DC, called **Camp OUT NOW**. She is the executive director of *Peace of the Action*.

Cindy is the author of five books. Her latest is: *Myth America II: 20 Greatest Myths of the Robber Class and the Case for Revolution*.

Cindy's websites are:
www.CindySheehansSoapbox.com
www.PeaceoftheAction.org

The details of Cindy's visit will be posted at bcpeaceaction.org.



Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed.

~President Dwight D. Eisenhower

World March for Peace

Jack Gilroy

After traveling 200 thousand kilometers, the international team of the World March arrived on January 2, at the Park of Study and Reflection, Punta de Vacas, Argentina. Close to 20,000 people heard the representatives of the World March from Chile, Argentina, India, Italy, the Philippines, Spain, and England that circled the globe calling for nuclear disarmament.

In our fall Peace Action newsletter *Update*, it was noted that Broome County Peace Action would join the march in New York City on November 30th. The cost of the bus was paid for in full by contributions and those who purchased seats. Broome County Peace Action's willingness to underwrite was rewarded with a \$16 profit. Forty five of us, mostly BCPA members met at Oakdale Mall, were bussed into Brooklyn, gathered a short distance from the Brooklyn Bridge and listened to our own Madison Terboss (12 years old) help open up the NYC Peace March Ceremony with a song of peace. Many hundreds of people then faced the wind and cold rain and walked across the Brooklyn Bridge to New York City Hall. Mayor Matt Ryan was the only mayor to speak to the crowd at City Hall. He spoke of how our community is devoted to peace, how Binghamton has

become a member of the Mayors for Peace program started in Hiroshima.

There were many professional camera men and women crossing the bridge and at City Hall; constant filming took place and reporters interviewed scores of marchers.

Support our Resisting Troops

At its December board meeting, Broome County Peace Action Board voted unanimously in favor of the following resolution:

“Broome County Peace Action, a 134-member local chapter of national Peace Action, supports troops who, acting on their conscience, refuse to deploy to Iraq or Afghanistan because they consider those wars and occupations to be illegal and immoral. Similarly, we support the deployed troops who for the same reason have applied for early discharge. We call on those who operate aircraft of any kind that kill Iraqis, Afghanis, or Pakistanis to desist. We admire the courage of all servicemen and women who actively resist these unjust wars. By rejecting their “mission” and disobeying orders at great personal risk, they are upholding the Constitution that empowers Congress alone to declare war, but does not empower the President to wage “preventive” wars that flout international law.”

The Board then voted to send the resolution to the National Board of Peace Action, requesting that it take a similar position. The Board meets on February 7th in Washington, DC and the matter will be considered then. Our board also voted to send the resolution to Peace Action of New York for forwarding to the other chapters in the state, with a request that each adopt and publicize one that is similar. It did on December 11th but so far there have been no responses.

At its January board meeting, BCPA reinforced its resolution by sending a \$100 contribution both to Iraq Veterans Against The War and to the GI Rights Hotline. It also voted to publicize this action in the next issue of *Update* to encourage others to make a donation. Both of these worthy organizations are sorely in need of funds. If you would like to mail in a contribution or make a credit card charge at their websites, here is the information:

G.I. Rights Network, Inc.
c/o Alison Carter, Treasurer
486 Sun Way
Fairbanks, AK 99709
<http://girightshotline.org/>

IVAW National Office
630 9th Ave., Suite 807
New York, NY 10036
<http://www.ivaw.org/>

The following day, no New York newspapers noted the march; not a word in the *New York Times* or *Daily News* or *New York Post*. We ask your opinion, even if you were not there, as to why this was so? Write George Haeseler at g.haeseler@verison.net or Jack Gilroy at jgilroy1@stny.rr.com.

For those of us who made the trip, it was wonderful. Our best time was the classroom on wheels — both on the way and return. An open microphone allowed any individual to express views and convictions on issues of peace and justice. Every one had important comments to make. Among the high lights were: Mayor Ryan’s answer to what he would do with money saved from not sending one 35-man platoon to Afghanistan (estimated cost — \$35 million for one year); BCPA President

& Deputy Mayor Tarik Abdelizam’s announcement of a naming of a trail along the Chenango River as the Peace Trail; George Haeseler’s tale of trying to use the subway, and many stories, poems, songs — class entertainment with people we all love.

Membership Committee Report

We are starting the year with 119 members. If you would like to get a jump on the year, you can pay this year’s membership using the form on this page. This will save us time and postage.

Susan McAnanama, Chair

Reductions Are No Substitute for Abolition

George Haeseler

I hope that Peace Action will expose as a farce any offer of nuclear reductions which lack a timetable for complete elimination. Reductions alone make the world no safer, with the possible exception that the number of nukes subject to sale or theft is reduced. Whether the US halves its supply or reduces it ten-fold, it could still annihilate any non-nuclear state without fearing retaliation.

We all know that the biggest violators of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) are the US and Russia, which together possess 95% of all the nuclear warheads in existence. We also know that the NPT was a bargain between those who had them and those who did not; with those having agreeing to rid themselves if those without would abstain. After the signing of the NPT, the US and USSR did just the opposite; they entered into a nuclear arms race which resulted in each possessing enough weapons to make our planet uninhabitable. Despite some reductions they each still retain 10,000+, with the US continuing to upgrade its technology and delivery systems.

Offers of just reductions with no deadline set for abolition and no agreement to allow inspections are a smokescreen. These offers are just used to make the unfair demand that other countries can’t have any as a deterrent. Why shouldn’t they have a few while they patiently wait for nuclear abolition to near its goal?

