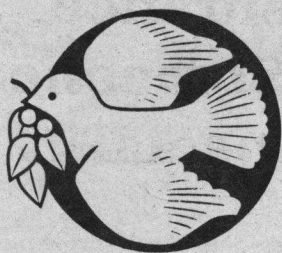


# PEACE DAY

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by Christopher Keane



**P**ace, pax, paz, amani, amatila, mir.

From the flash of v-shaped fingers to the flight of a white dove, the symbols for peace abound. And a dozen individuals will define it in a dozen different ways—from simple peace of mind to a world without conflict. However, regardless of the way it is spoken, defined or shown, the concept of peace is an international ideal.

And for Santa Cruz, that international spirit of peace is officially celebrated on the third Sunday of May.

*Peace Day: Discovering Our Common Ground* will be held at the San Lorenzo Park Benchlands on Sunday, May 20 from noon to 6:30pm.

Described as a non-profit, non-political, non-denominational, multi-cultural event, Santa Cruz's Peace Day Project organized the festival in the recognition that global peace is a shared responsibility.

"Peace Day is a big free party that the Peace Day Project puts on for the community," said Coordinator Diane Grunes. "We are trying to bring people together in celebration of peace and to look beyond our differences to see what we have in common."

Designed to celebrate the similarities as well as the differences among people of various ethnic, religious and

political backgrounds, the festival will feature a variety of international entertainment and speakers.

"We try not to inundate people with too many words. They don't want to be preached to," said Grunes, "So we try to give them a lot of what they come there to see."

The diverse musical program includes among others: *Ceedo Senegalese*, an African dance ensemble; *The East-West Kung Fu Lion Dance Team*; *The New Clezmer Trio*, featuring Eastern European music; *Ashwan Batish*; and *Side Saddle*, an all-women country-western group.

Speakers expected to attend include the *Leaders Listen to Youth Program*. The *Leaders Listen* program provides a forum for community youths to present their opinions. The young people participate in a writing project, then meet with local leaders to voice their ideas for a more peaceful Santa Cruz community.

Also scheduled are New Games for all ages in which non-competitive community games are presented; a parade which links the previous festival location of Mission Plaza Park with the new site; and a children's stage featuring magicians and jugglers; as well as international food and information booths sponsored by more than 70 local organizations.

The original Peace Day evolved out of the production of a play entitled "*Peace Child*." Set in the year 2025, the play concerns a group of Russian and American children getting together to create a Peace Day.

According to Peace Day Project executive director Bonita Mugnani, the play organizers wondered what would happen after the play was finished. "When people leave the play inspired about Peace Day, and children making peace in the world, what's next?" said Mugnani, in a recent newspaper interview. "The group urged Sheila Carillo and me to create a Peace Day."

"Sheila and I put together a festival and it did pretty well for the first year. We had about 25 organizations with information and activity booths, entertainment on the main stage, workshops, new games, recitals and the interfaith celebration. It was a slightly rainy day. In spite of that, we had over 1,000 people."

Since that first year the festival has continued to grow, drawing more than 4,000 people in 1989. Last year also marked Peace Day as an officially recognized state celebration. Governor George Deukmejian signed a resolution proclaiming the third Sunday in May as California Peace Day, and the Santa Cruz festival was recognized by the State Assembly as the educational model for celebrations to be held throughout the state. According to Grunes, legislation has also been introduced in Congress to designate a National Peace Day and the Peace Day Project organizers are hopeful that President Bush will sign that proclamation this year.

For more information regarding Peace Day, telephone the Peace Day Project at 475-0207. □



PEACE DAY: Discovering Our Common Ground.