

2011 *Alachua County Schools*  
*Peace Poetry*  
*Contest*



Sponsored by Veterans for Peace,  
Gainesville Chapter



# *Alachua County Peace Poetry Contest*

A collection of poetry by students of all ages from Alachua County schools, containing the winning poetry from the second annual Alachua County Peace Poetry Contest, sponsored by the Gainesville Chapter of Veterans for Peace.



*Published by Veterans for Peace  
Chapter 14, Gainesville*

# *Foreword*

This book of peace poetry celebrates the work of the winners of the second annual Alachua County School Peace Poetry Contest sponsored by the Gainesville Chapter of Veterans for Peace. The focus of the contest is peace, nonviolence and the abolition of war and hate.

Children, particularly, are open to creatively expressing feelings through poetry. Teachers and families, likewise, are vitally interested in promoting peace and nonviolent solutions and attitudes needed to seek a community and world at peace.

VFP believes that poetry is a prime and meaningful medium for creating a culture of peace. Poetry uses an ancient format to advance culture and learning. It makes creative use of language and ideas to advance the creation of folk art. VFP believes that peace poetry contests can help change the cultural focus from “poetry of war” to “poetry for peace,” a much broader, more humanitarian appeal. The Peace Poetry Contest provides a positive milieu where children and young people can share feelings and craft their words creatively, with adults, through poetry.

These poems were selected as winners because they spoke directly to veterans and judges. Some were simple, basic though expressed poetically. Some were more complex and developed, showing a progression of thought and feeling. All poems appear as the author wrote them.

Thank you for your participation in this program celebrating a Culture of Peace. VFP considers all contestants winners!

Jessica Newman

Veterans for Peace Associate Member and Peace Poetry Coordinator

# *Acknowledgements*

Veterans for Peace would like to thank not only the participants who submitted entries to the contest, but also those who were involved in the organizing and planning.

UF English professor, Dr. Sidney Wade, contributed in indescribable amounts by judging the poems with her team of graduate students listed here:

James P. Davis  
Laura Deily  
Diya Chaudhuri  
Karin Lightstone  
Claire Eder  
Becca Evanhoe

We greatly appreciate the time and dedication that went into the judging process, as this contest would never be possible without them.

Gainesville VFP would like to thank the Samantha Smith Chapter of VFP in the North Shore area of Massachusetts for sharing the idea of the Peace Poetry Contest with us.

We'd also like to thank the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Gainesville for hosting the event, as well as the Peace and Justice Coalition for its support.

With the continued support of all parties involved, the Alachua County Peace Poetry Contest will be able to prosper and grow for many years to come.

Look out for information about next year's Peace Poetry Contest at the Gainesville Veterans for Peace website.

## Hello Peace

You are my favorite  
Because you do good for people.  
You make them calm.  
Everybody is happy  
Thanks to you.  
Bye.  
See you soon.

*Mckayla Jinyoung Ro, Kindergarten, Oak Hall School  
Youngest Participant*

## Peace Day

The sun is a flamed ball in the sky.  
Above the Earth it flies high.  
Flowers pop up everywhere as  
A quiet hum fills the Spring air.

Everybody lends a helping hand.  
Adjacent to the sea's waves crashing  
To the sand.

A day as peaceful as plain can be.  
Peace stretches out as far as the  
Eye can see.

To make every day peaceful  
All you have to do is  
Make peace in the world  
And the world will thank you.

*Jeanna Storey, 4th Grade, Archer Elementary School  
Quality Poem*

## What if the World Was Peaceful?

What if we could live a life with no wars?  
What if our nation had no battle scars?  
The nation could hold peace in a big glass jar.

What if we did good deeds for each other?  
What if we helped the fallen rise again?  
With that, we wouldn't have war to bother.

As you see, I ask for not much, just a little.  
Why can't we live in peace, I ask all day.  
'Cause if we did, the world wouldn't be cold and brittle.

*Lulu Fang, 5th Grade, Williams Elementary School*  
*Quality Poem*

Peace is a loving thing.  
The wind going through your hair when you ride your bike.  
Peace is gentle waves coming to the warm sand at the beach.  
Playing with your friends is peace.  
Peace is relaxing at the pool on a sunny day.  
Having kindness toward others is peace.  
Peace is anything happy you can think of.

*Austin Cicale, 4th Grade, Brentwood School*  
*Quality Poem*

Peace is the harmony that surrounds the earth.  
Peace is the energy that keeps people going.  
Peace is the blue that sparkles over the rushing sea.  
Peace is the key to tranquility.

