

What Happened at
The Art of Peace
A Camp for Kids
July 2008

Themes

Our daily themes were:

1. What is Peace? *We offered our own ideas and focused on Canada's foundation: "Peace, order and good government."*
2. Peace in Me *We focused on how to stay peaceful even if our families or the world is not.*
3. Peace with Nature. *We focused on the rivers in Calgary and how they connect us..*
4. Peace in Families and Communities. *We focused on how to handle bullying and discussed The Canadian Government Apology to Aboriginal Peoples.*
5. Peace in the World *We examined a peacekeeper's responses to our questions and learned about peacemakers who are children.*

Each morning, Isabelle greeted campers and parents. Early arrivals visited the book display or the art tables.

9:00 – 9:15 Opening Circle

The children were called to the circle by the sound of the Tibetan prayer bowl. Seated on floor cushions, we took turns lighting a candle and pouring water as we named children in the world who live hard lives. Carolyn introduced the theme for the day. Passing a traditional Aboriginal "talking stick" around the circle, we shared ideas, questions or reflections.



9:15 After **Laughter Yoga**, half the peacemakers stayed with Fif for the Art of Drama (improv), the others went with Carolyn for the Art of Writing (freefall).

10:25 Isabelle presented the Art of Snacking – beautiful trays of healthy food every day.

10:40 – 11:10 The whole group sang and composed peace songs with Mélanie in The Art of Music. This year, the children also had a drumming circle – not quiet, but certainly peaceful; the children learned to listen to one another's rhythm.

11:10 – 11:50 Half the peacemakers went to the Art of Writing, the rest to the Art of Drama.

11:50 – 12:00 Closing Circle

Using the talking stick, we all offered comments, asked questions and made suggestions.



Book Displays

Peace and justice books covered two tables – one for adults and for children.

The CD

On Wednesday and Thursday, the children who wished, were recorded by Melanie. Each took home a souvenir CD comprised of poetry, peace dreams, drumming and singing.

Special Guests

We were honoured that Adriana Guarinos from UNICEF visited us on Thursday morning. As Education for Development Manager, Adriana was interested in our work. In the week following the camp, Adriana and Fif met to see how to further the work of peace education in

southern Alberta, with attention to meeting with school teachers.

On Friday, we were visited by Kent Wobst from the YMCA day camps program. He was interested in learning that peace education can be a lot of fun and that children respond enthusiastically to it. He took many notes.

Results:

Whenever we plant seeds of peace, we do not really know what fruits will grow. However, during the week we saw great leadership from children in small and big ways. We were all touched and inspired by having Sam Chambré in our camp, a 9 year old boy who heard about the camp from Bill Phipps (who is a colleague of Sam's minister-mother, Rev. Andrea Harrison in Williamstown, Ontario). Sam's father is currently serving as a United Nations peacekeeper in Sudan.



Sam Chambré and Aligo Batali

The short story of this particular adventure follows:

Sam wanted to come to our camp – from Ontario. His parents agreed to send him, and Morris Batali and Veronique Gakwandi-Batali agreed to billet him in their home. Morris is originally from Sudan and Veronique is originally from Rwanda. Sam was the 12th person to take up residence in the Batali household. So, while Sam was having a peace camp experience with Aligo and Eric Batali, he was also having an African-Canadian experience.

Sam's father had earlier agreed to answer questions from our peace campers; this became an important part of our week. On Monday, the children saw a photo of Captain Chambré and of Dominic, his translator. In the Art of

Writing, the children composed 30 questions about peacekeeping, Sudan, everyday life for a peacekeeper, violence, peace, loneliness, the UN and the Canadian military. I emailed these to Sudan.



Bill Chambré and Dominic

On Friday, Fif used these questions and Captain Chambré's thoughtful answers in her "Ask an Expert" drama session, so that as well as reading and hearing these questions and answers, the children had the experience of "embodying" the message. It was a powerful session for the children and also for the adults.

From the Children's Evaluations:

It was very fun.

Could we make this a full day?

Get more camps around Calgary for younger, middle aged and adult aged people. I want to come here next year.

I think you should extend the age limit so older kids can come, too.

It taught us a lot about other places in the world and how we can help.

I really liked meeting new people and recording things for the CD, and I liked the banana bread!

It would be cool for grown ups to do this.

I had lots of fun and look forward to coming back next year.

From the Parent's Evaluations:

Thank you very much for another wonderful Peace Camp! Your play and work at The Art of Peace Camp inspires our young people to ensure peace prevails in our world.

As a family we are planning a September 21 Peace Party. Thank you for your peaceful presence and influence on our son, our family and our community.

