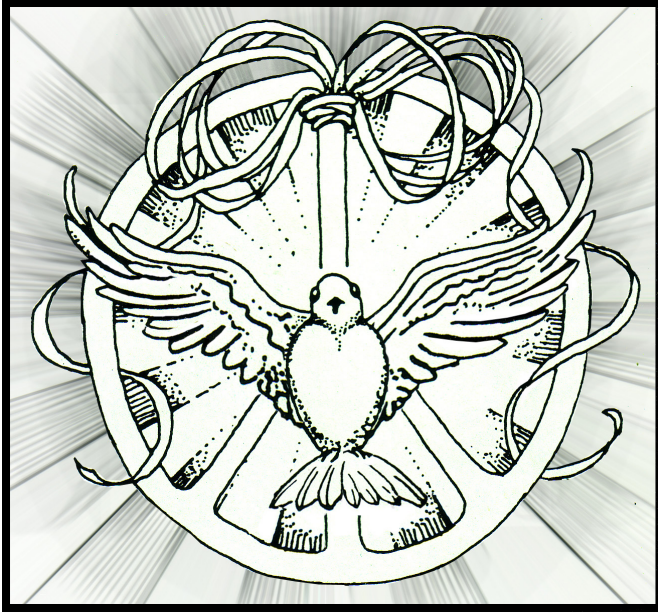


2013 Peace Poetry Contest



*Alachua County and
Marion County Schools
Grades 1-12*

Sponsored by Veterans for Peace, Gainesville Chapter



2013 Peace Poetry Contest

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Marion County Schools
Grades 1 -12*

A collection of the winning poems from the fourth annual Peace Poetry Contest in Alachua County and Marion County schools, first through twelfth grades, sponsored by the Gainesville Chapter of Veterans for Peace.



The text of all the poems contained in this book are printed exactly as submitted. Do to space and color restraints, we were unable to include special illustrations and designs that accompanied poems. But you can view the originals on our website at www.vfpgainesville.org.

Acknowledgments

Veterans for Peace would first and foremost like to thank all of the participants in the 2013 Peace Poetry Contest. This year we received approximately 230 poems from students of all ages in Alachua and Marion counties with diverse interpretations of peace. Without the poetry submissions, there would be no Peace Poetry Contest and none of the dialogue that comes with it.

The purpose of the Peace Poetry Contest is to encourage young people to think about peace and describe their ideas in a creative way with no rules and no direction. The result of this process is a dialogue about peace and nonviolence that will hopefully develop into peaceful worldviews applied to real world situations when the now-young poets grow up to be the future leaders of the world.

Parents and teachers also play a large role in the Peace Poetry Contest every year by encouraging their children to participate, sometimes awarding extra credit and providing other incentives. Thank you for helping make the 2013 Peace Poetry Contest a success.

UF English professor, Dr. Sidney Wade, was integral to this year's contest as head judge of the poems. Dr. Wade also enlisted her team of graduate students to help judge the large number of submissions. Thank you to Paulette Bane, Kristen Dawes, Claire Eder, Terita Heath-Wlaz, Adam Stengel, and Ezra Stewart-Silver for your time and effort.

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Gainesville has hosted the Peace Poetry Contest four years in a row now, and Veterans for Peace is grateful for their support and continued cooperation.

With the sustained support and work of everyone involved, Veterans for Peace believes the Peace Poetry Contest will continue to grow and prosper, spreading the ideal of peace to more and more people each year.

Thank you for making this year's program a success.

Winning Poets

Grades 1-5

Malaqhi Jones	7
Honorable Mention	
Murdolph Jones	7
Honorable Mention	
Ashley Wilson	7
Honorable Mention	
Sydney Millinor	8
Honorable Mention	
Viviana Goldstein	8
Honorable Mention	
Nina Zhang	9
3rd Place	
Julie Waldrop	9
2nd Place	
Caden Kresak	10
1st Place	

Grades 6-8

Sophie Viviano	11
Honorable Mention	
Alex Muse	11
Honorable Mention	
Jordan Yachabach	12
Honorable Mention	
Chloey Ramsey	13
Honorable Mention	
Summer White	13
Honorable Mention	
Peyton Haug	14
Honorable Mention	
Nate Englert	15
Honorable Mention	

Kayla Barrera	14
Honorable Mention	
Brian Byrne	16
Honorable Mention	
Chris Campo	17
3rd Place	
Xylie Miller	18
3rd Place	
Aaron Stutz	19
2nd Place	
Peter Acs	20
1st Place	