*Jacob Borgert, 4th Grade, Williams Elementary School*  
*Quality Poem*

## Peace

A silent breeze in spring.  
Flowers and trees relaxed.  
Silence  
Peace sounds from the school house.  
Silence  
Ocean waves are calm.  
Silence  
Harmless hippies protesting.  
Silence  
Happiness in everyone.  
Silence

*Derek Callen, 4th Grade, Brentwood School  
Quality Poem*

## Picture of Peace

My picture of peace is the perfect place that comes and embraces you when you meet it. My picture of peace is a silent serene lake with sunny summer rays shining cheerfully down on the water and a phenomenal breeze blowing - not a steamy suffocating wind or an arctic bone-chilling one, but a breeze as delightful as ice cream melting on your tongue - whirling around as you stand on the soft, springy, and forest green grass. My picture of tranquility is watching the massive and petite clouds float sluggishly by like turtles in the beautiful azure sky. This is my picture of peace.

*Sabrina Nong, 4th Grade, Williams Elementary School  
Quality Poem*



I fight with words.  
With Peace.  
Gandhi  
Rosa Parks  
The Freedom Riders  
Some think words are harmless  
But they are not, you must see.  
Gandhi  
Rosa Parks  
The Freedom Riders.  
Think  
Compassion, kindness, tranquility.  
Words of Peace.  
Gandhi  
Rosa Parks  
The Freedom Riders  
Learn to love  
Speak into this angry world  
Gandhi  
Rosa Parks  
The Freedom Riders  
Heal the world.  
Peace

*Molly Ayers, 4th Grade, Brentwood School  
Quality Poems*

## **The Meaning of Peace**

Peace is a spiderweb, eternally controlled by the people.  
Peace is a rainbow, showing us new possibilities every day.  
Peace is like a blazing fire, forever keeping us warm and cozy.  
Peace is like a stream of water, flowing harmony into a bay.

Peace pleases a plethora of people;  
war just hurts everyone in the end.  
Peace plays a harmonious and melodic tune;  
war plays a tune like a guitar string on a bend.

*Tej Stead, 4th Grade, Williams Elementary School  
Quality Poem*

## What is Peace?

Peace is happy helping hearts,  
amiable people all over the world,  
no bloody battles.

It is also pacifists calling Mother Nature, healing,  
irenic living creatures in harmony and justice,  
and as nice to have as candy.

But most of all, peace is love and happiness  
living all over the world.

*Grace Yu, 4th Grade, Williams Elementary  
Quality Poem*

### **PEACE IS...**

Peace is like a fortress.  
Its walls keep the bad out.  
It is as graceful as a  
hummingbird, yet as  
strong as a building.

### **PEACE IS NOT...**

Peace is not solitary,  
many embrace it.  
You do not have  
struggle or fight it.  
Just go with it and  
it will lead you in a  
better direction.

*Doug Jones, 4th Grade, Archer Elementary School  
Quality Poem*

## Peace is the Greatest Value

I see a soldier struggle and strive  
Let God be with him and keep him alive  
His non-existing faith and pride  
I stare into his tear-filled eyes  
This shows me that there's no peace  
But there is in dream, at least  
Peace is a solid thing, strong and pure  
For the wounds of making it, let their be a cure  
War is sadly all around us  
When it begin there are cars with the red plus  
Values are so sacred to me and you  
And so I is...

*Hailey Marchetti, 5th Grade, Williams Elementary  
Quality Poem*

I just can't sleep tonight!  
No way everything is right.  
It's in the papers.  
It's on TV.  
It's everywhere I go.  
Children are crying;  
Soldiers are dying.  
Some people have no home.  
But I know there is sunshine beyond, in the rain.  
I know there's good times.  
Heaven tell me how to make a change.

*Allen McBride, 4th Grade, Brentwood School  
Quality Poem*

Peace is hippie harmony.  
A glittering, flowing stream of serenade,  
It makes the world tune melodically  
With bells singing blissfully.

*Annie Ho, 4th Grade, Williams Elementary School  
Quality Poem*

**P**lenty of Love  
**E**normous amounts of happiness  
**A** lot of Unison  
**C**ongenial people everywhere  
**E**verything's calm

*Sana Lulu, 4th Grade, Williams Elementary  
Quality Poem*

## **Peace**

Peace is endless like the grains of sand.  
Peace is wonderful and very grand.  
It's unbreakable by actions or words.  
No matter what happens or occurs.  
Peace is in everyone.

*Jonathan Hayes, 4th Grade, Williams Elementary School  
Quality Poem*

## **No More**

Boom ! A soldier dies in Fallujah  
Boom ! Ten kids die in Kandahar  
Stop ! No boom ! No more !

No more widows  
No more parents less kids  
No more kid less a parent  
No more father less a son  
No more mother less a daughter  
No more friends less a friend lost in war

Stop ! No more boom ! No more war!

