A Letter from Rachel Corrie's Parents
June 3, 2003
To the Coalition of Women for Peace and the Israel Committee Against House Demolitions

Kahlil Gibran said, "When you are sorrowful, look again in your heart and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight." Rachel was our delight. As we weep, we try to recall our time with her and try to dwell on all that she leaves us. It is difficult to summarize a life and to put into words what that life has meant to yours, but we hope we can share with you a bit of the essence of Rachel. From the moment she was born, she was an essential part of us — her mom, her dad, her brother, and sister. So much of what we miss now, of course, is just having her around — coming through the door to our house into the safety of a family place where she could just be. She napped on our couches. She relaxed on our deck bathing herself in the welcome spring sunshine. She ate potato soup suppers with us, and sat in front of the fire to warm herself. She sat quietly in corners writing and made messes creating art in the garage. She asked for advice about how to grow plants and wandered through the yard looking at what was emerging there. She talked us into taking her out for sushi dinners, into buying her tin boxes at antique shops, and into purchasing additions for her wardrobe at the Goodwill store. She challenged our political views when they needed challenging. She chastised us if we weren't thoughtful enough in our opinions. She playfully teased us about our many shortcomings and worried too much about her own. She loved us, and comforted us, and supported us when we needed it. When she hadn't seen us for a time she greeted us with long, loving embraces.

Her grandmother writes of her as an infant, "Rachel would lie with
Chris
> and Sarah stretched on the floor beside her, playing a board game. Games
> bored me, but here this baby seemed entranced. I think it was her feeling
> of connectedness, of belonging, that person-to-person relatedness that was
> so remarkable to her. Rachel's life didn't touch yours lightly. She
> impacted you."
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> In her fifth grade yearbook at age eleven Rachel wrote her ambitions: "I
> want to be a lawyer, a dancer, an actress, a mother, a wife, a children's
> author, a distance runner, a poet, a pianist, a pet store owner, an astronaut, an environmental and humanitarian activist, a ballet teacher, and the first woman president."

> One of her high school teachers wrote, "When I consider Rachel's impact on me the first phrase that occurs is---destined to make a difference. In my relationship with Rachel as her teacher and friend...there was a mutual respect for the written word. She was the creator. I was the editor and as a good listener I was a sounding board for Rachel. She had so many ideas, so many questions...Rachel couldn't be bothered by little things like turning in all of her assignments, because she was already dealing with the big issues: splashing in a puddle on the way to class or then writing poetry that was so clear, so poignant and so articulate or wondered but didn't question how this complex young woman had so much to contribute."

> One of her faculty at The Evergreen State College in Olympia wrote of her, "She was not content to merely learn about injustice in the world but also needed to do something about it. This was true locally where she would counsel low-income people, work to save the Labor Center at the College, or connect art and peace in the Procession of the Species. (An Olympia earth day event that honors all of life.)"

> One of Rachel's college classmates wrote, "She had touched us long before all this happened. She will continue to touch us. There was more to Rachel than that fateful day in Rafah, thousands of miles away fr
her
> home. There is more to her than any one individual will ever
know...There
> was a greatness in Rachel that can and should inspire the greatnes
in all
> of us. If our collective memory of Rachel ends with admiration,
then her
> message is 'lost on us.'
>
> We know that Rachel's message is not lost on those of you who have
> gathered today to remember her. We know you are deeply connected
to her
> in your efforts to end the occupation and to bring peace, justice,
and
> security to all the people of Israel and Palestine. Tonight, while
taking
> a break from writing, we attended a meeting here in Olympia to
raise
> awareness of and funds for the Israel Committee Against House
Demolitions.
> We will spread the word in the U.S. Mahatma Gandhi said, "A small
body
> of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their
mission can
> alter the course of history." We thank you for this evening in
honor of
> Rachel and we join in solidarity with all Israelis, Palestinians,
and
> internationals--determined spirits--who strive to end the horror of
the
> occupation and the violence that it brings to us all.
>
> Peace to you from the Corrie family.
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