Grades 9-10

Christina Lauer	21
Honorable Mention	
Deja Cray	22
Honorable Mention	
Hannah Walker	23
3rd Place	
Hali Troendle	24
2nd Place	
Alice Hou	25
1st Place	

Grades 11-12

Shaquille Pratt	26
Honorable Mention	
Ashley Torres	26
Honorable Mention	
Shaniqua Donley	27
Honorable Mention	
Cassidy Davis	28
3rd Place	
Brianna Sirmons	29
2nd Place	
Devon Washington	30
1st Place	

Peace Poem

Peace is when you're alone.
And when it is quiet and calm.
When you have peace it is a good time to take a nap.
Or a good time to read a book and kick back.

*Malaqhi Jones, 1st Grade, J.J. Finley Elementary School
Honorable Mention, Grades 1-5*

World Peace

World peace is when peace is all over the world. The name kind of gives it away. We have never had world peace, because people are always at war. War isn't peace, it's fighting and fighting is wrong. World peace will bring a lot of happiness to everyone.

*Murdolph Jones, 2nd Grade, J.J. Finley Elementary School
Honorable Mention, Grades 1-5*

Peace

Bells are ringing,
birds are singing,
there is peace on Earth today.

Peace on Earth,
there is new birth.
I hope there will always be peace.

*Ashley Wilson, 3rd Grade, J.J. Finley Elementary
Honorable Mention, Grades 1-5*

Peace

Oh Lord there is nothing like peace
or nothing better.
Peace is the present god
gave us and we should cherish this with all our
hearts.
Peace is what raises our hearts and sets us free
throughout our lives.
The one thing that can help us
stop a war the one thing we
depend on in
hard times.
Even if it feels like
you have descended to Hell peace can still
save you. Peace can save you any where
or anytime. When you're in trouble peace
can still save you.
Oh Lord there is nothing like peace
or nothing better.

*Sydney Millinor, 4th Grade, Wiles Elementary School
Honorable Mention, Grades 1-5*



Peace is careful and sometimes rare in your family.
It is the time when leaves calm and wind stops blowing.
It is very important.

*Viviana Goldstein, 3rd Grade, C.W. Norton Elementary School
Honorable Mention, Grades 1-5*

Nature's Peace

During the bloody war,
I looked into the core
of the great willow tree
I saw a stream of light
that looked like a blessing for me
The birds started singing,
the river began to bubble
It all seemed like a
harmony of peace
O, the joy!
The world gave
Nature's peace to me!

*Nina Zhang, 4th Grade, C.W. Norton Elementary School
3rd Place, Grades 1-5*

The Things I See

The smell of roses are filling the air,
from a familiar tree I pick off a sweet
pair. The birds are tweeting all day long,
The birds are singing a beautiful song.
I feel like I am falling gracefully from the air.
It feels so cool like the wind is blowing
my hair. When I snuggle up in my warm bed,
then I see something floating that is red,
then I knew it was a rose,
because of the smell that came to my
nose. I feel like a very nice queen, sitting
on a throne that everyone has seen.
Now I'm in peace.

*Julie Waldrop, 3rd Grade, J.J. Finley Elementary School
2nd Place, Grades 1-5*

If We Try

If there are no boundaries
Between north and south, west and east
And we all share the land,
Then we can all live in peace

If we help one another
Aid the poor, spread the feast
And we all share Earth's goods
Then we can all live in peace

If we can agree to disagree
The whole world sign a treaty
And we use words not weapons,
Then we can all live in peace

No folded flags for mothers
All the violence has ceased
If we all accept our neighbors,
Then we can all live in peace

*Caden Kresak, 4th Grade, Archer Elementary School
1st Place, Grades 1-5*



I got shot
I've been hit
I've been down on my wit
I've been poor
I've been sad
I've been down on my knees
I've been pray'n to God to help me please
I've been brave
I've been strong
I've been pray'n all along

*Sophie Viviano, 6th Grade, Queen of Peace Catholic Academy
Honorable Mention, Grades 6–8*

Peace

I got lucky
A “perfect life”
Or so they say
But they don't know
What's bottled up inside

I don't have peace
I don't have love
What do I have?
A bunch of stuff
Is that what I want
No not really
But people don't get that
No, not anybody

*Alex Muse, 6th Grade, St. Patrick Interparish School
Honorable Mention, Grades 6–8*

A peaceful fly in the night

The sky so bright
Just a little breeze
A good time for a flight
I grab my head gear
I shall fly like a kite
I start to takeoff
I'll be doing this till night
The clouds as little puff balls
All but one in sight
The big dark cloud starts rumbling near
Although I am at a great height
I can't think of what to do
Aha now I have something is I might
I try going up, not a chance
I try going down finally there's a whole in sight
I go down and around and then, I was at peace again
Peace in the night
I waited in my plane all day
Then I thought " now this I might"
I'll write a poem about peacefully flying in the night.