A wife in husband's lap  
A child in father's neck from behind  
A son in parents' home  
A friend in friends' parties

If there war were no more!

*Promotto Islam, 5th Grade, Talbot Elementary School  
Quality Poem*

## Peace

Peaceful breezes through the trees  
laying back in sunshine.  
Homeless people will have homes  
and war will be no more.  
Anger, cruelty would be in the past;  
Happiness and friendship would be present and future.  
Laughing with friends on a sunny day.  
Joyful, calm, and quiet.

*Linnea Alborn, 4th Grade, Brentwood School  
Quality Poem*

The wind carries love across the flower in the sun.  
Happiness is washing up to the shore  
Along with the ocean breezes.  
It's spring time and the ice has melted away all your  
worries.  
Joy is crawling in every nook and cranny.  
Turning frowns upside down.

*Phoenix Bear, 4th Grade, Brentwood School  
Quality Poem*

## Peace is...

The dreams that are made when good time finally fade  
a tree and a sea with blue green algae  
The laughter of kids making friendship that sends  
them on  
the most exciting and very long journey  
Now that is the true joy of pure peace

*India Kumquat Blanchard, 4th Grade, Williams Elementary School  
Quality Poem*

## In the Air, The Wind

In the air the wind breezes through the trees.  
When I run it feels like flowers hitting my face.  
All the hippies are relaxing in the quite Spring.  
My gentle brothers play in the ocean.  
But in one hour I am going to war.  
I hope I will still be alive.  
Goodbye, Brothers.

*Eric Carter, 4th Grade, Brentwood School  
Honorable Mention, Grades 4-5*

## Peace

Peace is like a holy harmony,  
Peace spread happiness melodically.  
Happy, harmless, helpful peace,  
It works like a can of grease.

Peace stops every kind of war,  
Gives hopeless people light and opens an optimistic new  
door.

It is like flowers spread all over the world,  
It is extremely powerful - more than any kind of gun or  
sword.

Oh peace Oh peace Oh peace Oh peace  
It's much more beautiful than the vast ocean sea.  
All we wish, all we crave, the earth is in peace not in any war.  
Peace is unlike anything, way more precious than all kinds of  
jewels.

*Cindy Jie, 4th Grade, Williams Elementary School  
Honorable Mention, Grades 4-5*

## Peace

Peace  
Peace  
Peace  
Peace

Peace is a candle-lit room you meditate in  
Peace is when you hug a friend & spread God's glory end to end

Take a nature hike, swing in its trees  
That is peace  
That is peace  
That is peace

So don't fight peace or tear peace  
It has a lighthearted soul  
Don't tackle it down & send peace away  
Wake up the next morning, find a today  
And be in the holy light

The word is peace.

That's its name; so silky, so soft, so smooth  
Like sailing water on a sailing moon  
Peace is so pure it can slip  
It can stay  
Peace rebinds us  
Peace reminds us  
So be at peace and at peace you'll stay  
Through dark night and bright day

Peace  
Peace  
Peace  
Peace

*Lily Deleo, 4th Grade, Norton Elementary School  
Honorable Mention, Grades 4-5*

## Peace

Peace is a cat burning bright  
In the eye of the night  
Peace is a ball of radiant light,  
Shining in you and me.

*Lila Collings, 4th Grade, Williams Elementary School  
Honorable Mentions, Grades 4-5*

## What Is Peace?

Do you hear birds chirping,  
Or water bubbling and slurping,  
How do you hear peace?

Do you feel beaches of sand,  
Or a warm welcoming hand,  
How do you feel peace?

Do you see people joining together,  
Or warm suns and good weather,  
How do you see peace?

Does it smell sweet and sure,  
Or fresh and pure,  
How does peace smell?

Is it sugary and savory,  
Or salty and flavory,  
How does peace taste?

Is it colorful and nice,  
Or is it pure with a spice,  
What is peace?

*Samantha Hand, 5th Grade, Williams Elementary School  
3rd Place, Grades 4-5*

When I drive up 8th Avenue  
on Memorial Day weekend  
my heart drops  
to see the tombstones  
rise up the hill.  
Every year there are more and more  
that rise up, over the hill.  
It seems so bad to kill  
the people who serve our country.  
Just speak the works of peace.

