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# Rhythm Ride News

Drums Not Guns, (214)641-0782, DNG @drums .org, www.drums.org/dng

## Special Interest Articles

Drums Not Guns wins best musical entry in Plano 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade

Special Drum Circle held at Robert Mueller School of Living Ethics- Summer Peace camp

City of McKinney Arts Commission awards DNG \$8,000 grant to fund:

- Workshops
- Soli Drum and Dance Festival
- Monthly McKinney Drum Circle
- Peace Awards Performance Banquet

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## MAC Grant Award

On Sept 2nd, the McKinney City Council approved the award of an \$8,000 grant to Drums Not Guns for the Oct 2008 to Sept 2009 season.

The grant was awarded for the following activities: Weekly Drum workshops at Old Settler's Recreation Center -- Monthly (the 4th Saturday) Drum Circles just off the square in downtown McKinney --The Soli Drum and Dance Festival , Mid May, 2009 which will include workshops at Old Settler's and a major final performance in the historic McKinney Performing Arts Center, downtown McKinney-- Peace Award Performance - presenting a major performance in

collaboration with the McKinney arts community in recognizing individuals and groups for their efforts to advance the peaceful resolution of conflict. The submitted grant application was for a grant of \$18,000 and the award of \$8,000 will make it difficult to deliver all of the elements of the proposal. It will be necessary for DNG to start thinking about some major fund raising efforts. If we can set a goal of matching the \$8,000 through fund raisers, donations and sponsorships, we know we can have a major impact on the North Dallas drum community and elevate our contributions to the community that will pay

big dividends in the future.

We're looking forward to working with DNG Members to make the 2008-2009 season wildly successful. Thanks for all of your efforts up to this point.

We have just begun a renaissance for Drums Not Guns and we are on the verge of a major renaissance with the north Texas drum community!



*There is no way to peace.*

*Peace is the way.*

*M. Ghandi*



## Plano Lions Club Awards “Best Musical Entry” to DNG float

The Plano Fourth of July parade was an exciting event for the people of Plano. It began normal enough when the marching bands and red, white and blue floats came down Independence Street.

But it took a decidedly moving turn when the Drums Not Guns drummers came rolling up beating out rhythms of KuKu and Macru.

The crowd began to move

and groove in a frenzy of dance. The announcer thought it was a samba or salsa band, but the rhythms were certainly West African.

The float was a fifteen foot trailer covered in canvases painted by Season Kerr and Randy Harp proclaiming a message of peace with quotes from Ghandi and Martin Luther King.

There were American flags and flags from around the world, provided by

Suzannah Brown, sending the message that independence is a global cause not, just an American military celebration.

The Plano Lion's Club and their judges awarded the “Best Musical Entry” to Drums Not Guns, one of four awards.

Watch for the float at coming events. The trailer seats about nine drummers and makes quite a colorful impression.





## Summer Peace Camp Drum Circle

Drums Not Guns was invited to participate in the final day's festivities of a North Texas area's summer peace camp on August 1<sup>st</sup> in Fairview, TX, making yet another connection with organizations in search of unique, family-friendly, socially-conscious activities.

Located at the Robert Muller Center for Living Ethics, the Peacemaker Day Camp, a project of the North Texas Peace Learning Center (NTPLC), is a series of week-long programs for children who seek to learn peaceful conflict resolution and the promotion of world peace through their social actions and personal examples.

NTPLC Founder and DNG member, Laura Seipp, concluded the August session with a drum circle facilitated by DNG Treasurer Randy Harp with the help of 15-year-old Abraham Luna on dun

and Lucy Parker Watkins on djembe.

Approximately 15 children and a handful of adults attended the final day's drum circle despite the 100+ temperatures. With a variety of percussion instruments available including drums, sticks and rattles for the children's use,

DNG began the drum circle with a brief performance of the West African song of celebration, Kuku. Afterwards, Harp invited the children to play with the drums as he offered tips on how to create a successful the drum circle.

Harp followed the performance by asking each child to play their heartbeat. As the group joined in the basic beat, Harp encouraged them to play other rhythms that fit with the sound of their collective heart rhythm. "Listening to each other will

help us create the music. Play around with the rhythm, keeping the heartbeat as the foundation. That will help us create a beautiful sound," Harp told the children.