*Jordan Yachabach, 6th Grade, Queen of Peace Catholic Academy
Honorable Mention, Grades 6-8*



A brand new mother, rocking her baby softly
“I love you,” on her last breath
The only true peace she’s ever felt
Her love lingering through death

Certain of joining the fight for peace
A brand new soldier, sitting alert
He never doubted what could happen
But still, his blood stained the dirt

Love is patient, love is kind
Then why is peace so fleeting?
All the good in the world cannot go unpunished
Every good person must take their beating

*Chloey Ramsey, 8th Grade, Queen of Peace Catholic Academy
Honorable Mention, Grades 6–8*

Safe

When you awake in the middle of the night,
With fear seeping into your dreams,
Palms shaking, forehead sweating,
With memories,
Of explosions, people dying, screams,
Remember, you’re okay,
You’re safe.
You will never enter into the mouth of hell again.

*Summer White, 8th Grade, Kanapaha Middle School
Honorable Mention, Grades 6–8*

Peace Poem

A bullet shot near
Rings in my ear
Bringing stripes of pride.

As we run we bring red
As we fight, white
And our tears streaming blue.

Though we are gone
Remember, with a song
Our flag so bright and bold

Now that I am cold, stories are told
With ease
I am
At peace

*Peyton Haug, 8th Grade, Queen of Peace Catholic Academy
Honorable Mention, Grades 6–8*

Peace

Something so complicated and hard to find
Represented by a circle and a few lines
Something thwarted by guns and mines

People pulled in by the seduction of a fight
Only to feel immeasurable regret next night
Always overpowered by fear and spite

Constantly in pursuit of peace
Though we can only achieve it temporarily
But every second devoid of blood and war
Is without a doubt worth fighting for.

*Kayla Barrera, 8th Grade, Kanapaha Middle School
Honorable Mention, Grades 6–8*

Tip the Scales

War is good, some people say,
while in the ground, their families lay.
They talk about serenity,
but act with utter enmity.

In the night, the bombs will fall,
killing mother, father and child all.
Why we do it, no one knows,
but yet we continue exchanging blows.

How to stop it, this terrible force,
to me, there is only one true course.
We must use peace to save the earth,
tip the scales, embrace life's birth.

So, tip the scales, and release the hate,
for peace always does lie in wait.
You know how to find it, it's in you and me.
Just believe in peace, and you will be free.

*Nate Englert, 8th Grade, St. Patrick Interparish School
Honorable Mention, Grades 6-8*



Peace Poem

As I look to the sky
My eyes lay upon the glistening moon
Hearing the distant cry
For the battle will be here soon

The soft, sweet breeze
Flowing towards the west
Does not settle or ease
The pain filling my chest

My life has been taken over by fear
And my memories are now only distant dreams
For tonight I will shed my last tear
Over come with Satan's evil screams

Will I escape this living Hell
or will I perish for my Country
For if this is my last farewell
I hope I do not leave bluntly

I wish this could all change
As I watch the trees sway back and forth
Though all we pay attention to is rifle range
And how stealthily we move north

What we need is not only love
We don't only need courage
Not the wake up calls of the Morning Doves
Or frantically forage

What we need is something simple
Something easy to grant
Something beyond any stars twinkle
But smaller than any plant

For this divine gift
Is not an enemy cease
But the pain lift
Of the great and mighty peace

*Brian Byrne, 8th Grade, Queen of Peace Catholic Academy
Honorable Mention, Grades 6–8*

When it comes time for war,
People must stop and think.
Who wants it?
Who needs it?
Instead of debating our problems,
A soldier bleeds it.

Why do we fight?
Over oil,
Over money,
Over power.
Since when do objects control our lives?
Why let our lives be controlled,
When we can save lives instead?

We may live in separate countries,
Different continents.
We may have different religions,
Different beliefs.
But aren't we all the same?
Why don't we prove it?

End the fighting,
End the war.
If peace is achieved,
The past won't matter anymore

*Chris Campo, 8th Grade, Kanapaha Middle School
3rd Place (tied), Grades 6–8*

Peace Within Myself

One day I'll find peace;
At least within myself
I'll keep a smile on my face
And never let it fall

I'll walk with a bounce in my step
No matter what's going on
I'll be immune to the bustle of life,
And just take a deep breath.