*Emma Dodd, 4th Grade, Brentwood School  
2nd Place, Grades 4-5*



## A Wish for Peace

We live in a world of us and them,  
World peace is a wish, it is too sad,  
But people share the same stem,  
Instead of divide, we should add.  
I imagine a peaceful world in my mind,  
No poverty, greed, or gunfire,  
Peace is an ideal we need to find,  
It will be achieved as we reach higher.  
Peace does not come in a day or week,  
It needs to be understood,  
Peace is for the strong not weak,  
We need a sense of brotherhood.  
The world is so colorful and diverse,  
About others we should be educated,  
Knowledge is power; ignorance is curse,  
Respect should be reciprocated.  
If peace is to be achieved,  
People must share,  
If peace is to be received,  
People must be fair.  
Our world needs peace,  
We need to unite as a whole,  
Every country is a puzzle piece,  
Peace comes from the heart and soul.

*Amir Helmy, 5th Grade, Williams Elementary School  
1st Place, Grades 4-5*

She lay in the meadow roses, sunflowers, and rainbows of pedals filled her eyesight. She looked in the stream, and it shone as if diamond were floating around like boats on a windy day. She stuck her finger in the water. It was ice cold. Little fish with red and orange lines down their backs nibbled on her finger. She stood and fell onto her bed of flowers. She saw images of her father in the clouds above. She opened her eyes and sat up. She looked around. In the distance a figure of a man stood, and she focused on him. He yelled "Madalyn." I didn't respond. He walked closer and closer until he came into view. "Dad," I yelled. "You're back." I ran to him and hugged him. I didn't want to let go. "You're home." I whispered as a tear slid down my cheek. The war was finally over.

*Matya Kaye, 6th Grade, Jordan Glen  
Quality Poem*

## **A Perfect World**

If peace were an object  
How popular would it be?  
Would it be the next big thing?

Everyone would want to have peace  
The greedy would want  
To have an abundance of it

Those who could afford  
To buy peace in bulk  
Would be hated

But if hatred was  
As common as peace  
Would life be the peaceful?

Arguments would start over peace  
Countries would fight over it  
Soon enough people would declare  
War over Peace

War over Peace.

*Janelle Taylor, 8th Grade, Lincoln Elementary School  
Quality Poem*

## Peace At Least

Although our world is troubled,  
There is one thing we can do  
Through the wars and many struggles,  
We can create the world anew.  
We must all join together  
And stand hand in hand  
Cease-fire forever  
Throughout all this land  
Come from all over,  
From west and from east,  
Come together now and  
Make peace at least.

*Kate Bowser, 7th Grade, St. Patrick's Interparish School  
Quality Poem*

The green leaves rustle in the oncoming wind. The trees shake as distant thunder rumbles. The animals all skitter, scamper, slither, and plod into their homes. The animals know, however, that these ominous black clouds are only coming to nourish the parched land. Chaos hits the forest. Thunder roars above the rushing of the rain. The darkness is only interrupted by intermittent flashes of lightning. Then, it ends. The sun shines and a rainbow spreads across the sky. The trees all seem green, the flowers bloom, and the birds sing. The forest is left in peace.

*Eric Carter, 8th Grade, Jordan Glen  
Quality Poem*

## Peace

Something we lack  
Something we hold back.  
Peace is what we need  
It is a great deed  
Love for people great and small  
Something needed for us all  
Our world is deep, cruel and dark  
We need a strong, helpful spark  
We are all the same  
No one should be to blame  
Peace.

*Sam Talbot, 7th Grade, St. Patrick's Interparish School  
Quality Poem*

## Do Not Ever Let Go!

Something we can ask,  
before it's blown.  
Something we can grow,  
before it's grown.  
Peace is all I ask,  
And it's not a big task.  
I want peace!  
Peace is within our grasp,  
don't let it fade.  
More lives can be saved,  
we just have to be brave.  
I want peace!  
And I want it now!  
There is something we should do,  
something that has not been done.  
Something we can win,  
that has not been won.  
Something we can shout out,  
to end all of Gods' worries.  
All we need is peace.  
Peace is within our grasp,  
grab and take hold.  
Do not ever let go!

*Kayla Rohrer, 7th Grade, St. Patrick's Interparish School  
Quality Poem*

## Peace is...

You hear the screams of the innocent; you see your brothers and sisters dying.

The bad men don't give a second thought, but they don't think of the family, the friends, and the peace that was once there, before they came.

You try to save your sisters and brothers but the bad men take them away.

You think of the peace of the village before they came, kids playing in the street, sounds of laughter and cheer flowing with glee, and the nights of cool crisp quiet air.

You think of the family and friends comforting you when you were hurt, they always say, peace is one act of kindness.

I go to comfort the innocent and the bad men see my ways, they stop their actions and help the world learn peace by that one act of kindness.

*Dalton Cone, 7th Grade, St. Patrick's Interparish School  
Quality Poem*

Peace, one thing that the world needs most, there  
will be no war, there will be much love  
Animals will be safe, happiness  
Will be plentiful. And  
We all need  
To be happy with what  
We have and treat other the  
Way we want to be treated. Will peace  
Succeed? Will everyone on earth be happy?  
Will the animals thrive? Will war stop? Only time will tell.

