## 2011 Redwood Coast Peace Poetry Anthology

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#### **Cover Photo**

Big Island, Hawaii - Volcanic Peace (modified)

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# 2011 Redwood Coast Peace Poetry Anthology

A Collection of Poems on the Subject of Peace and Non-violence by Humboldt County High School Students

Edited by the Veterans' Education and Outreach Project of Veterans For Peace, Inc., Humboldt Bay Chapter 56



Unitarian Universalists



Veterans for Peace



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> Veterans' Education and Outreach Project (VEOP Committee) Jon Reisdorf, Co-chair Carl Stancil, Co-chair Richard Gilchrist 'Nate' Lomba

Anthology layout by Toby Griggs (Buddhist Peace Fellowship)

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# Peace even in times of unrest should be the goal of all human communities. The Redwood Coast Peace Poetry Contest is an attempt to focus on peace in a very troubled world.

We dedicate this Anthology to our friend and comrade



Photo by 'Nate' Lomba



WWII US Navy Veteran Former Mayor of Brookings, Oregon Staunch supporter of Veterans for Peace Founding member of the Veterans' Education and Outreach Project Tireless worker in the cause of peace and justice

## VETERANS FOR PEACE, INC. Our Mission

Veterans For Peace is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) educational and humanitarian organization dedicated to the abolishment of war.

### **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

We, having dutifully served our nation, do hereby affirm our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace. To this end we will work, with others:

- (a) To increase public awareness of the costs of war;
- (b) To restrain our government from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations;
- (c) To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons;
- (d) To seek justice for veterans and victims of war;
- (e) To abolish war as an instrument of national policy.

To achieve these goals, members of Veterans For Peace pledge to use non-violent means and to maintain an organization that is both democratic and open with the understanding that all members are trusted to act in the best interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace.

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### Acknowledgments

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Buddhist Peace Fellowship Humboldt Unitarian Universalists Fellowship Social Action Committee

#### - Judges -

Allen Berger David Holper Lynn Kerman Jerry Martien Pat McCutcheon Joe Shermis

#### - Assistance -

The VEOP Committee gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance of VFP Chapter 56 and the Chapter members that helped make this contest a rousing success.

#### I Have No Color

My beautiful lady I am your love and your hate Your happiness and your despire<sup>1</sup>

When my heart is blazing up hot You're the water to my fire

I walk through the garden of pain that leads To the garden of pleasure I find you in a bundle of roses and see That you're my shining treasure

You open your eyes and Put the stars in the skies You smile with the Morning as you make the bright Sun rise

Your beauty pulls me Down to your lips and you Speak in my ear

You put your hand on My heart and say that this dream is pure

But I'm seeing your figure And it's like no other And you say I am love and I have no color

> David E. Rogers Eureka High School Eureka, California

[1] Term coined by author (verbally confirmed).

#### Human Souls

Have you let yourself be beaten down, did you fight and still end up on the ground?

Listen when I say it doesn't have to be this way.

Raise up your weary hands once more and I promise this time you won't be ignored,

tickle the chin of father time, let the laughter sing you.

Find embrace where nothing lay before, because there is love.

I'll paint this story into your eyes but only if you let me.

Together.

Do you even understand?

Together.

We can curse or bless each other.

Can you hear that faint sigh beyond the tree tops, deep in the hearts of man, a softly moaned lullaby of rainless tears?

It is all of us.

Exhaling.

We are tired and ill of manufactured screams.

Lace fingers, lock eyes, cry a blissful ocean and raise the hairs of the earthly spine, she grew us.

You'll never be able to explain murder to her, but she can show you love. Love more intoxicating than any pleasure.

Love that breeds peace, for every mind, for every body, for every soul. How could you possibly resist her?

I know you've all felt her before, when your alone face upturned soaked in moon glow, shadows streaking your cheeks, you felt her in your chest and you brought your fingers there and your eyes, you were so curious,

a symphony of simultaneity,

rising, falling, all as one.