I have a river of peace that flows within me.
Sometimes reality is like a dam.
Blockin the peace the flows within me,
starting as wood and growing stronger into steel.

War, fighting, death who wouldn't lose faith.
Now matter how much flow the dam blocks
I know I'll find peace,
Even if I have to start with a little thing like me.

*Xylie Miller, 8th Grade, St. Patrick Interparish School
3rd Place (tied), Grades 6-8*



Hide and Seek

Where are you?

Where could you possibly be?

Do you hide behind the monopolies?

Or do you sneak in the shadows of oligopolies?

Maybe you hide inside outrageous taxes,
or slither inside the mountains of debt owed
but never paid.

Do you bury yourself within the
sounds of war?

Or do you stash away in capitalism
and communism?

Where are you?

Why won't you show yourselves?

Is it because you are afraid?

Do you reside in the fear and
superstitions between countries?

Where do you two conceal yourselves?

Must I shout your names?

Show yourselves tranquility and peace!

So you can flaunt and prance
in this world once again.

*Aaron Stutz, 8th Grade, Fort Clarke Middle School
2nd Place, Grades 6–8*

Peace

Peace is as smooth as jazz,
it smells like a brilliant array of flowers.

It looks like everyone.
from a happy student, to an elderly lady.

It tastes like the sweetest Honeysuckle flower,
and feels like the smoothest leather.

War will tear it apart, break it down, and rot it.
Try to keep it fresh and together.

Drive safely, talk safely, and listen carefully.
Everybody makes mistakes, even perfect people.

Peace, a wonderful and colorful thing,
purely indescribable and perfect.

Colorful as a bundle of circus balloons,
and as safe as a loaded .45 caliber pistol.

No fighting, no loss, and no horror.
Peace, a simply exquisite thought, or idea.

*Peter Acs, 6th Grade, Oak Hall Middle School
1st Place, Grades 6–8*



PEACEFUL PLACE

There are birds, bees and tall brown trees.
I go and play there every day,
And all my problems blow away.

The only one there is me.
That's all there is I like to see.

Others say "Can we play?"
And I say "No, go away!"

I made this place just for me,
Just for me, so I can be free!

*Christina Lauer, 9th Grade, PACE Center for Girls
Honorable Mention, Grades 9-10*



PEACE OF MIND

Not knowing what you're
Doing or who you're with
Worries me.

It scares me to think
Of you leaving and
Being free.

Never saying 'I love you'
Or 'miss you babe'
Makes me feel like
I'm pushing you away.

But, the day you told
Me I had your heart
And that you were here
To stay made me feel
Special in each and
Every way.

Many people say that
Love can make you blind,
I say sometimes
Love can give you
A peace of mind.

*Deja Cray, 9th Grade, PACE Center for Girls
Honorable Mention, Grades 9-10*

For a Moment

Ecstatic, young children
running free,
hair crazy in the wind,
their arms waving high,
pumping with beautiful electricity.
Gentle grins, insane smiles,
bare feet skipping, sprinting,
little toes innocently crunching fragile leaves.
They gallop to the gorgeous fields ahead,
where love and freedom and peace are wed.
Soft blankets of green await.
For a moment, there will be peace.
For a lifetime, there will be love.

*Hannah Walker, 10th Grade, Newberry High School
3rd Place, Grades 9-10*



Peace Is a Cure for the World

Peace is the handshake between foes when the battle has ended
When the war is over and the suffering subsided
Peace joins those who once walked in darkness
It creates friends out of adversaries
Peace is a cure for the world

Peace sings a melody to the heartbroken people of the world
The harmony of peace never diminishes
Peace is the way of the unprejudiced
It carries out the world's virtuous deeds
Peace is a cure for the world

Peace will stand for the lawful and never fall for the unjust
Inviting the world and turning down not one person
Peace sings the words of the people
It substitutes anger and hatred with love
Peace is a cure for the world

Peace is a gentle stream flowing in a sound and steady course
Picking up societies like a river picks up silt
Peace is a waterway that flows through our souls
It is a medicine for our bodies
Peace is a cure for the world

*Hali Troendle, 10th Grade, Forest High School
2nd Place, Grades 9-10*



When a voice can influence a mind,
And not be judged by the gender of the speaker,
And not be judged by the color of the speaker,
We will be free.