*Nate Englert, 6th Grade, St. Patrick's Interparish School  
Quality Poem*

## What is peace?

Who am I to say what is or not.  
I'm just a kid.  
How could I know?  
When it seems as though  
No one can get it right  
No scholars, philosophers, doctors, or lawyers know.  
If they did  
We wouldn't have war  
Of any kind  
No fights but  
Love  
So what is peace?  
You tell me.

*Caroline Boudreaux, 7th Grade, St. Patrick's Interparish Day School  
Quality Poem*

## Peace

As quiet as a tranquil park  
As still as the ongoing dark  
Like a leaf blowing in the wind  
Or a baby that just grinned  
There is no way to define peace other than this  
An open meadow in the forest  
Or on the beach as a tourist  
Reading a book just for fun  
Taking a beautiful walk or run  
Peace is only what you can feel  
Living in freedom and not fear  
We will only have peace if everyone starts to care

*Xylie Miller, 6th Grade, St. Patrick's Interparish School  
Quality Poem*

I am **proud to be an earthling**, a citizen of this unique planet. With creatures that live independently of one another, yet are all connected. Each is as dependent of the other as threads in a tapestry. I live in a never-ending circle of life.

My Home Planet is special; it holds the key to life, water. Vast amounts of this precious liquid cover three-fourths of my globe as sparkling blue seas.

Life prospers on my planet because of the loving care it provides. The treasure of life, H<sub>2</sub>O, rains from the skies as a gift to all. A transparent blanket drapes across us, protecting life from the harsh rays of the fireball, our sun. It only lets a few select beams through to nourish our plants, among other things. This shield keeps us warm when we turn away from the fire at night, and cool when we face it, once more, in the day.

One of our most precious resources is human beings. As the most complex creatures on earth, we rule the land. By developing new technologies, we've enhanced our standard of living. We now, more than ever, have an understanding of whom and what we really are.

As an earthling, I thrive in an ideal utopia. Any road bumps I come across are simply part of the journey and add to my fun. The truth is... life just wouldn't be worth living on any planet, but our dear earth.

*Sarah Lulu, 8th Grade, Lincoln Middle School  
Quality Poem*

## Peace

Peace we think we know it, but we don't.  
We think that we practice it but we don't.  
Jesus taught it, and he lived it but even though  
he told us what it was we didn't listen.  
There is no place without conflict, but there is  
no place without peace.  
I think we all know what peace is but  
we also don't practice it.  
I know what peace is, peace is the thing  
that keeps us all from going insane.  
Peace keeps us from destroying each others homes.  
It keeps order in a world that has been so torn.  
Peace is what we all know and peace is what we don't  
know.

*Alex Ladun, 7th Grade, St. Patrick's Interparish Day School  
Quality Poem*

## Peace

As free as air,  
As beautiful as a jewel,  
As perfect and untainted as a child,  
Rare among men,  
Untouchable.

As necessary as air,  
As difficult to obtain as a jewel,  
The perfect and untainted environment for a child;  
Perfection for one and all.  
Rare among all;

## Peace

*Anastasia Tedder, 7th Grade, St. Patrick's Interparish School  
Quality Poem*



## Let Your Life Shine with Peace

This world can be filled with happiness and humor;  
With sadness and ruins, it can become a rumor.  
All we need for this world to be vast,  
Is a little peace just to contrast!

Peace can come and peace can leave;  
We just need to know how to believe.  
It can change life around;  
Or take it a step down.

Peace is like strength.  
You just need to extend its length.  
It can be your power tool,  
And make you feel cool.

A sparkle of peace can sprinkle,  
And make our lives twinkle.  
From the moment you hold it.  
Until you unfold it!

*Nathalia Herrera, 7th Grade, St. Patrick's Interparish Day School  
Quality Poem*

The war starts.  
The bluebird cries,  
the people die.  
This is so absurd.  
The war ends!  
The blue bird sings  
The Church bell rings.  
Peace is the word.  
It's what makes the world go 'round.

*Elizabeth Bayer, 7th Grade, Ft. Clarke Middle School  
Quality Poem*

## Peaceful

It may be peaceful to gaze at the moon  
Yet on the other side of the world there are guns and bombs  
Which are supposed to help fight for peace  
How is it that if the opposite of peace is war yet we do it to  
make peace?  
I may be a child but I know that that does not make since  
I can dream that one day there will be peace every where  
I did say I could dream it may never become true but I can  
dream  
Can we not use treaties?  
Can we not fight, can we not cause hundreds of deaths?  
I hope one day my dream will come true but for that to hap-  
pen I need you.