"Despite the heat, we all enjoyed playing with DNG. Randy has a special way with the children. He went into the middle of the circle, danced and 'guided' portions of the drumming. The children really loved it. Randy helped the children feel free to enjoy the drumming rather than expecting them to do things just so. This approach allowed the children to come and go as they pleased and, I believe, allows them to learn to love drumming. We all had a lot of fun and greatly appreciate DNG's generosity," Seipp comments.

*"Drumming touches all of us, connects us through our hearts to our similarities, and gives us freedom to express ourselves beyond words and unite beyond perceived affiliations."*

*Michael Kenny*

## President's Perusing –Michael Kenny, MMT, MT-BC

There has never been a time when Drums Not Guns has been more relevant. In today's world of violence, instability, consumerism and individual isolationism, being able to sit down across from each other behind our drums and share our spirits, our joy, and our dedication is to participate in sharing a vision for a different kind of world. Since its inception Drums Not Guns has been devoted to providing an outlet and a framework for coming together, resolving our differences peacefully, and including all who wish to be a part of something bigger than ourselves.

Recently, Drums Not Guns has undertaken steps to revitalize the organization, focus our efforts at community outreach, and expand our membership. We strongly believe in the vision that was offered by Happy when he founded the organization, and welcome all who wish to share in the growing of this vision.

We hope that you will attend drum circles, classes, festivals, and realize the fun and sense of belonging that comes with sharing the positive drumming experience. Stay tuned for upcoming newsletters as we strive to keep the community informed, grow Drums Not Guns, and share our bliss!

## Upcoming Events

Date	Time	Event
Every Saturday	10A-12P	Drum Workshop-Old Settlers Recreation Center, 2601 E. Louisiana St., McKinney,TX
9/21/2008	1:45 -3P	Bishop Arts District - Drum Call
9/21/2008	4:30P until	MoonLady Equinox Drum Jamm
10/24/2008	7:00P-10P	McKinney Downtown Open Drum Circle –Mitchell Park SW Corner of Downtown Square on Louisiana Street
10/25/2008	12P Perf. 9PM Drum Circle	Addison World Fest- Opening performance – Closing Drum Circle-DNG Booth open all day
12/19/2008	6:00P	Winter SolstiCelebration Friday, December 19

## Welcome New Members!

We have had an amazing year so far thanks to the continued support of our new members and volunteers! Our mission and goals could not be achieved without the involvement of our community, and we give our warmest thanks to those of you that have chosen to become a part of our growing organization.

What does it mean to be a member of Drums Not Guns you ask? Well, for starters, you are part of a movement to stop violence in all aspects of our communities by promoting peace through the power of percussion. Drumming is a communal activity that brings people together to nurture, celebrate, and share our world's percussion traditions, diversity, common humanity, and inter-reliance.

Membership in Drums Not Guns also includes our quarterly newsletter, gifts such as a set of PAZ Drumsticks and invitations to art, cultural, and outreach events that DNG is a part of. Also, we offer a weekly group rehearsal from 7:30 to 8:30 every Wednesday (see Calendar at

[www.drums.org](http://www.drums.org) for location), free of charge to our members. We encourage you to get involved at whatever level possible.

We want you to share your ideas, hopes, and dreams with your drumming community. We want to make drumming accessible, and to create safety and community so that people can experience drumming and dance as the powerful forms of self-expression they can be. So tell your friends, family, and coworkers to get on this rhythm ride, too!

I and the rest of the board are honored to serve you as our members, and we are certain that you will be an integral addition and valued asset to our organization. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any membership questions, I can be reached at [noctuaserpens@yahoo.com](mailto:noctuaserpens@yahoo.com), or through our website [drums.org](http://drums.org). I look forward to drumming and working with you all in the following years to realize our collective vision of community spirit, grassroots action, and good old fashioned fun!

Peace and well-being to you.....

Season Kerr

Drums Not Guns Board Member  
Drummer, Secretary &  
Community Outreach Coordinator

Welcome to some new or renewing Drums Not Guns members!!!!

Melanie Elmore

Alan Noel

Bill Ewoldsen

Juan Pacas

Jim Evans

Dale Kennedy

Frank Hernandez

Laura Siepp

Peggy Harp

Walter Upchurch

Jeffrey Walter