In February, 2002, the first formal audio recording of "Children Singing Peace Around the World" was completed on Maui with children from Iao School and Unity Church of Maui. The children from Iao School since have named themselves the Iao School Peace Team. Led by their teacher, internationally reknowned peacemaker, Lei'ohu Ryder and their principal, Elizabeth Ayson, they share aloha with their community and others around the world. The team accepted an invitation to sing the Hawaiian version of "Children Singing Peace Around the World" at an event entitled, "Today's Children, Tomorrow's Future" to be held on September 11th, 2002 on the West Lawn of the Capitol in Washington, D.C.

In May, 2002, children from Kfar Hanasi Kibbutz recorded the Hebrew version of Children Singing Peace Around the world near Rosh Pina, Israel.
In April, 2002, children from Dalyat El Camel, Israel recorded the Arabic version of Children Singing Peace Around the World. Thank you to their music teacher for his beautiful arrangement!

In May, 2002, a spontaneous gathering at the Chalice Well Peace Gardens in Glastonbury, England resulted in a recording in English by children from the U.K.
In May, 2002, children from Bunsgoil Ghaidhlig Ghlaschu in Glasgow Scotland recorded "Children Singing Peace Around the World" in Ghaidhlig. This was a particularly fond experience for Dawn as this was her great grandfather's homeland.
Article contributed by Anael Harpaz
CSPAW Hostess and Assistant, Rosh Pina, Israel
April/May, 2002

Kautha, teacher at Dir Hana, Dawn and Anael

One of the most moving days for me with Dawn and Children Singing Peace Around the World was on the Day of Memorial for all the thousands of soldiers and civilians who have lost their lives for the love of this land. We had made an appointment to be in an Arab school in Dir Hana on Tuesday. Things were so intense with the many schools we were visiting that I had no idea what the date on Tuesday was. When I realized it was on the Day of Memorial, I found myself in a great dilemma. What do I do?! Every year on this day I go to the cemetery, as do all Jews in this country, because everybody knows somebody who has been killed. For me it is my cousin.

So what do I do now?! Several days before I had made a commitment in a healing session to break my cultural conditioning and here I was presented with an opportunity to do just that! I meditated on it and realized, it is time to break the cycle - to do something different for the same cause...to move from mourning to morning. And so I found myself driving to Dir Hana, an Arab village here in the Galilee, where there had been much unrest during October of 2000. This area was one of the major flames of the present crisis where uprisings had taken place and 13 of their young men had been killed. Instead of going to the cemetery, I was on my way to sing a peace song with Arab children.

I prayed all the way that we would be out of the school by 11:00 am, when the sirens go off for two minutes throughout the whole country. Dawn and I contemplated finishing by 10.30, but I decided that God has put me here today; he will take care of this too and I will find myself exactly where I need to be at 11.
As we walked into the classroom, I saw a sea of beautiful faces; some in traditional dress and the rest in jeans just like my daughter. On the back of one of the chairs I noticed a swastika. My heart missed a beat as I realized this too was cultural conditioning. I too once hated Arabs and Germans because this is what I was taught. I found myself in great compassion for this young girl, headdress and all, who I suspected had been taught to hate me just because I am Jewish. We had a beautiful morning; the song opening all of our hearts as I prayed inside that this would bring some healing to our wounded land. At 10.35 the bell rang and by 10.50 we were in the car driving out of the village. The siren sounded at 11:00 and we found ourselves between Araba and Dir Hana, exactly where the demonstrations had taken place, by an olive grove. We stopped the car and got out. As the sirens wailed, so did I... for this country... for this land...for all we have been taught...for all those who have fought...for all the pain that lies in the hearts of all of us. Be we Jew, Arab, Moslem, Christian or any other faith, is it not time to weave a new dream? ... a time to let go and let God be part of us all, for surely we are all equal in His eyes… with tears streaming down my face I looked into the skies, in a plea for help and hope, a new beginning and there I saw two storks hovering over our heads reminding me that God does hear our plea. As I looked down to the ground again, I saw many flowers with five petals, pentagrams…five, a number of change.

This is the time for a new beginning and I guess it starts with me. As each one of us becomes more peaceful, lives our dream, fulfills our potential, the world will be a better place to live in.
One afternoon in early spring my 6 year old daughter, Ali, announced she was going to teach the preschool-aged children of her old nursery school, "Children Singing Peace Around the World". She said “The idea came to me like a voice from my heart” and, while she was nervous about teaching the children, she felt compelled to do it. As I listened to her plans to visit the preschool over spring break, I felt love and pride as I was reminded that being a peacemaker took courage and the understanding that desires, ideas and visions for peace on earth were not to be kept to oneself but rather needed to be shared.

The source of Ali’s motivation began at her school in January 2002. The 75 students at the Woodlands Charter School in Ukiah, California began work on the Children’s Cloth of Many Colors, an international peace project that invites children around the world to express their feelings and thoughts for peace on earth, in a quilt form. In researching the project for the school, I found Dawn Ferguson’s web site and knew immediately Children Singing Peace Around the World had to be included. I made contact with Dawn and was amazed to hear upcoming travel plans could include a stop in Ukiah. Dawn came to our 60 acre wooded campus and taught the children the song, not only in English but also Hawaiian, Hebrew and Arabic.
Dawn’s beautiful voice and warm smile along with her words of encouragement made it seem effortless as they learned each version, including the hand movements.

Dawn’s visit and Children Singing Peace made a lasting impression on the students. They have a reverence for the song that can be seen on their faces when they sing it. “It is not just a song, but more like a mantra” claimed Hanna a 6th grader at the Woodlands. The children have sung the song at community events like Cherishing Youth Day, Earth Day, Family Expo and Pastels on the Plaza. They also taught the song to school children from the Buddhist school and have performed the song together at some of these events. More school children in Ukiah have begun their own pieces of the Children’s Cloth of Many Colors as a result of students sharing their experience.

Woodlands teacher, Mary Robson, said it best when she told the students “Like a pebble tossed in a pond, you have started a ripple that has become a wake, your responsibility is to keep it going.” With conscientious actions, careful words and love in their hearts even young children can make a difference in their lives, their community and the world.

Marla and her family hosted Dawn's visit to the Woodland's Charter School in Ukiah, Ca. They plan to join others in Washington, D.C. on September 11, 2002 for the event entitled, "Today's Children, Tomorrow's Future". For more information on this event visit www.the mastersgroup.org.

Thank you to all of the children and all of the adult children who have participated in the many programs and events over the past several months. My life has been profoundly enriched by being touched by each and every one of you and walking for a time in your world on your land with you. Thank you for your warm welcomes and your beautiful hearts. May you all sing your hearts all ways!

Many blessings,

Dawn