*Emily Blount, 6th Grade, St. Patrick's Interparish School  
Quality Poem*

A world without war  
A world without bombs on every news channel  
Can I get some screams on the radio to be accompanied  
Your childs education was the first to go with budget cuts  
To make more guns to meet the cut  
Of the defense industry they on the up and up  
While the people slum it in the ruts  
But I digress and I must confess  
To be disgusted by this kill-  
ing looks like medieval times to me  
fresh with a new haircut, a nations best and brightest  
killed with swords, now mowed down  
but still the caskets stay the same  
the mom won't accept it things are getting tense  
the flags draped over and another recruited.

*Ehsun Syed Qamar, 8th Grade, Lincoln Middle School  
Quality Poem*

I close my eyes  
And sit in the soft sand  
I feel the warmth of the sun  
On my skin  
I can hear the crashing of the waves  
As they come on shore  
I smell the saltiness in the  
Cool breeze  
I dig my toes into the sand  
And feel the sand run through  
My fingers  
Above in the distance  
I hear the birds  
Peace is everywhere  
When I visit the beach

*Maranda Maris, 6th Grade, St. Patrick's Interparish School  
Quality Poem*

The ugly thing  
Boring into your eyes  
In its,  
Lies sadness  
Opening it's mouth reeking of smoke  
It yells  
A flash of red  
A bitter taste  
What is this?  
Anger?

*Jenique Brown, 8th Grade, Oak View Middle School  
Quality Poem*

## **Only an animal knows of peace.**

Only an animal knows of peace,  
All wolves and frogs and bears and geese.  
They do not want more than they need,  
They are not overcome with greed.  
They do not despise all other kinds,  
They do not let hate control their minds.  
They have no kings, no men of power,  
No monarchies to turn sour.  
They do no pollute, they do not sin,  
And so we might learn then,  
That maybe we are not so smart, with our music and art,  
Because what we have the least,  
Is what the animals have, peace.

*Ben Porter, 6th Grade, St. Patrick's Interparish School  
Honorable Mention, Grades 6-8*

## **I Need Peace**

Peace Peace Peace! I really need Peace.  
I have a lot on my back and I need some time to relax.  
So Please Please! Please! Give me some Peace.  
Everyone is just so loud and overwhelming.  
I guess they just don't know how I am feeling.  
I wish they would all just understand.  
That I am feeling so sad.  
All I want is Peace and Quiet but no one can hear me in  
all this riot.  
OH if only they could all just understand and realize  
that I am feeling sad.  
Then I would feel a lot less stressed and I could get  
myself relaxed.  
So please if you are usually really overwhelming,  
Give me some Peace!  
Just some Peace and Quiet!

*Evie Hackett, 6th Grade, St. Patrick's Interparish School  
Honorable Mention, Grades 6-8*

## **An Excuse for War**

Mutual harmony  
An excuse for war,  
A call upon soldiers,  
The use of guns and C-4.

A common goal for many  
Maybe even all,  
Everyday it's fought for,  
Everyday soldiers fall.

In the quest for tranquility  
The search for unity,  
We strive to enjoy each other,  
To become a community.

Lend credence to divinity  
Our conscience and such,  
The answer has been revealed  
Close enough to touch,

If we only try  
Just take a look around,  
The goal can be achieved  
Peace will be found.

So, Mutual harmony  
An excuse for war?  
In my opinion  
Not anymore.

*Kylee Wesley, 8th Grade, Oak View Middle School  
Honorable Mention, Grades 6-8*

## Another Way

Disagreements worked out with guns.  
Countries hated with the fire of a thousand suns.

Orphaned children cry in the street.  
How can they walk with no shoes on their feet?

Don't they know there's another way?  
I hope that that will happen some day.

When the fighting will cease.  
When the wars will end.

When we all achieve peace.  
And call one another a friend.

But some can't see there's another way,  
So the world grows weaker day by day.

I may be young, but even I know  
That violence in our world must go.

So, cure the hate  
Don't discriminate.

Find the good in another,  
And we must all love each other.

It's never easy in a person's eyes,  
To be okay with compromise.

But we must strive for a better day,  
We have to learn there's another way.

*Ava Criscitiello, 7th Grade, St. Patrick's Interparish School  
3rd Place, Grades 6-8*

## Ribbons

Lying under gray skies,  
That have been tinted pink by the sunset.  
Laying in the tall, green grass,  
Letting another evening waste away.

Isn't that what summer is for?  
Relaxing and looking around you,  
Trying to figure out things that you didn't have time to bother  
with before,  
And reliving the joyful memories of the long year that has  
passed.

