



Peace Action of New York State

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2008 Hiroshima/Nagasaki Events Were a Success Across New York State!

- Bay Ridge Peace Action
- Broome County Peace Action
- Chenango Peace Action
- Genesee Valley Citizens for Peace
- Great Neck SANE/Peace Action
- Greenwich Village Peace Action
- New Rochelle Peace Action
- Peace Action of Central New York
- Peace Action and Education of Metro Justice
- Peace Action International
- Peace Action of Staten Island
- Upper Hudson Peace Action
 - Bethlehem Neighbors for Peace
 - Guilfordland Neighbors for Peace
 - Pine Hills Neighbors for Peace
 - Saratoga Peace Alliance
 - Schenectady Neighbors for Peace
 - Southern Rensselaer Neighbors for Peace
 - Troy Peace Action
- West Side Peace Action
- Western New York Peace Center

Local Peace Action groups throughout New York State, along with a number of our allies, had a hugely successful series of commemoration events in remembrance 63rd anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. There were twelve events held around the state between August 5th and August 9th. Over 1100 New Yorkers came out in support of peace, nuclear abolition, and conversion of our permanent war economy.

NEW YORK CITY



Also on August 5th, in **Manhattan**, Mary Beth Sullivan, Outreach Coordinator of the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space joined over 50 New York City residents from several local organizations at All Souls Church, where she passionately discussed the urgency and importance of converting our permanent war economy. Ms. Sullivan's comments prompted a highly charged

discussion about the 2008 presidential candidates, the U.S.'s continued involvement in wars around the world, the need for policy reform, the environmental effects of our consumption and war habits, and what we can do to break this hazardous cycle.

Over 50 **Brooklyn** residents came to Bay Ridge on August 7th for a screening of "Conviction." The space was packed, and the audience was really enthusiastic about the film and the message of the event. There were numerous speakers who discussed nuclear weapons and other important peace-related topics, prompting an engaged and positive post-screening discussion.

Twenty Peace Action **Staten Island** members and supporters came to the ETG Book Café to hear Mary Beth Sullivan's insightful message about the necessary conversion away from the United States' permanent war economy. The event was both an educational and a poignant way to honor the anniversaries of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings.

CAPITAL DISTRICT

A few hundred **Albany** residents heard the reading of John Hersey's "Hiroshima" on August 6th in a public square. Fifteen people read from the book over a three-hour period. By the nature of the venue ordinary citizens were exposed to literature about nuclear weapons and the need for nuclear abolition, as well as to the need for peace activism more generally. In addition to the wonderful turnout, there were two days of newspaper coverage in the local media, including a large picture of the reading published on August 7th.



Schenectady Neighbors for Peace held a memorial march for those who died in the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and called for an end to nuclear weapons. About 30 participants walked single file across the Gateway Bridge over the Mohawk River from **Schenectady** to Scotia on August 6. The river was symbolic, as survivors fleeing the bombs ran to the river. Demonstrators carried peace banners and flags, giant puppets, and peace cranes and marched to the accompaniment of drums. The demonstration was visible to traffic under the bridge as well as those at the park. Once over the bridge, the march was accompanied by bag

pipes to Freedom Park, where there was an announcement about the demonstration by a member of the band playing at that night's concert, which had an audience of at least 200 people. Participants were interviewed by a local television station and the local newspaper wrote a piece on the event, offering greater visibility to both the event and the peace movement.

CENTRAL NEW YORK

Chenango residents will have several opportunities to catch the television screening of "America's Dialogue: Nuclear Weapons." The film is running four times per week for two weeks, and will be shown on Chenango's local public access cable channel. This gives residents an opportunity to hear about the effects of nuclear weapons and has the potential to reach a very wide range of people in the surrounding area.

Three events were held in **Syracuse**, including a crane- and lantern-making party, which was shown on the local 11:00 news as part of "Art Commemorates Bombings." On August 6th, there was a very successful commemorative march, where 100 Syracuse residents walked for 45 minutes in honor of the anniversaries. On August 7th, there was an interfaith sharing at the Zen Center of Syracuse, where more than 70 supporters came for the standing-room-only event with local interfaith leaders. Local media thoroughly covered these events, and two speakers advocated a nuclear-free future on Channel 10 News.

On Saturday, August 9th, Frida Berrigan of the New America Foundation's Arms and Security Program joined Broome County Peace Action and local supporters for a breakfast in honor of the anniversaries. Following the breakfast, **Binghamton** residents marched to the confluence of two symbolic rivers where they listened to music by Mackenzie Gannon and Madison Terboss. The remembrance was a solemn reminder of the need for a nuclear-free future in the United States and around the world.

LONG ISLAND



This year may have been the best commemoration program that **Great Neck SANE/Peace Action** has ever had. "No More!-No more Hiroshimas-No more Iraqs-No more Irans" was attended by over 300 people, many of whom were young, on August 6th. The audience packed the sanctuary of the Unitarian Universalist Church at Shelter Rock. There were several topics covered, including nuclear weapons, war, and the economy, with on-target and effective speakers, including Mary Beth Sullivan, throughout the night. To set the tone for the night, the audience had the privilege of hearing jazz pianist Bob Lepley open with "Here Comes the Sun" and "Imagine," with an appropriate and moving performance of "Give Peace a Chance" as the conclusion.

WESTERN NEW YORK

On August 5th, over 100 **Buffalo** residents, including an impressive number of students, attended the screening of "White Light, Black Rain," along with a lantern release, at the Buffalo Erie Historical Society. The event was a collaboration between the Western New York Peace Center and the Friends of the Japanese Garden. A statement written by the Mayor of Hiroshima was read, followed by a moment of silence. The lantern release was accompanied by solemn words from a local pastor, rabbi, and Buddhist monk. Attendees were very moved by the film, and were inspired by the event.



The solemn vigil held in **Geneseo** on August 7th was attended by over 20 Genesee Valley Citizens for Peace members and supporters. The support from students, particularly from SUNY Geneseo, was strong. This was a moving way to honor and remember the victims of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings.

The great local turnout and statewide support in honor of the victims of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings proved to be an effective and moving way of advocating a nuclear-free future and a shift away from our permanent war economy. Thank you to everyone who showed their solidarity by attending these events.