

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.  
Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.” — Margaret Mead



# Grandmothers for Peace International

Barbara Wiedner, Founder, 1928 - 2001

Lorraine Krofchok, Director

Founded 1982

Spring 2013

~ DO SOMETHING ~  
**TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

## Sandy Hook and the Shameful Epidemic

by Bill Durston, M.D.

Our country is reacting with shock, horror, and grief to yet another mass shooting – this time, at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, where 20 elementary school children and six adults were killed by a lone gunman. We should be shocked. We should be horrified. We should grieve for the victims and their families. And, as a country, we should be ashamed.

Every year, more than 30,000 U.S. civilians are killed by guns. Children in the United States are killed by guns at a rate that is 12 times higher than in the other leading 25 industrialized countries of the world. Gunshot wounds are the second leading cause of death in children in the United States, just behind motor vehicle crashes. The Connecticut shooting evokes memories of the 1989 Cleveland Elementary School shooting in Stockton, California, in which 5 children were killed and 29 wounded; the 1999 Columbine High School shooting in Littleton, Colorado, in which 13 students and teachers were killed and 24 wounded; and the 2007 Virginia Tech shooting in which 32 people were killed and 17 wounded.

Between July 1, 1994, and June 30, 1999, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reported that there were 220 separate shooting incidents on high school campuses across the United States, with 253 deaths. The report concluded that school-related shootings were “rare.” The Canadian press commented that it was “uniquely American” to regard 220 separate high school shooting incidents in 5 years as “rare.”

The single factor which most clearly distinguishes the United States from other democratic, industrialized countries that have far less gun violence is the easy availability of guns in our country. We should be ashamed that we have not adopted the same kind of sensible gun control laws as in those other countries which put the onus on the gun owner to show why he needs a gun, not on society to prove that he shouldn't have one. We should also be ashamed of the glorification of gun violence in our popular media and of the perpetration of the myth that honest citizens should have guns for protection when there is overwhelming evidence that guns in our homes and in our communities are far more likely to be used to kill innocent civilians than to protect them.

We should be ashamed of our elected leaders who, with few exceptions, lack the political courage to even talk about gun control. One such exception is California State Senator Dianne Feinstein who co-authored the 1994 Federal Assault Weapons Ban. In 1996, though, after the CDC reported the shockingly high rate of gun-related deaths for U.S. children, Congress cut funding for the CDC's gun violence research. In 2004, Congress let the assault weapons ban lapse, and in 2005, Congress passed a bill giving special immunity to gun makers and dealers from products liability lawsuits. Even after Arizona Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords was critically wounded in a mass shooting in January of 2011, Congress failed to take any action to prevent future mass shootings.

SANDY HOOK | Page 2

- US Military Deaths, 2001-2012: *Iraq War = 4,486; Afghanistan War = 2,176*

- Cost of The Wars, 2001-2013: *\$1,415,893,859,716.00 (TRILLION)*

- Civilian Deaths, 2001-2011: *Iraq = 110,971-121,262; Afghanistan, 2006-2011 = 12,793*

(costofwar.com; icasualties.org; iraqbodycount.org; 1-22-2013)

## Sandy Hook: It is time to stop our country's gun violence.

FROM PAGE 1

The current majority on the Supreme Court should be ashamed of itself for essentially re-writing the Second Amendment. In 1939, The Supreme Court ruled in the case of U.S. versus Miller that the Second Amendment, which begins with the phrase, "A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state," guarantees a collective right of the people to maintain armed state militias, such as the current day National Guard, but not an individual right to own guns.

*The late Supreme Court Chief Justice Warren Burger stated that the misrepresentation of the Second Amendment as guaranteeing an individual right to own guns was "one of the biggest pieces of fraud on the American people" that he had seen in his lifetime.*

Shamefully, the current Supreme Court became a party to that fraud when it ruled in a 5-4 decision in 2008 that the District of Columbia's ban on private ownership of handguns violated the Second Amendment.