Not for him it's not,  
That boy who lived just a couple houses down from you.  
He was a few years older than you,  
And in elementary school he rode the same bus as you.

Your parent's thought,  
"What a smart boy.  
He'll do well in this world."  
And you, of course, thought that too.

Until your family heard he had joined the army.  
He was shipped off to Afghanistan  
Along with his best friend.  
And a yellow ribbon was tied around the big oak in his front yard.

But then you saw the ribbon removed,  
And replaced by a black ribbon.  
You knew that it was a symbol of mourning,  
And so you knew who was being mourned.

But maybe this story could've been prevented,  
Maybe a young life could've been saved,  
A black ribbon not tied around a tree,  
And a family not torn apart by grief.

So now, whenever you pass by a house,  
And you see a yellow ribbon tied to a tree,  
You will remember the story of the young boy,  
And think "If only there was no war, and only peace,"

"Then, we wouldn't need colored ribbons."

*Charlotte Burks, 8th Grade, Lincoln Middle School  
2nd Place, Grades 6-8*

## Eternal Peace

I came here for peace,  
Eternal peace.  
I tried to get away,  
From war,  
From agony,  
From despair.  
Where everyone is equal.  
No one going hungry,  
No one being killed for no reason.  
Alas is there no hope?  
So, I escaped to the forest,  
Still there are the animals being shunned from the pack,  
Having no food because the other animals took it,  
Having to struggle to stay alive each and every day.  
I escaped to the ocean,  
I see fish drowning in tears,  
Sharks killing when their bellies are full,  
Whales singing their songs of sorrow.  
I escaped to the Desert,  
Where the birds are hoping to catch the little worm,  
Where the snakes are drying up from the sun's heat,  
Where the cacti survive on only inches of rain a year.  
No matter where you go, you cannot escape.  
There is always someone getting left out.  
That is why I am here.  
Alone.  
With only me, myself and I for company.  
In this dark room,  
The only sound is my heartbeat,  
Throbbing in my ears like a drum.  
And as I sit in this silence I think.  
I think is it really so bad?  
Is there nothing I can do?  
I stand and leave.  
I plant trees.  
I help the fish,  
I water the cacti.  
I may not have changed the war,  
The agony,  
The despair,  
But I helped.  
So now instead of thinking, "Is there no hope?"  
I start thinking "How may I help you today?"

*Lily Windsong Campbell, Jordan Glen  
1st Place, Grades 6-8*



## What Comes from Chaos

It stares like a flickering candle,  
Waiting for life to go by before showing its ugly head.  
It is a monster, a saint, an aspiration of hope for humanity.  
Yet we relish in it, yet we worship it.  
It is a mediator on the sidelines of all great wars,  
The referee waiting to announce its existence with a whistle blow.  
Peace is a funny word, one that rings in many people's minds... with what?  
Peace connotes love, success, happiness, the end of suffering, the satisfaction that what  
You did was something big and that You can say that You were a part of.  
Some learn the hard way, through death, through loss,  
That peace is not always present or virtuous.  
With war comes something out of the ashes,  
A phoenix shaped by treaties, guns, blood, words, and broken hearts.  
Every day I help dust the ashes into a pile,  
Creating a little phoenix of my own.  
So peace, wait for me  
At Saint Peter's pearly gates, I'll be there soon,  
After fighting for humanity.

*Angela Acosta, 10th Grade, Eastside High School  
Honorable Mention, Grades 10-12*

## Frustration

Pointless, harmful, harsh words and looks,  
The twinge... sting in the heart from losing a friend,  
Stupid prejudice and wrong intentions,  
Trying to look back, find when it went wrong, checking  
all the books,  
Hoping that everything will turn out better in the end,  
Wondering how, what... what can we do for future pre-  
vention?

I get lost in thought sometimes,  
Beating myself up for not being able to do more,  
Contemplating why people do such petty, meaningless  
crimes,  
Looking for a quick way out,  
Looking for that open door,  
It makes people sad, cry, scream and shout.

Guns and bombs making things worse,  
Hard-headed leaders that don't want to quit,  
The thought of peace being shut like doors,  
People that we are supposed to be looking up to throw-  
ing a fit,  
Not even thinking of the possibilities,  
Only trying to take down our "enemies."

*Blu Bourlay, 12th Grade, Eastside High School  
Honorable Mention, Grades 10-12*

Where do I find peace?  
I find it in his voice.  
Soft, sensual and stern.  
His heart is what I yearn.

Where do I find peace?  
I find it in the sky.  
Weightless as a cloud lifted up so high.  
Soaring so gently, as a bird I fly.

Where do I find peace?  
I find it in music.  
With every word of a rapper and singer mouth.  
It takes me to a place no one knows about.