Intensity collapses you but you are left with no wounds.

Inhale slowly. We take our first breath.

Ashley Feraru Six Rivers Charter High School Arcata, California

#### **Poor Teddy Bear**

A sad little bear sits on a shelf old and tattered and tired of itself long ago it was happy and loved but now it just sits there needing a hug it misses it's friends, the horse and the lark the hedgehog, and the monster, as it waits in the dark they would all sit around, laughing to tears but one by one, they all disappeared until all that was left was the poor teddy bear sitting sad and alone next to an old rocking chair it waits and waits to be disappeared too That's the only thing left it can think of to do but as day turns to night and night into day it can only watch as the world wastes away for when they came with their bombs and chemical warfare they took out the sun, they polluted clean air and they said it was for freedom and quality of living but they didn't foretell people everywhere dying now the only ones left are decaying and infected with the ragged bear that sits alone and rejected it will never be noticed or played with again because for all living things that day was the end I fear this day will actually happen our future destroyed by our vengeful actions the world torn apart by petty human emotions ripping up earth and trashing the oceans but the thing I hate most about this future affair is that there are no people left for that poor teddy bear

> Casey Lynn Arcata High School Arcata, California \*\*\* Third Honors Award Recipient \*\*\*

#### Serenity Sets Sail

The Golden Rule swings out into sparkling Humboldt Bay waters, with the wind in her sails and deep-tree vitality breathed anew into her weathered masts. Former soldiers as patient as the redwoods found a way to give her wings again. She shimmers across the surface like a pond-skipping dragonfly, away towards our dreams on some unforeseen shore.

Really, none of us lives for tooth and claw, arrow and scar. We live for the scent of sunlit grass, for a young child's laugh upon seeing a snail for the first time. And this little boat keeps her promise to the sunset, venturing into the horizon on her mission of peace.

Our hearts

go with her.

Amy Fontaine McKinleyville High School McKinleyville, California \*\*\* First Honors Award Recipient \*\*\*

#### Poem 2

Gracefully floating through a breathy sigh, it yearns to be loved. It's meaning unique and special so much to someone, something, Yet it can never be found unless looked for. This one purrs when stoked with affection. And lingers in the palm, crying softly when asked to leave. That one comforting one-syllable word that cushions on a conscience, As a ribbon of air, flowing under a wing. Peace.

Dripping with a history of pain and loss.

It bares its fangs and smirks at the delicious opportunity.

This one knows how to play with fire.

And with decaying masochism embraces the salted wounds and burning scars.

Yet sadistic and cunning it knows not when to stop.

Knows not when its tyranny will start to bore,

Until it has no one left to devour.

War.

"Why must you hurt and kill the things I love?" cried Peace, once again.

"Why, dear Peace, it is really quite simple," snickered War, seething insincerity. "I do it to survive, my love, I must! I thrive off pain, I bathe in sorrow, and hungrily lap from the wounds of betrayal.

Darling Peace, do you not do the same? You laugh among these entities which cause me harm. You thrive off bliss, you bathe in love, and dance about the sky leaving footprints of rest. You are what I'm not."

Peace and War, eternally dancing on a balancing scale, Both envy a little piece of one another. But never seem to notice. Yet let it be known, That the kind-hearted peace, Had kissed a little of itself through War's poisonous shell. Just enough so that War's prisoners There fighting on the battlefield, Know the pain of what they're doing and Know the sweet touch of mercy.

> Belinda Mitchell-Rice Northcoast Preparatory and Performing Arts Academy Arcata, California \*\*\* Honorable Mention Award Recipient \*\*\*