When a couple can show their affection through marriage,
And not be judged by their infatuations,
And not have others judge about their rights over marriage,
We will be free.

When we can step outside our door,
And not be scared to run back,
And not be scared that we are living in a world where danger lies
close to home,
We will be Free.

When nations can stop their wars,
And not attack those who are different,
And not attack other forms of government because they are different,
We will be free.

When we can accept the world and people for who they are,
And not be separated by physical appearance
And not be separated by wealth
And when we can call ourselves, together as one, the people,
We will be Freed.

*Alice Hou, 10th Grade, Eastside High School
1st Place, Grades 9–10*



Peace

Peace is the marriage of people and the planet with all attendant races.

Peace comes from being able to contribute the best that we have,
And all that we are, toward creating a world that supports everyone;
But it is also securing the space for others to contribute the best
that they have

And all that they are.

Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.

*Shaquille Pratt, 12th Grade Eastside High School
Honorable Mention, Grades 11–12*

PEACE

I find peace in silence.
There's peace when I sleep.
It's peaceful at night,
 on cold days with no crickets singing.
There's peace in death.
I can imagine sleeping peacefully,
 not ever being disturbed.
I hear peace in the howling of
 The wind at night.
There's peace in a cat's purr
 when they rub on your face.
I find peace when I'm alone.
There's peace in nothing.
There's peace in abyss.

*Ashley Torres, 11th grade, PACE Center for Girls
Honorable Mention, Grades 11–12*

PEACE!

Sitting on the dock
Looking out into the deep sea
Birds flying, the sun's beaming,
Waters washing onto the reef.
I look over my head
And I see color.
Blue!
And white like puddles
The wind is piercing through
My face. It's refreshing
It looks like the birds
Are having a race.
I love coming onto the reef
It clears my mind and I
Have so much Peace.

*Shaniqua Donley, 12th Grade, Eastside High School
Honorable Mention, Grades 11-12*



PEACE

There's nothing more peaceful than a day at the lake
Like the keys to the city
There is nothing more pretty
The sun beats on my skin
Sand pushing through my toes
Nothing but time
Nowhere to go
Hop on the boat
A dip in the lake
No worries or concerns
Until after summer break
Stay a week or two
As long as it takes
Water lapping on the shore
Riding a board across the wakes
This is my home
This is where I'd love to stay
A nice peaceful lullaby
Of a long lazy day

*Cassidy Davis, 11th Grade, Forest High School
3rd Place, Grades 11-12*

A Mug of Tea

Peace exists in many forms
Which everyone sees differently-
“No more war!” is the shouted norm
But I think peace is a mug of tea-

Its best served warm, and sweet and flavored
And you can't help but share-
This calming thing you've come to savor
With those for whom you care-

Whenever you share both tea and peace
It warms you to the bone-
Especially when the world is cold
And makes you feel alone-

I don't think everyone on Earth agrees
On just what peace exactly means-
And truly there is no wrong answer
But I believe peace is a mug of tea.

*Brianna Sirmons, 11th Grade, Forest High School
2nd Place, Grades 11-12*

Flames of Peace

Peace is like a blossoming tree
Its petals dancing hand-to-hand with the wind, unbound and free.
Peace is like the first sunset
When the earth and heavens at last connects.
Peace is like an eternal flame
That is fueled by all the hopes and dreams of those who are truly
willing to believe.
Peace at times may seem distant, but not unreachable.
Through the depths of war it remains untouchable.
Peace is possible as long as we stand by it;
The flames of peace will forever burn bright
As long as our hearts are there to light it.

*Devon Washington, 12th Grade, Eastside High School
1st Place, Grades 11-12*



Veterans for Peace would like to specially thank the musicians who performed at the 2013 Peace Poetry Contest!

Lindzi Ferguson, Vocalist

(recommended by Gainesville Academy of Art and Music)

Terrance Williams, Vocalist

(of Eastside High School)

Keith Peters, Guitarist

**THINKING ABOUT THE MILITARY?
MAKE AN
INFORMED CHOICE.
ADVICE FROM VETERANS
ON MILITARY SERVICE
AND RECRUITING PRACTICES**
A Resource Guide For Young People
Considering Enlistment

<http://www.afn.org/~vetpeace/>

Gainesville



Chapter 14

If you'd like to support the Peace Poetry Contest or the Gainesville chapter of Veterans for Peace, you can donate or send suggestions to:

Gainesville Veterans for Peace
P.O. Box 142562, Gainesville, FL 32614

All checks should be made payable to Veterans for Peace, Gainesville. Thank you for your support this year!

