



HANDS OF PEACE



October 2008
1000 Elm Street, Glenview IL 60025

www.hands-of-peace.org
For more information, call 224-406-5045

From our Executive Director...

by Julie Kanak

HAPPY FALL TO ALL!

Fall always feels like change to me...kids change grades, the leaves change color and this fall brings some exciting changes to Hands of Peace, too.

While we are sad to be saying farewell to old friends who are transitioning off of the Board and Operations Committee, we are so happy to welcome new volunteers who bring a lot of positive energy and creative new ideas. You'll see some changing faces this fall at HOP!

One of our new faces will be Mr. Tony Mandolini, our new part-time Accountant. We are grateful for his expertise as he takes over the books and we streamline some procedures.

Over the next few months we will be updating our website and other publicity materials. They will all take on fresh new faces, as did our new version of our DVD which premiered to wild applause at the Farewell Banquet this past summer. Everything will keep the Hands of Peace "feel," we're letting the creative juices flow as we give ourselves a makeover.

We are also starting an exciting new initiative called Peace Partners! Peace Partners will offer new opportunities for individuals, families or organizations to connect to HOP and the participants in a personal way without hosting a Hand. Look for more information coming soon....

There will be some changes in the Mid-East too, as Regional Coordinators Hoda Barakat and Jasmine Tamuz bring some new ideas into the Follow-Up Program, and the Hands bring their own suggestions for effective and fulfilling activities. Hoda and Jasmine will also begin a new initiative this fall to start engaging volunteers, Hands' parents, and other supporters who want to get more involved with Hands of Peace—our presence in the Mid-East grows and grows!

Yep, lots of changes going on this fall, but one thing never changes...our deep appreciation to the many HOP supporters who help us in so very many ways. THANK YOU!

Give Us your Email Address

Folks on the Hands of Peace email list receive our monthly e-newsletter Hands Across the Water.

Don't miss out on the latest HOP news.

Send your email address to mcain@hands-of-peace.org

News from the Board of Directors

by Debby Fosdick

I am honored (and, as the politicians say, "humbled") by my election to the Board Chair position for 2009. While it's a bit daunting to follow in Gretchen's footsteps, there are several factors which contribute to my confidence that Hands Of Peace will continue to thrive:

1. Our new structure: The Board leadership structure has been enhanced by the additions of the Emeritus Chair position and the Vice Chair position. With Gretchen Grad "graduating" to the Emeritus Chair role, and Joanna Sullivan (our former Host Family Chair) stepping into the Vice-Chair role, I know that we've got the leadership needed to build on the past and move forward to the future.

2. Our Board: Returning Board Members include Laura Bernstein, Joel Carp, Rev. Stanley Davis Jr., Gretchen Grad, Dr. Shakeela Hassan, Ismail Hummos, Dr. Ron Miller, Azam Nizamuddin Esq., Rabbi Brant Rosen, and Tom Rosenberg. We would like to thank John Casey for his valuable service as he steps down from the Board for a well deserved break. We also thank Alan Rubin for his dedicated work as HOP Treasurer for the past several years.

In addition to Joanna, we have 2 new Board members: Oscar Marquis Esq., who hosted Wael Omar this summer, has been elected as our newest Board member. Jane Hund, host for 2 years and mother of Diane (Hand 2007, XL 2008), is succeeding Alan in the Treasurer role.

At our September Board meeting, Dr. Shakeela Hassan and her husband Zia graciously invited us to their home. After a full meeting agenda, we adjourned just before sunset, and were then joined by Shaykh Abdool from the Islamic Foundation who led us in Maghrib prayers. We were touched by the fellowship – Christians, Jews and Muslims praying together and breaking the Ramadan fast. And break it we did, with a delicious dinner that followed.

Your Board meets again in November for our annual retreat where we'll do strategic planning and welcome our new members to the team. As a Board we are all mindful of our good fortune. We work with amazing volunteers, led by Jim Tatsuda and the Operations Committee. Our staff, led by Julie Kanak, is as dedicated a group of professionals as we could ever hope for. Our "Hands" from the past 6 years continue to inspire us. Thanks to every one of you for a great 2008. We're looking forward to 2009!

