

# Merriam Park NEIGHBORS FOR PEACE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### St. Paul's German Sister City Endorses March 22<sup>nd</sup> Neighbors March for Peace

**St. Paul, MN – March 20, 2003** – Merriam Park Neighbors for Peace is a grassroots organization of neighbors from the Merriam Park area of St. Paul and surrounding Twin Cities neighborhoods who are dedicated to educating the public and encouraging the government to pursue peaceful, non-violent alternatives to war. Along with co-sponsor, the Iraq Peace Action Coalition, they will be holding a Neighbors March for Peace on Saturday, March 22, 2003, in St. Paul. Marchers will assemble at 1:30 p.m. at Macalester College (1600 Grand Avenue at Snelling Avenue) in the Bateman Plaza south of Grand Avenue outside of the Student Center. At 2:00 p.m., the group will proceed east on Summit Avenue and back west on Grand Avenue to return for a rally at Macalester College.

This week, Merriam Park Neighbors for Peace founders, Anne Benson and Rachel Goligoski, and web coordinator, Krista Menzel, were contacted by Werner Ulrich and Roland Sperling from Neuss, Germany, St. Paul's German sister city, in support of the Neighbors March for Peace.

Werner Ulrich is a Protestant church adult educator and founder of Friedenstreffen Neuss (Neuss Peace Meeting), an organization similar to the Neighbors for Peace groups in the Twin Cities. Friedenstreffen Neuss recently delivered a petition with 700 signatures from citizens of Neuss against the U.S. attack on Iraq to their congressperson, Kurt Bodewig, who passed it on to German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder in Berlin. This week, Friedenstreffen Neuss passed a resolution endorsing and supporting St. Paul's Neighbors March for Peace. Their resolution will be read at the Saturday rally by St. Paul City Council Member Jay Benanav:

"We are a group of concerned people from Neuss. Our aim is to win as many people as possible for the cause of peace and to oppose a war with Iraq or any developments likely to endanger peace in the world. As citizens of Neuss, St. Paul's German twin city, we were overjoyed to hear that there will be a big peace march in St. Paul on Saturday, March 22, 2003, and that you are expecting many people to take part. We should like to express our solidarity with your stand against a war with Iraq and wish you every success. We send you our very best wishes and feel united with you in our common cause for peace, freedom and justice in the world."

Roland Sperling is a member of the Neuss City Parliament. Today, he presented a resolution to the City of Neuss and Mayor Herbert Napp to support St. Paul's Neighbors March for Peace. The resolution was passed by the Parliament, and the City of Neuss has sent a letter of support to the City of St. Paul, Mayor Randy Kelly, and St. Paul City Council Member Jay Benanav.

When asked for her reaction to this international endorsement of the Neighbors March for Peace, Merriam Park Neighbors for Peace co-founder, Rachel Goligoski, said she was very encouraged by the news. "When my telephone rang at 5:00 a.m. on Tuesday morning, I was afraid it was bad news about the war. I was very relieved to hear that it was a kindred spirit calling all the way from Germany. The man reaching out across the ocean was Roland Sperling, a member of the City Parliament in Neuss, calling to tell me that they too want peace in our world, are opposed to the war on Iraq, and want to show their support for our march on Saturday. Mr. Sperling spoke of St. Paul City Council Member Jay Benanav's proposed anti-war resolution in St. Paul, so asking Jay to read the German address of solidarity at our Neighbors March for Peace on Saturday made perfect sense."

Anne Benson, the group's other co-founder, was equally inspired. "I was overjoyed when I learned that citizens of Neuss had learned of our local peace efforts and sent us a statement of solidarity. Because our government seems to be doing



its best to alienate us from the rest of the world, it's even more important that we show the world that most Americans want to be peaceful citizens of the global community."

Merriam Park Neighbors for Peace meets on Wednesday nights at 7:00 p.m. in the basement of St. Mark's Catholic Church (2001 Dayton Avenue, St. Paul). Anyone who wants to work together with others for peace and related causes and bring an educational message of non-violence to his or her Twin Cities neighborhood is invited to attend meetings or subscribe to the MPPeace mailing list.

For more information about Merriam Park Neighbors for Peace or this event, please visit the group's web site at [www.mppeace.org](http://www.mppeace.org) or contact:

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For more information on Neuss' Sister City endorsement of the Neighbors March for Peace, contact:

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### End ###



# Friedensbewegung: Protest in St. Paul

**Neuss.** Mit einer Solidaritätsklimarung hat sich das „Friedensstreifen Neuss“, eine Initiative der Erwachsenenbildung im Evangelischen Kur-chenkreise Gladbach-Neuss, an Kriessgegner in der Neusser Partnerstadt St. Paul in den USA gewandt. „Wir sind eine Gruppe von besorgten Menschen in Neuss. Unser Ziel ist es, möglichst viele Menschen für die Sache des Friedens zu gewinnen und uns gegen einen Irak-Krieg und friedensgefährdende Entwicklungen in der Welt einzusetzen“, heißt es in dem Brief an die Organisation „Neighbors for Peace“ (Nachbarn für den Frieden), die für Samstag Nachmittag zu

einem großen Friedensmarsch durch St. Paul aufgerufen hat. Das Neusser „Friedensstreifen“ erklärt sich in dem gezerrn übermittelten Schreiben mit den Zielen der Initiative in St. Paul: so- lidarisch, zahlreiche An- ti-Kriegs-Organisationen im US-Bundesstaat Min- nesota, darunter Pax Christi-Gruppen oder die Veteranen für den Frieden“ haben sich dem Aufruf von „Neighbors for Peace“ zum Friedensmarsch am Samstag angeschlossen.

## Vor dem KRIEG im Irak

Ob die Stadt Neuss ein „solidari- sches Grußwort“ an die Teilnehmer der Friedensdemonstration in St. Paul richten wird, wie von der Fraktion Unabhängige/PDS in einem Dring- lichkeitsantrag für den gestrigen Hauptausschuss angeregt, wird sich erst heute entscheiden, wenn die Fraktionsvorsitzenden des Stadtrates mit Bürgermeister Herbert Napp da- rüber beraten. In der Diskussion brachte CDU-Ratsherr Dr. Heinz-Günther Huch rechtliche Bedenken vor, weil der Stadtrat kein Mandat be- sitze, für die gesamte Bürgerschaft von Neuss zu sprechen. „Ich bezweif- le, dass es richtig ist, sich in die innen- politische Diskussion der USA einzu- mischen“, Dr. Michael Werhahn (CDU) warnte davor, eine Solidari- täts-Resolution zu verabschieden. Die Fraktionspitzen sollen heute ein „weiches“ und konsensfähiges Gruß- wort formulieren.

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Im Internet: Anti-Kriegs-Protest in der Neusser Partnerstadt St. Paul.