The American Academy of Pediatrics took the position in 2000 that firearm regulations, to include bans on handguns and assault weapons, are the best way to prevent firearm deaths and injuries. Had Congress passed such a ban, and had the U.S. Supreme Court not engaged in a fraudulent re-interpretation of the Second Amendment, it is almost certain that the mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School would never have occurred. In the absence of anything short of a ban on handguns and assault weapons, it is not predictable when and where the next mass shootings will occur, but it is certain that they will continue to occur.

It is past time for our country to stop the shameful epidemic of gun violence. It is time for us to adopt comprehensive gun control laws that show that we love our children more than our guns.

*Note: Dr. Durston is an emergency physician practicing in Sacramento, California. He is also a Marine Corps combat veteran and former expert marksman, decorated for courage under fire in Vietnam.*

*Dr. Durston is the Vice-President and the High School Scholarship Essay Contest chairperson for the Sacramento Chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility.*

*Bill and Diane Durston are long time supporters of GFP.*

# DOING SOMETHING

**"Firearm regulations, to include bans of handguns and assault weapons, are the most effective way to reduce firearm related injuries."**

American Academy of Pediatrics position statement, April 2000

## The Sacramento Chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility

Announces a scholarship essay contest open to High School Seniors in Sacramento and surrounding counties \$15,000 in total scholarship money will be awarded

To enter the contest, high school seniors should submit an original essay of 500 words or fewer describing their thoughts about the words of the American Academy of Pediatrics who said, "Firearm regulations, to include bans of handguns and assault weapons, are the most effective way to reduce firearm related injuries."

Deadline for essay submission is March 13, 2013

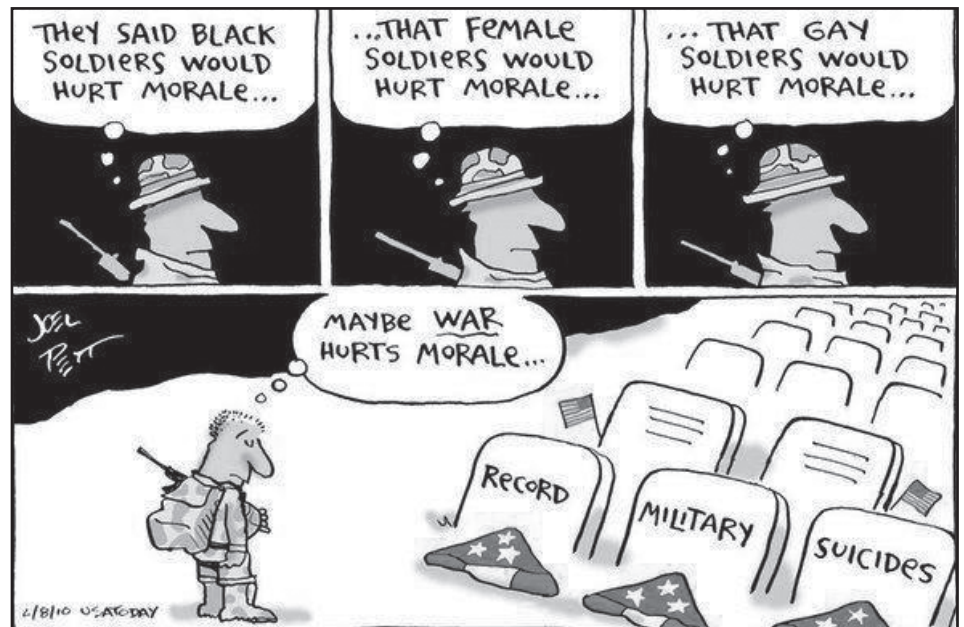
For contest details, go to [www.sacpsr.org](http://www.sacpsr.org), email: [essaycontest@sacpsr.org](mailto:essaycontest@sacpsr.org), or call 916-955-6333

## GFP Northland Chapter

Jan Provost

Our 26<sup>th</sup> annual "peaceful" toy drive for area homeless and low income children was a big hit this year!! People were so generous:)

One of our drop-off sites, Take 2 Consignments, even decorated their front window. Wasn't that great? We Grannies love doing this every year! Everyone does their part and it runs along smoothly.



