



## Press Release: August 6 Is Hiroshima Day

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A gathering takes place in Lewiston, Maine on August 6 aimed at recommitting ourselves to no-nuclear-war and commemorating Bernard Lown, the Nobel Prize-winning namesake of the local Bernard Lown Peace Bridge. The place is the Gendron Franco Center on Cedar Street and the time is 10:00 AM. That day marks the anniversary of the U.S. nuclear attack on Hiroshima, Japan in 1945.

After the program in the Center is completed, the assembly moves to the monument honoring Dr. Lown at the nearby Bernard Lown Peace Bridge. Further reflections will be offered and the observances end at 11:30 AM.

Lewiston Mayor Carl Sheline will offer welcoming remarks. Auburn resident Allen Harvie will be presiding. The following people are speaking:

- Former Lewiston Mayor Laurent Gilbert will recall the contributions of Dr. Lown and the campaign in 2008 to rename the bridge in Dr. Lown's honor.
- Doug Dransfeld MD will testify to the urgency of eliminating nuclear weapons and, as head of the Maine chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility, will report on the group's work toward that cause
- Ted Walworth MD, experienced in working for Doctors Without Borders, will reflect on the public role of physicians advocating for world peace.
- Denny Dreher and Fred Brodeur will speak on behalf of Pax Christi Maine

The short film "DR. LOWN: A Documentary" will be shown. It documents U.S. and Soviet physicians collaborating for peace.

Organizing the August 6 event are: Maine Veterans for Peace, Peace Action Maine, and Physicians for Social Responsibility – Maine Chapter.

Sponsors include PeaceWorks of Brunswick, Maine and Pax Christi Maine.

Dr. Lown, who died in 2021, was the famous cardiologist who invented the DC defibrillator. He and Soviet cardiologist Eugene Chazov in 1980 co-founded the group International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, which remains active (See <https://www.ippnw.org/>). Through their efforts, physicians joined in a worldwide campaign for a moratorium on nuclear weapons. For Dr. Lown, this was “the greatest political issue of our time.” Drs Lown and Chazov together received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985.

Bernard Lown immigrated from Lithuania with his family, and studied at Lewiston High School and the University of Maine before entering medical school. He was a co-founder in 1961 of Physicians for Social Responsibility. He served as that group’s first president.

Former Mayor Gilbert, a member of Florida and Maine Veterans for Peace and friend of Bernard Lown, has guided arrangements for the day. He and Allen Harvie led community efforts in 2008 to recognize Bernard Lown and carry out Allen Harvie’s idea of renaming the former South Bridge to honor Dr. Lown. Involved in that project were the Lewiston and Auburn City Councils, the Maine State Legislature, and former Governor John Baldacci.

Doug Rawlings, an organizer of the upcoming event, recalled recently that, “When we formed Veterans for Peace in 1985 here in Maine, we were, and still are, thinking of the children whose lives are impacted by war. Many of us, as veterans, looked into the eyes of these children. On August 6, 1945, the bomb was dropped on the children of Hiroshima at 8:15AM, just as they were settling into their classrooms.”

According to Rawlings, “peace cranes” will be available to people attending on August 6. These origami paper cranes represent the story of Sadako Sasaki, a Japanese child-victim of the bombing. They are now a worldwide peace symbol.

Organizers of the August 6 event require that attendees wear protective facial masks inside the Gendron Franco Center. They will be provided.