Where do I find peace?  
I find it in my friends.  
Each one lends a helping hand.  
We're so close, we call each other kin.

Where do I find peace?  
I find it in my family.  
They're always there when I call.  
I know they will never let me fall.

Where do I find peace?  
I find it in any place or thing my mind feels content.  
Living life to the fullest, no backspace button,  
Just there in plain black and white print.

*Lintorica Smith, 12th Grade, Eastside High School  
Honorable Mention, Grades 10-12*

## Lakes and Ripples

Strolling through a pathway  
I stumbled onto a lake  
I stopped and looked into it  
And happened to see my face

It looked calm, cool, and collective  
My reflection had a certain look of peace  
But as soon as I touched it  
In my face appeared a crease

The ripple started at my forehead  
And ended at my chin  
The ripple had passed and suddenly  
My face looked calm again

With all of this happening  
It started me to think  
My reflection had peace until I touched it  
Then peace had began to shrink

The ripple was like confusion  
Idiocy, anger, and hatred  
The ripple was like war  
And war can lead to dread

You can find peace anywhere  
On earth even at a lake  
Just remember if you cause a ripple  
Then your peace can be at stake

*Dionte Ford, 12th Grade, Eastside High School  
3rd Place, Grades 10-12*

## Peace Means...

Peace is a bird chirping  
In the warm spring sunshine,  
A silver fish darting from one clump  
Of underwater weeds to another in the cool spring water.  
Peace is a butterfly in the wind  
Against a soft blue sky of summer.  
Peace is like whispers.  
Peace is like mountains reaching up in the sky.  
Peace is like a river flowing through the land.  
Peace is like the stars lighting up the darkness.  
Peace is very good to you  
And for everybody else, too.  
Peace starts with good deeds  
Like taking out the trash and  
Opening the door for old people.

*Anita Caldwell, 12th Grade, Eastside High School  
2nd Place, Grades 10-12*

## Peace is Still

Still flat water on a lake;  
A mighty eagle on its perch;  
Rain falling for any sake;  
Bowed heads in a silent church.

Peace is still,  
But not man's will.

Men get lost,  
Especially in the dark.  
Everything as cold as frost,  
The world is filled with savage sharks.

Peace is silent;  
Man is violent...

*Kendall McClellan, 12th Grade, Eastside High School  
1st Place, Grades 10-12*

# Winners

**Mckayla Jinyoung Ro**                      **Youngest Participant**  
Kindergarten, Oak Hall School

**Eric Carter**                                      **Honorable Mention**  
4th Grade, Brentwood School

**Lila Collings**                                      **Honorable Mention**  
4th Grade, Williams Elementary School

**Lily Deleo**                                        **Honorable Mention**  
4th Grade, CW Norton Elementary School

**Cindy Jie**                                         **Honorable Mention**  
4th Grade, Williams Elementary School

**Samantha Hand**                                 **3rd Place, Grades 4-5**  
5th Grade, Williams Elementary School

**Emma Dodd**                                       **2nd Place, Grades 4-5**  
4th Grade, Brentwood School

**Amir Helmy**                                       **1st Place, Grades 4-5**  
5th Grade, Williams Elementary

**Ben Porter**                                       **Honorable Mention**  
7th Grade, St. Patrick Interparish School

**Evie Hackett**                                      **Honorable Mention**  
6th Grade, St. Patrick Interparish School

**Kylee Wesley**                                      **Honorable Mention**  
8th Grade, Oak View Middle School

# *Winners cont'd.*

**Ava Criscitiello** 3rd Place, Grades 6-8  
7th Grade, St. Patrick Interparish School

**Charlotte Burks** 2nd Place, Grades 6-8  
8th Grade, Lincoln Middle School

**Lily Windsong Campbell** 1st Place, Grades 6-8  
Jordan Glen School

**Angela Acosta** Honorable Mention  
10th Grade, Eastside High School

**Blu Bourlay** Honorable Mention  
12th Grade, Eastside High School

**Lintorica Smith** Honorable Mention  
12th Grade, Eastside High School

**Dionte Ford** 3rd Place, Grades 10-12  
12th Grade, Eastside High School

**Anita Caldwell** 2nd Places, Grades 10-12  
12th Grade, Eastside High School

**Kendall McClellan** 1st Place, Grades 10-12  
12th Grade, Eastside High School

*Much thanks to Ms. Cathy Dewitt - nationally published writer, concert producer, award-winning jazz composer and folk songwriter - for her performance at the 2011 Alachua County Schools Peace Poetry Reading.*

*For more information, visit her website at [www.cathydewitt.com](http://www.cathydewitt.com).*