Keep doing, creating, and being peace!

Thank you for providing this incredible environment for our children to learn about and practice peace. This has been particularly transformational for my son who seems more peaceful all round this week.

Thanks so much for this wonderful concept. My daughter has received so much from this week.

The Peacemakers:

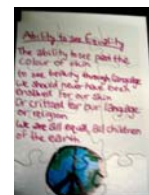
Twenty-one children aged 8 ½ to 13 (5 girls); **Fif Fernandes**, puppeteer, clown, actor; The Art of Drama facilitator; **Mélanie Hartshorn-Walton**, The Art of Music facilitator, performer & teacher; **Isabelle Klaiber**, hostess, greeter, minder, peacekeeper & The Art of Snacking facilitator; **Iris Cho**, 16, ESL student from Korea, teen assistant & camp photographer; **Connor Cook**, 15, teen assistant; **Carolyn Pogue**, author, The Art of Writing facilitator & coordinator.

Isabelle, Fif and I are members of the peace group, Women in Black. Mélanie and I have been active members of Scarborough United Church. We are grateful to have had their support and particularly thankful to the church for allowing us the use of the gym and ensuring that we had insurance in place for the children and leaders to run this program.

Special thanks to Ruth Lomenda of Women in Black who baked 4 dozen hand-made peace cookies and joined us one day, to Margaret

Jessop who sewed together our peace banner from 2007, to Enid Holtby, Marion Jorgensen and Helen Smith for support in money matters, Sharon Woodhouse who, for the third year did a PSA on CBC Radio, our anonymous supporter, Brenda Dushinski, Christine Louie for assisting in coordinating the registration, Liz Paynter who borrowed drums for us, Wendy Ainsworth, and Jill Newman who is always there to answer questions, offer suggestions and cheer on the work.

One day, children each used a blank puzzle as a canvass to express their thoughts about peace in communities:



Ability to See Equality

The ability to see past the colour of skin,

To see beauty through language~

We should never have been enslaved for our skin, or criticized for our language or religion.

We are all equal.

We are all children of Earth.

Follow-up

1. Children will be mailed a "Happy International Peace Day" card for September 21st.
2. This report will be sent to the Official Board at Scarborough United Church, Women in Black and other interested people.
3. A financial report was prepared by Carolyn. The budget varies year-to-year, depending on donations and fundraising. This year it was a little less than \$1,800.00. Four children were on scholarships at \$50/week.



Writing peace.

Other Peace Camp News this Year

1. The connection with Captain Chambré was inspiring for a number of reasons, but an unexpected point was raised when he wrote that his Ugandan colleague inquired about sending his two children to Canada for our next camp. Although merely a question, the implication is that people everywhere are looking for peace education.
2. With input from team members, Carolyn wrote a peace camp “how-to” booklet which is available for free download from Fif’s and Carolyn’s websites. (www.laughingpeace.com and www.carolynpogue.ca) We also printed 20 copies to sell at cost to anyone interested in our resources, methods and experience.
3. Fif and Carolyn offered a workshop at the Alberta Social Forum in Red Deer this spring about running a peace camp. Fourteen interested people attended.
4. Betsy Young at Wild Rose United and Meg Roberts at the Unitarian Church are offering a peace camp in their area of Calgary in early August.
5. Tracy Robertson at Woodcliff United in Calgary is co-ordinating a peace camp in late August.
6. In July, St. Paul’s United Church in Orillia, Ontario ran a week-long peace camp based on the book *A New Day: Peacemaking Stories and Activities*. They also erected a peace pole.
7. October 24th, Carolyn will offer a workshop on running a peace camp in Waterloo, Ontario.
8. Carolyn and Fif met with /spoke to representatives from the The Glenbow Museum, the Epcor Centre for the Performing Arts – Arts Learning and the City of Calgary Diversity Program. Although they were not able to incorporate The Art of Peace Camp this year into their summer programs, there is a strong interest for next year.
9. It remains to be seen who from the Scarboro community will become involved with this peace camp. I believe that my future involvement with peace education will be working with adults interested in creating peace camps and trying to inject peace education into existing programs and curricula.

Once again, it has been an honour to work and play with these children and leaders. Thank you to everyone who helped, donated money and spread the word about our camp. Thank you to the parents and grandparents who trusted us to establish this oasis of peace in our city.

May Peace Prevail.

*Carolyn Pogue
Calgary, Alberta 2008*



“Children Deserve a World without Violence” ~
Women in Black hold vigils the 2nd and 4th Fridays of every month.