#### **Reconciliation of a Soldier's Winter**

I found you in the middle of winter, Dangling your feet in the torrents of a bitter river. Your toes were blushing with the cold, And your arms were pickled with goosebumps. Your breath was becoming slower and slower And rattled in your chest like lead bullets in a rusting tin. I called out to you, tried to entreat you inside, But as I spoke, your achromatic eyes broke And poured into your sanguine hands. Your quivering lips dipped deeper in shades of cobalt As they stuttered your reply, "I'm too dirty, too dirty." Where the skin of your pallid body was thinner I could see your veins solidifying. Cords of fading cerulean Transforming you into crystal. Yet the crimson stained across your palms Wouldn't pale with the algid temperatures, Just deepened its flush with each frigid degree. "I'm too dirty, too dirty." And then you plunged yourself under The alabaster froth of a bitter cataract. Disappearing from beneath the silver eyes Of the winter sky, which judged you so harshly, Beneath the violent rapids, Beneath the abating air, Your soul found concord. Your palms release, amity! And your heart washed clean in conciliation. In death you found peace.

Rowan Parker Northcoast Preparatory and Performing Arts Academy Arcata, California

#### Peace

Peace is a better place for everyone And Earth has water to give everyone To drink and keep everyone healthy And work out at the gym And earth has land, cars, trucks, and boats And ships too Earth is lovely and rain grows flowers And grass too And the rain can grow things healthy and strong And a sunny day for everyone too Play in the summertime.

> Brittany Boudreaux Eureka High School Eureka, California

#### Peace is for

I said,

There's no such thing

Not a single word

Not a phrase

Not a term, called:

#### Peace

In a time of war, in the edge of reality

I said,

What a word

What a phrase

What a term, the thing called:

#### Peace

Is the name for impossibility, or

A core of

A heart of

A shell, of

Chaotic shadows, it might be is

Peace

Is a dream

Is a hope

Is a wish

In the future, it might be is

Peace

In a word

In a phrase

In a term

As a dream

As a hope

As a wish

#### Peace

Is for possibility

For the people

For the prayer

For the power of

Well,

Peace

I say

It might be still there

To be founded, to be invented

As P never stands for violence

And V never stands for peace

It might be still there

A single word we dream for the people

A phrase we hope in every prayer

A term we wish with the entire power we posses

"Peace, is for the whole world"

Karina Rinesti Arcata High School Arcata, California

#### We Hate You

We hate you War
You made our fathers and brothers
Go to war to battle
And leave us behind;
Praying for them.
We hate you War
You made our fathers and brothers
Train mornings till nights.
We hate you War
You made our fathers and brothers
Get killed, murdered,
And get shot.
We hate you War
You made our fathers and brothers
Suffer and get injured.
Why don't you just disappear?
Our world is much better without you.
We hate you War
You made us miss
Our fathers and brothers
We put the blame on you
Because you bring us pain.

Bao Cheng Eureka Senior High School Eureka, California

### A Special Place

Peaceful Elevation A special Place Centered on Love Everyone laughing and smiling

> Michelle Lewis Eureka High School Eureka, California

#### **Two Dinner Tables**

I look across the dinner table There is my brother Intelligent, kind and annoying On opposite sides are my parents Wise, responsible and loving I love my family

My friend looks across the dinner table There is her brother Intelligent, kind and annoying On opposite sides are her parents Wise, responsible and loving She loves her family

Two dinner tables Two happy families Two rooms filled with laugher But only one set of parents can be legally married Injustice

> Katerina Rocker Heppe Arcata High School Arcata, California \*\*\* Second Honors Award Recipient \*\*\*

#### A Search for Peace

One day a man set off from home, to go far, far from home. He kissed his wife and dog goodbye, to search a man named Peace. He walked and walked 'til he went numb, asking all the way he went. He asked the hills and asked the trees, who lived before he did. They both told him to ask the sea, who stretched across the world. For all his sweat and all his pain no clue was his reward. Step by step, one at a time, the man was on his way back home. He passed the trees that lived with birds that sang throughout the day. The hills looked on, hushed, as mighty as they were, as the noisy creatures sang. They had to bear at the same time, the pain of carrying the giant trees That shielded them from rain and sun during the night and day. The man reached home, worn out and weak, but could not go to bed. He thought of the hills, the birds, and the trees and wondered how they endured together, Being so different from one another. How the trees could stand the birds and how the hills could stand the trees. Were questions that lingered on his mind. The man stood awed and thrilled by this. It dawned on him he'd found the clue. The peace he searched had not been far, Hardly had it been a stone's throw away. Peace is when we stretch a hand to help someone in need. It is when we open up and accept people as they are. Peace is when we live in harmony with all our differences.