Getting to zero is not easy, but as a start, why don’t the nine nuclear states agree to reduce their supply to a level equal to that of the one which has the least? The nukes would have to be completely destroyed, not just dismantled, with a set timetable for its accomplishment. Then in exchange, the non-nuclear states should be willing to continue to abstain and allow inspections. Perhaps there is a better first step towards a nuclear-free world, but vague promises of reductions while demanding that others remain defenseless and threatened is a hoax which Peace Action should not countenance.

A Concert For Peace
 Sunday, April 25, 2010
 3:00 pm
 West Middle School
 Binghamton, NY

In collaboration with the Binghamton Community Orchestra, The Madrigal Choir of Binghamton presents *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace*, by the Welsh composer Karl Jenkins. The work incorporates historical and moral issues raised by war and encourages commitment to a more peaceful millennium. At the heart of the piece is *L'homme arme*, a 15th century melody from the Burgundian Court.

More Military Suicides than Combat Deaths

Finian Cunningham

Gulf Daily News, Bahrain

Here is a shocking statistic that you won't hear in most western news media: over the past nine years, more US military personnel have taken their own lives than have died in action in either the wars in Iraq or Afghanistan. These are official figures

from the US Department of Defence, yet somehow they have not been deemed newsworthy to report. Last year alone, more than 330 serving members of the US armed forces committed suicide - more than the 320 killed in Afghanistan and the 150 who fell in Iraq (see wsws.org).

Since 2001, when Washington launched its so-called war on terror, there has been a dramatic year-on-year increase in US military suicides, particularly in the army, which has borne the brunt of fighting abroad. Last year saw the highest total number since such records began in 1980. Prior to 2001, the suicide rate in the US military was lower than that for the general US population; now, it is nearly double the national average.

A growing number of these victims have been deployed in Iraq or Afghanistan. What these figures should tell us is that there is something fundamentally deranged about Washington's "war on terror" - which is probably why western news media prefer to ignore the issue. How damning is it about such military campaigns that the number of US soldiers who take their own lives outnumber those killed by enemy combatants.

What is even more disturbing is that the official figures only count victims of suicide among serving personnel. Not included are the many more veterans - officially classed as civilians - who take their own lives.

Most likely, these deaths are reported in some small-town newspaper in "a brief"

news item with no context or background as to what drove these individuals to take their own lives. It is estimated that the suicide rate among veterans demobbed from fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq is as high as four times the national average. The US Department of Veteran Affairs calculates that over 6,000 former service personnel commit suicide every year.

Many of these men have come home to a country they have fought for only to find no jobs, their homes repossessed by banks that have enjoyed trillion-dollar bailouts and broken relationships.

Meanwhile, President Obama - the erstwhile peace candidate - has taken on the role of Commander in Chief with gusto, telling his countrymen and women that they are fighting a "just war" to "defend American lives". Only a year ago, he was campaigning for the presidency on a ticket to end such wars. Now, more than his predecessor, George W Bush, Obama is committing to wars without end. How soul-destroying is that for a grunt holed up in a bunker, with his young family back home probably telling him that they have just signed up for food stamps? In their guts, these US soldiers must know - as many other ordinary people around the world do - that these wars are nothing but a desperate, pathological bid by a dying power to salvage its crumbling empire - an empire that enriches a tiny elite and impoverishes the majority. Is it any wonder that many of them simply lose the will to live?

Broome County Peace Action

Here are my dues. They entitle me to local, state, and national membership in **Peace Action**. Make check payable to: **BC Peace Action**. **If you are not already a member, you can select a free, one-year-only trial membership.**

_____ \$35 household _____ \$25 individual _____ \$10 student/low-income _____ Free, trial membership

I would like to make an additional **tax deductible** contribution to Broome County Nuclear Weapons Reduction Campaign, the educational arm of B.C. Peace Action. Make check payable to: **BC NWRC**.

\$ _____ Contribution \$ _____ Total (enclose)

Name(s) _____ Telephone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

E-mail _____

Mail to: **BC Peace Action, P.O. Box 1611, Binghamton, NY 13902**

Broome County Peace Action Board meetings

The Board meets the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation on Riverside Drive in Binghamton. Most meetings are followed by a speaker on a topic of interest to the peace community. Occasionally plans change (weather, illness, scheduling conflicts) so you may want to call President Tarik Abdelazim at 221-0893 or e-mail him at modocpress@yahoo.com. The talks start about 8:00. pm Talks are listed on our Web site:

bcpeaceaction.org

Calendar

April 8-10: Cindy Sheehan will be in Binghamton. See page 1.

Sunday, May 2, 2010 has been designated "International Action Day for a Nuclear Free World".

May 3 - 28, Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, New York City.

What Does Code Mean On Your Mailing Label?

Take a look at the letter code on your mailing label. It tells if you have a paid-up membership in Peace Action or if you need to contribute to stay on the mailing list. The different codes are:

- 10: You have already paid your membership in 2010. THANK YOU!**
- 09, 08, 07: Your last paid membership was in 2009, 2008, 2007, etc. Please renew using the form on page 3.**

Letter code and year added to mailing list:

E: 2003, F: 2004, G: 2005, H: 2006, I: 2007, J: 2008, K: 2009, L:2010

If you would like to continue receiving **UPDATE** but feel you cannot make a membership payment at this time, just give us a call (729-1044) and we will keep your name on the mailing list.

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