VETERANS FOR PEACE

Gainesville, Chapter 14
vfppeacepoetrycontest@gmail.com
(352)373-3435

2115 NW 7th Lane
Gainesville, FL
32603

"If we are to teach real peace in this world, and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children." – Mohandas Gandhi

Dear Educator and Community Leader,

The Gainesville chapter of Veterans for Peace announces its **6th ANNUAL PEACE POETRY CONTEST** for Alachua County, where all students, grades K–12, are encouraged to submit one original poem focusing on their interpretation of "peace."

Veterans for Peace members believe that peace-making and hope for a peaceful world begin in our community, our homes and our schools. That is why we invite you and your students to participate in the contest this year; a peaceful possibility lies in the younger generations of today who will be leading, transforming and inspiring the world tomorrow.

We want to honor the ideal of peace through the perspectives of young people. Peace is a uniquely human conception and affirms the human spirit. It is especially important to remember that peace is not merely a goal but a human right. In that spirit of reflection upon social justice, we encourage everyone to contribute a poem to this contest.

Last year, more than 400 students submitted poems, and the winners were invited to read their poems aloud at the Peace Poetry Reading, where they were publicly presented with their awards. Three winners read their poems at the Veterans for Peace Winter Solstice Concert in December in front of more than 350 attendees.

A panel of English graduate students from the University of Florida, led by Dr. Sidney Wade, will judge the poems based on creativity, content, and use of language. The winners will be published in the 2015 Peace Poetry Book and asked to recite their poem at the public **Peace Poetry Reading on May 9** at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Gainesville. Winners will also receive valuable gift certificates to a local bookstore.

If your student(s) want(s) to submit a poem to this year's Peace Poetry Contest, **the deadline for submissions is March 20, 2015**. Poems can be submitted via email to vfppeacepoetrycontest@gmail.com or via mail to:

VFP Peace Poetry Contest
2115 NW 7th Lane
Gainesville, FL 32603

Submissions must include the poet's name, grade level and school, and two preferred methods of contact for the parent/guardian and/or teacher (e-mail, phone number and/or mailing address). We need this information in order to efficiently and reliably notify the winners. Teachers can serve as direct contact for the winning student, helping us to notify the parents, but this is not required. All students will be notified of the results, even if their poem does not place.

For more information, please email vfppeacepoetrycontest@gmail.com or call Sheila Payne at 352-373-3435. To view the 2013 Peace Poetry Book, visit http://tinyurl.com/q47m5y5.