Agnes Badu-Mensah North Coast Preparatory and Performing Arts Academy Arcata, California \*\*\* Honorable Mention Award Recipient \*\*\*

#### A Million Hearts in it Together

For those who want peace to be renewed,

they try to write, say tell, or do.

There are more clueless young people out there than ever before,

who are trying to stop the War.

Up in their minds they are racking those empty shelves,

but nowhere up there do they understand that one cannot change what another isn't willing to change within themselves.

One can be the best person, the most caring, concerning, giving, nice, happy, selfless sort of a being,

but that still will not open their eyes into seeing

Anything.

Even the person who is labeled with

the best of the greatest amount of adjectives,

someone who wants to do "little things,"

will not change the hate, the disaster that the war brings.

A Smile? A Hug? A Simple thought? This is going to change the World! I think not.

Maybe if every person could be the same,

then could every person help pursue change.

Only if every person in the world could care as much; could forgive, forget, stop having envy, hatred, jealousy, revenge, and stop regretting,

then and only then can peace start settling.

Even in the people who are most devious because even to those hearts peace is mischievous. So to change the world is to change oneself. To make this idea come alive would be a hard stealth. One cannot change the world or stop the war alone, a heart that wants change is what millions need to loan. A heart cannot beat with only one vessel, and just one lone boy against himself would not be much of a wrestle. The world cannot concur peace, Unless millions of caring hearts are willing to lease. Are willing to care, Are willing to share, Are willing to join together in prayer, Then could peace spread through the world everywhere.

Because peace is all around

in the sky, in the trees, in the ground.

Alysia Lovio McKinleyville High School McKinleyville, California

#### The Beast

Let's count the raindrops. One, two, three, four...

Let's see the blood spill. John, Steven, Mary, Elena...

Death,

As prevalent as the air we breathe.

So why?

Why must man slice the breast of man? Legalized murder, And for what? Peace?

From what stable building is constructed from blood, flesh and tears? To feed the beast that consumes our hearts,

And breaks those of our beloved.

Force feeding the Earth the blood of her creatures. Is that no different than making a mother eat her child like a savage

cannibal?

Is it okay if we call it, "cleansing our spirit?" Just as we call war, "serving our country?"

Seeds of peace shall never be sown if palms tightly grasp a weapon. Then what are we saving ourselves from?

Love,

And world peace.

Hands, palm to palm. We shall be saved.

> Courtney Feraru Six Rivers Charter High School Arcata, California

#### Peace Keep

Poison gas fills the lungs of little ones. Bullets flying through the air hitting innocent victims. Why the violence, the killings? Why can't we just keep the peace? Love is stronger than hate, don't underestimate! Break through the barrier of hatred just knock it to the ground let the peace flow in and fill this place. Don't be influenced by hate. Keep the peace and don't hate. Love life and stand free!

> Megan McKenzie Eureka High School Eureka, California

#### The song he plays:

I hear him sing a soft lullaby, Secretly I know it's a twisted lie. The song he coos is the song of hate, The power he has we underestimate. I see him hold the world in his hand, Why he hates, we will never understand. He has the power to ruin us all, I hear him sing the song into the nightfall. I no longer see in his eyes that familiar glow, Why he hates on one will know. The hate spreads like a deadly disease, Till were hate free, we won't live at ease. He sits and sings so empty and sad, It's hard not to see the fire in his eyes and feel bad. As we listen to the lyrics of his songs, We know in our hearts that it is wrong. For some the words rang true, And the hate they felt grew. They stopped and study each word, And we witness as something bad just occurred.