"Hands of Peace showed me that the other side is human, just like us, and they are aiming for peace too, just like us. This program taught me that if we keep aiming for peace, peace can be achieved! It will take time and a big commitment, but it can happen!"

2008 Participant

Highlights from the 2008 Summer Program

By Ashley Bates, Program Director

It's a little embarrassing, but I still find myself humming the HOP song, "We are people, from different nations, but now we're learning how to live as one..." The song brings back fond memories of friendships and adventures that seem far away as I go about my daily routines.



On July 13, led by this summer's incredible XLs, the '08 Hands of 2008 sang "We are people..." for the first time. Over the next two weeks, they engaged in challenging discussions and worked hard to forge friendships despite disagreements and differences. They initiated English, Arabic, and Hebrew cheers on the bus, and found the energy to organize evening gatherings after long busy days. At every opportunity, the '08 Hands just wanted to be together.

Together they observed services at a synagogue, a mosque, and a church, witnessed a courtroom trial, climbed a ten-foot wall at the Teams Course, rode roller coasters at Six Flags, and toured Chicago by boat and by foot. They watched poetry performances by inner-city Chicago youth, and attended a hilarious play at the Looking Glass Theatre. On Cultural Cooking Night, the Hands showcased their own talents and heritage with skits celebrating Arab debke dancing, Jewish songs and traditions, and American pop-culture.

On July 27, at the Farewell Banquet, the '08 Hands sang "We are people..." for the last time. American Hands from previous summers joined the chorus. The audience of HOP supporters sang along. The following day, all Hands gathered by the bus to say goodbyes. And the tears and the hugs began. Fifteen minutes later, still no one had boarded the bus.

The '08 Hands have been back in their different nations for over two months now. Many of them are attending follow-ups, meeting Hands from past years, and participating on the listserv. As time passes, the HOP song may start to seem unrealistic, particularly when more lives are lost in the conflict. I admire all Hands who stay engaged in the difficult dialogue process and continue to strive for peace.

Report from the Middle East

By Jasmine Tamuz, Israeli Regional Coordinator

On August 22nd, a follow-up meeting was held in Jerusalem. Almost all the 2008 Hands participated along with Hands from past years. This was the first meeting for this year's Hands since they said their good-byes in Chicago. Everyone was very excited to see each other. There were 4 facilitators and 2 Regional Coordinators - quite a large circle.

We started by saying a few words about ourselves. An interesting discussion started when a Palestinian Hand suggested having a follow-up in a Palestinian city. This brought up some very interesting questions of how both sides see each other and the other's towns, cities and people. Questions of stereotypes and security came up and again, like always in HOP, the difficult balance between friend and enemy came to the surface.

In the second part of the meeting the group was split up into this year's Hands and 2008 Hands, who discussed issues of their choice. Then as a large group, we brainstormed the different activities we could have during this year's follow-ups. As usual, there was a feeling that the follow-up ended too fast. We didn't have a follow-up during September, because of the Ramadan fast, but our next follow-up will be October 24 in Jerusalem.

I hope this coming year will be full of new thoughts and actions, from faces old and new.

Can You Help?

As you can see, lots of great things are happening at HOP. We see, however, that we need some help....

- **Volunteers!** We have included the Volunteer Interest Form in this mailing. Check it out! Fill it out! Come on out and join us!
- **New names!** Know any individuals, families, schools, organizations, faith communities, businesses or social groups who might like to know about HOP? Email Julie Kanak at jkanak@hands-of-peace.org or call her at 224-406-5045 with contact information and she'll be happy to follow up. We are always seeking opportunities to tell people about this amazing organization.
- **Giveaways!** We are also seeking donations of promotional items we could stamp our logo on and hand out at events. Pencils...stickers...magnets...we're open.
- **\$\$! or even €€!** We always appreciate financial donations of any amount—as we focus on change this fall, we'd be grateful for the change in your pocket!

July 17 - Aug. 3, 2009
Hands of Peace Program

**Interested in participating as a student,
host family or volunteer?**

See our website: www.hands-of-peace.org

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