

***** BAY AREA *** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE *** MIDDLE EAST PEACE *****

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<http://tawonga.org/weekend-programs/peacemaker.php>

Israelis, Palestinians from War Join Americans for Only Palestinian-Jewish Family Peace Camp in U.S.

TWO PARTS:

(1) Friday-Monday, Oct. 5-8, 2007 - Peacemakers Weekend - Near Yosemite National Park, California

(2) **Tuesday evening, Oct. 9th, 2007 - 7:30 PM - St. Mary's Cathedral, 1100 Gough at Geary, San Francisco**

Powerful San Francisco public report-out from California peace camp that changes Arabs, Jews

Compelling narratives ● Middle East refreshments ● Educational exhibits ● Free parking

● **From Middle East war zones**, Palestinian and Israeli youth and adults from 32 Holy Land towns will join American counterparts to live together four days and nights in the California mountains. This is the Bay Area-initiated Oseh Shalom~Sanea al-Salam, the nation's and probably world's only resident Palestinian-Jewish Family Peacemakers Camp September 5-8, 2007. **Then, October 9th in San Francisco, peace camp participants will describe their lives in violence and despair, and newfound change and hope.**

● **Over 100 adults and teens -- Muslims, Christians, and Jews** – including 42 women and men from Israel, the West Bank and Gaza include Combatants for Peace -- Israeli and Palestinian former armed fighters now turning their faces away from violence and toward one another. **The Arabs and Jews will return for their powerful San Francisco report-out to describe their intense living and communication experiences together at camp near Yosemite National Park, as part of a rapidly growing family of North American camp programs for the Middle East public peace process.**

● **Twelve other independent sister youth camp programs** have names like Seeds of Peace -- the first, established in 1993 -- Building Bridges for Peace, Creativity for Peace, Peace It Together, Hands for Peace, and Middle East Peace Camp for Children. The Peacemakers Camp provides the only family program.

● **In safe, natural environments**, campers come to realize "an enemy is one whose story we have not heard."

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Only Palestinian-Jewish Family Peace Camp in U.S.

● **"This is a new breed of Arab and Jewish citizens who refuse to be enemies,"** says Palestinian-American organizer Melek Nasr-Totah. "It is amazing to see their strong national identities, yet being able to have a new quality of listening that brings them together, step by cautious step, even in the face of sometimes-clashing narratives."

● **These camps intend to help end war and increase cooperation.** They create leaders -- Palestinian and Jewish citizens who have themselves are changing from "enemies" into partners and are prepared to help others. This year's participants are all involved in public peace organizations and are therefore prepared to share their camp experience with their respective organizations.

● **This "public peace process" was first defined by Dr. Harold Saunders, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State,** facilitator of the Camp David Accords and four other successful Israeli-Arab treaties. Saunders says that "this is The Citizens' Century" and implores people to participate fully in partnership with governments. Saunders says, "There are some things that only governments can do, such as negotiating binding agreements. But there are some things that only citizens outside government can do, such as changing human relationships."

● **"These camp participants and facilitators together can reveal to us perhaps the single greatest source of new social intelligence for the Middle East public peace process,"** says Len Traubman, retired San Francisco pediatric dentist, and co-founder of partner camp organizer, the 15-year-old Jewish-Palestinian Living Room Dialogue in the Bay Area -- the oldest of its kind. The Family Camp idea sprang from the imagination of a single Dialogue participant in February, 2001. By Fall, 2003, the first Peacemakers Camp Family Weekend was a reality. This is the Peacemakers Camp's fifth year to impact thought and life in America and the Middle East.

BACKGROUND:

2006 Oseh Shalom~Sanea al-Salam Palestinian-Jewish Family Peacemakers Camp

<http://traubman.igc.org/camp2006.htm>

The larger family of 13 North American camps for the Middle East public peace process

<http://traubman.igc.org/camps.htm> AND <http://traubman.igc.org/campconf.htm>

The deep roots of these camps is described at <http://traubman.igc.org/camphist.htm> .



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