We watch as the song is played hate is shared, Most of us cover our ears because we're scared. If no one stopped to listen to the song of hate Maybe the way the world is now wouldn't be our fate. We need to cover our ears from the music playing Cause if you keep listening, we'll keep paying. So gather around and let's protect, Together we can lay the song of hate to rest. He stings his final strings And he smiles and no longer sings.

> Marlea Rose Eureka High School Eureka, California

#### Peace

eyes opening blinding in our vision the thought of change the moments unfurling in our hearts different thoughts than the consuming of our world frozen still without a motion eyes closing dreaming in my soul

of that imagined day.

> Sierra Abrams Alder Grove Charter School Eureka, California

#### Peace

On the field I'm at peace Where we eat our meals where we feast I stand in the grass meditating my thoughts floating I think back, my mind has a flash Running up the field so quickly so fast I tilt my head to look at the clouds I hear rain hitting the grass so loud The thunder it roars with an overwhelming BOOM! The game was starting very soon

> Michael Millot Eureka High School Eureka, California

#### "untitled"

My Brothers, and my friends. When the field is full. of the dead and those close to it. when you lie unsolicitedly dying, how can it be sweet to die. for a contrivance of mens' minds, A necessary evil. Tangential vicissitudes issue from the captain's house, like the cold steam of an impassioned scream. A scream for ordered chaos, mazes and mazes. stacked in neat columns. The scream boils blood, vision blurs red. then blue. then starry. As the blue runs out. into red. away into the damp earth, you lie alone, face up in the field, with nothing left to lose, save everything.

> Kevin Roney North Coast Preparatory and Performing Arts Academy Arcata, California

#### Buried in the Ground

Wars cause too much suffering.

They inflict harm to the people who don't carry the guns.

Wars are pointless.

Why can't people be content with what they are given?

Power, land, resources, and the feeling of superiority are what wars are fought for.

Why do people refuse to recognize that wars do not need to happen?

Buried in the ground are millions of lives taken by the cruel malevolent hand of Death.

Death caused by war.

A child may visit his parent's grave and weep.

The tyrants who start the wars don't know the sorrow of those who have lost ones.

The tyrants that start the wars aren't the ones sacrificing their own lives. Why?

Why do they have others die for their own greed?

Why do they have the right to ensconce themselves in the treasures that they take?

Those who do not fight for their own cause are cowards.

What right do they have to reprimand those who do not fight?

Men, women, and children buried in the ground because of war,

Have lost their lives for nothing.

There was no reason for them to die.

A mother's boy... killed.

She asks, "Why?"

The men in the shadows ignore her, too indulged in their comforts to give her a straight answer.

All those affected by war: men, women, and children,

are all buried in the ground.

Andrew "White Wolf" Morning Star Eureka High School Eureka, California

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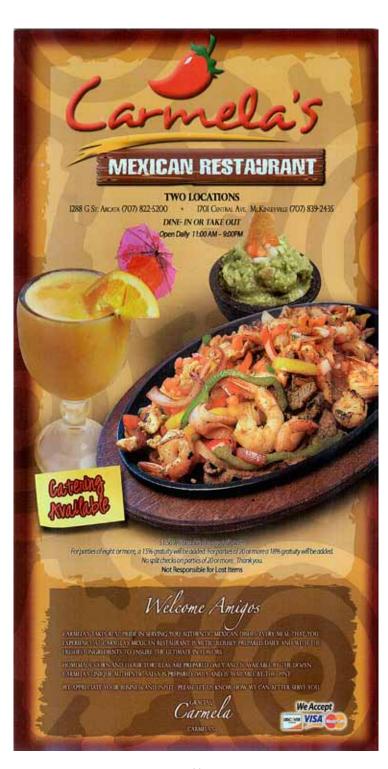
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Chuck DeWitt

**Richard Gilchrist** 

Jim and Linda Sorter

Bug Press, Arcata, California

## Endorsements

Peter LaVallee, Director, Youth Services Division Redwood Community Action Agency

> Liz Smith, MSW, Executive Director Boys & Girls Club of the Redwoods

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom



# Redwood Community Action Agency\_

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Veterans for Peace Redwood Coast Peace Poetry Contest P.O. Box 532 Bayside, CA 95524-0532

To Whom It May Concern:

The Youth Service Bureau of Redwood Community Action Agency enthusiastically endorses the Redwood Coast Peace Poetry Contest.

