



International Connections

A Newsletter Publication by the YMCAs of
Cambridge & Kitchener-Waterloo

Winter 2010

YMCA PEACE WEEK
Think it. Say it. Do it.

YMCA Peace Week 2010 took place November 20-27th. It featured many events including the “Art of Peace” Exhibit (with artwork from local artists about peace), Peace Medallion Ceremony, a Film Night and a Photo Exhibit. On November 19th, we honored three recipients with the YMCA Peace Medallion. Ellen Fowler was our Strong Kid recipient, Laszlo Sarkany our Strong Role Model recipient and the Alison Neighbourhood Community Centre our Strong Community recipient. This Peace Week focused on getting our communities to start to THINK about Peace. Our friends at Galt Collegiate as well as several local artists (Leigh Cooney, Roberto Lavidez, Victoria Nickel) accepted this challenge to express their perspectives on peace through art. It is our hope that as we continue to move forward, more people will think about their role in peacemaking. At the Peace Medallion Ceremony, a challenge to consider what you will do this coming year for peace was issued. It is with great joy we look forward to celebrating a new group of Peacemakers in 2011. You can be a part of engaging and encouraging Peace in our Community—we want to know—what will you do?

Email: international@ckwymca.ca or call 519-741-8585 x 242





Peace Action Camp 2010

October 29-31st, youth from YMCAs across Ontario gathered at Cedar Glen for Peace Action Camp. Several Youth from Kitchener-Waterloo and Cambridge were in attendance. During the weekend we planned a simulation game known as “Guns or Butter” This game involved 4 countries with differing levels of wealth & power and an open strategy on how to interact. We heard from country Prime Ministers, Ministers of Finance, Ministers of Industry & Agriculture and of course—the Minister of Defense. During our simulation, the game ended with a war between the richest and poorest countries. The most interesting part of these activities is

the debrief. We talked about the innate distrust of the richest countries by the poorest, and the temptation to use your money for weapons “just in case” rather than using the money for the Health & Education of your citizens or for Industry/Agriculture. As an “ACTION” item from our weekend we had to think of a way to share what we learned. Our group (Cambridge/KW/Hamilton) decided we would like to host a day with groups of youth to participate in a simulation and put together an action plan with a larger group! Look for more details in March!



Did you know? In Zambia, one in every seven adults in the country is living with HIV and life expectancy at birth has fallen to just 39 years. In 2009, nearly 76,000 adults were newly infected with HIV, which is about 200 new infections each day. As a result, the estimated number of HIV/AIDS orphans was reported in 2009 at a staggering 690,000 children.

World AIDS Day

On November 29th, the YMCA hosted a Café Night at the Little Bean. We heard about HIV/AIDS in Canada, as well as the difficult “world-wide” statistics. Together we celebrated the work being done by our friends and partners in Zambia with the Peer-to-Peer HIV/AIDS education program as well as the Care and Support Program for those currently affected by HIV/AIDS. We were entertained throughout the evening by several local musicians who freely offered their incredible talents to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS. A special thank-you to our musicians and to all who were able to attend. **On December 1st** (World AIDS Day) we joined with ACCKWA at a candlelight Vigil held at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church to remember those who have are living with or have passed from HIV/AIDS. We are grateful to our Zambian partners & local partners who are working hard to educate in order to help eliminate the spread of HIV/AIDS.



Zambia

This past May, three individuals had the opportunity to visit our partner YMCA in Zambia. They saw the HIV/AIDS Peer to Peer Program in action and also got the chance to see and understand some of the other programs the YMCA of Zambia gets to offer the community. The Peer to Peer Project takes place in 5 different centres throughout Zambia (Kitwe, Kabwe, Chipata, Lusaka and Choma). This program has been met with great success! The Program



Coordinator has steadily been creating & implementing new leadership development curriculum as strong leaders continue to come forward out of their trainings. Peer leaders are trained to teach about HIV/AIDS to the community. From there, those who hear the information share it with their friends and families, helping the education about HIV/AIDS to continue to go forward. The implementation of a Care and Support Program is also taking place. Currently about fifty people suffering from the affects of HIV/AIDS are visited, brought food, and cared for.

Beginning in this next year, we are hoping to expand upon this program to reach more people. Felix, one of the leaders in the Peer to Peer Program shared, " I can honestly say that through peer education I've been linked to all sorts of people, to business houses and churches at large, it's a whole new arena of exploration". He continues to say "YMCA peer education is not just merely teaching and sharing information with communities and the young people at large but it also includes mentoring and learning from one another as peer educators". Our visiting team walked away with a bigger picture of the work being done by YMCAs on a global scale and an eagerness to become more involved. We are thrilled to be able to partner with such encouraging and engaged people. We continue to look forward to sharing more with you about the work being done by our partners!





UPCOMING

- **February 6-12**
International Development Week
- **March 8**
International Women's Day
- **March 21**
Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- **April 22**
Earth Day

Questions?

Email: international@ckwymca.ca
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www.ymcacambridgekw.ca

**YMCAs of Cambridge & Kitchener-Waterloo
International Department**
161 Roger Street



International Book Club

1st Tuesday of the Month 7pm at
A.R.Kaufman YMCA

January: "In the Land of No Right
Angles" – Daphne Beal

February: "All is Quiet on the Orient
Express" – Magnus Mills

March: "Stones into Schools"
– Greg Mortenson

April: "28 Stories of Aids in Africa"

May: "Secret Daughter" – Shilpi Gowda

June: "The Life of Pi" - Yann Martel



CHALLENGE CORNER

TIME OUT! This simple challenge is to go for a walk around your city. We don't often get the chance to take a moment to just enjoy & "notice" our community. Think about what kind of benefits you receive just living in Canada, and what you would do if you didn't have the freedoms that you currently do. After you've done that—email your thoughts to: international@ckwymca.ca