VETERANS FOR PEACE

Gainesville, Chapter 14
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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 **11th ANNUAL PEACE POETRY CONTEST** for Alachua County, where all students, grades K–12, are encouraged to submit one original poem focusing on the idea of "peace," or, more specifically, peace and social justice.

Veterans for Peace members believe that peace-making and hope for an end to war, violence and injustice begin in our community, our homes and our schools. Through the Peace Poetry Contest, we hope to stimulate discussion and critical thinking on tough subjects like war, racism, injustice, hate, environmental harm and inequality. By addressing these issues, we can begin to make them right.

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 of tomorrow.

Last year, more than 300 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. Four winners read their poems at the Veterans for Peace Winter Solstice Concert in December in front of more than 350 attendees.

A panel of local authors and poets will judge the poems based on creativity, content, and use of language. The winners will be published in the 2020 Peace Poetry Book and asked to recite their poem at the public Peace Poetry Reading in May 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 April 12, 2020**. Poems can be submitted via email to vfppeacepoetrycontest@gmail.com or via mail to:

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2115 NW 7th Lane
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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 831-334-0117. To see a copy of last year's Peace Poetry Book, visit http://www.vfpgainesville.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/2019-peace-poetry-book-FINAL-1.pdf.