The contest encourages local youth to reflect upon important issues facing our community and nation and to express their insights through poetry. We applaud any effort that encourages young people to think for themselves and to question standard assumptions. The process challenges myths and stereotypes and leads to a broader understanding of social justice.

Thank you for sponsoring this very worthwhile event.

Sincerely,

avall

Peter LaVallee Director – Youth Services Division (707) 443-8322 Ext. 203

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Redwood Ceast Peace Poetry Contest

To Whom It May Concern:

Veterans for Peace

Thank you for your commitment to promoting peace locally and abroad and by including our young people by hosting a Peace Poetry Contest. On behalf of the Boys & Girls Club of the Redwoods, I enthusiastically endorse this contest.

Encouraging youth to deal with issues of unrest and adversity and to be able to challenge these issues through artistic means is empowering and a reminder that as our future leaders, they have the power to effect monumental change.

Sincerely,

Liz Smith, MSW Executive Director

# Be on the look-out for the next Peace Poetry Contest in early 2012!

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Redwood Coast Peace Poetry Contest

#### THE HUMBOLDT BAY CHAPTER OF VETERANS FOR PEACE

www.vfp56.org



#### Invites

#### Humboldt County High School Students

to submit an original poem directly focusing on peace; the abolition of war, hate, or violence; or peace-making in our communities.

Peace even in times of unrest should be the goal of all human communities. This contest is an attempt to focus on peace in a very troubled world.

#### **Poetry Format:**

Submissions may be free style verse, rhymed or unrhymed poems of 50 lines or fewer. All work *must* be completely original, one entry per author, and, heretofore, unpublished.

#### Submission Requirements:

An entry shall consist of a single copy of the poem accompanied by a separate author's profile sheet.

**Poem:** Printed or typed on 8½- by 11-inch paper, with the title of the poem at the top of the page and page numbering if more than one sheet. Do not include author's name or any other identifying information on this sheet.

Author's Profile: On a separate sheet, provide: 1) title of poem; 2) author's name; 3) name of parent or guardian; 4) school affiliation or home schooled statement; 5) grade level; 6) name of teacher or home school coordinator; 7) contact telephone number (indicate whether personal, parent, guardian, or teacher); and 8) e-mail address.

Entries should be mailed to: Veterans For Peace, Redwood Coast Peace Poetry Contest, P. O. Box 532, Bayside, CA 95524-0532. Or, e-mailed to: *nslomba@reninet.com* in either Portable Document Format (.PDF) or Rich Text Format (.RTF).

#### Submission Deadline:

#### Entries must be received not later than 5 p.m., Monday, March 7, 2011

Entrants will receive a copy of the *2011 Redwood Coast Peace Poetry Anthology* and be invited to present their poetry at the **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Peace Poetry Celebration** to be held Friday, May 6, 2011.

Cash prizes will be awarded to five written entries by an independent panel of local judges. \$200 for 1<sup>st</sup> Honors, \$100 for 2<sup>nd</sup> Honors, \$50 for 3<sup>rd</sup> Honors, and two \$25 Honorable Mention

# There will also be a \$100 cash award for "Best Presentation" that, in the opinion of an independent judge, best conveys the meaning of the author's written poem.

To qualify, the presentation must be made by the author at the Peace Poetry Celebration in May.

The Redwood Coast Peace Poetry Contest is sponsored by the Humboldt Bay Chapter of Veterans For Peace, Inc., the Buddhist Peace Fellowship Humboldt Chapter, and the Humboldt Unitarian Universalists Fellowship Social Action Committee. Submissions remain the property of the respective authors. Veterans For Peace Humboldt Bay Chapter 56 is granted an unrestricted license for reuse at its discretion.



# The 2010 Peace Poetry Celebration