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**According to the Associated Press:** The military lost more service members to suicide than combat last year as the number of troops who took their lives rose to a record high.

The 349 active-duty suicides in 2012 is the most since the Pentagon began tracking them in 2001, and underscored the toll a decade of wars has taken on the all-volunteer force. Comparatively, 229 troops were killed in combat in Afghanistan last year.

- *The Sacramento Bee (California), January 15, 2013.*

## *Dear Mr. President, These are our thought after the election:*

I will not begin with a list of requests and reminders of your promises. Rather, I would like to say what I will promise you.

I promise you I will do everything in my power to reduce the influence of the military industrial complex in our country's policy decisions: war preparations including research and development, drones in particular; lobbying influences; elections and campaign money; environmental destruction, pollution, energy and climate impacts; death and wounding of our soldiers and countless civilians in foreign countries; misuse of funds and privileges; overspending, waste and contractor corruption; sexual trauma in our military; deployment and post-deployment suicides; devastated families, and finally, propaganda and revolving door appointments.

When Ike (President Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953-1961) warned us of the Military Industrial Complex, he was strident. I watched it on TV.

I will ask one thing of you: Please don't wait until your own farewell to warn us of the profound transformation we need. We need it now.

*Ellen Murphy, Washington*

The United States has always placed itself above the fray telling the world that we are "the democracy" and we are the ones who have got "self-government" and "equality" right.

Maybe it is time that we put actions behind those words so they are not just rhetoric at best or hypocrisy at worst:

*We will not start wars.*

*We will govern so the many flourish rather than the few.*

*We will work together across race, religion, gender, political ideology, geographical location, and so forth to come up with the best possible solutions to complex problems.*

*We do not have to win every argument domestically or internationally.*

*Hedwin Naimark, California*

We are small group of **Grandmothers for Peace**, and supporters, who stand on the corner of Cortez and Gurley Streets every Friday from 4 to 5 p.m. **Prescott, Arizona**, is a small, very conservative town, and though we get the expected catcalls, we also get many honks in response to our

"Honk for Peace" signs. Some people have driven around twice for that purpose, and even people walking say, "honk, honk" to us. I mention all this to demonstrate how much people want the wars to stop.

It goes without saying that we discuss politics among ourselves and with strangers waiting for lights to change. Everyone seems to have strong opinions. Although we discuss many issues, three of them are mentioned below:

Besides being disappointed that you chose to ramp up the troops in Afghanistan rather than bring them home, our peace group is concerned that many innocents are killed by drones. It must be very scary and seemingly an unfair advantage for unmanned vehicles to hover overhead, taking out whomever, and creating more angst against the U.S.

Another disappointment with your first term is that the bankers were never brought to justice. It sends out a negative message that certain factions are not being held to the same standard of justice as everyone else. Some of us would like to see you back off from prosecuting Julian Assange who only revealed to us, the public, immoral actions by our elected officials, not unlike Daniel Ellsberg with the Pentagon papers. Besides, Assange is not an American citizen.

We realize you can't do everything in just one term and appreciate your saving the auto industry, passing the Affordable Care Act, rescuing the economy from a bottomless pit, working toward saving the environment, closing out the war in Iraq, and more. Many of us are doing whatever we can to get you reelected; the alternative is unthinkable. We're trusting that because you won't need to be concerned about campaign financing after you're reelected, you will be free to correct more of the injustices in our system and bring us lasting peace.

Sincerely yours,

*Kathy Svendsen, Arizona*

You may be surprised to learn that I support the 1 percent, even though I am part of the 99 percent. ***The 1 percent that I support are the 78,000 men and women still serving in Afghanistan, and their families*** still praying for their safety. I support bringing them home much sooner than the end of 2014. Move that timeline up by one year.

When you first announced that all

troops would be out of Afghanistan by 2014, I thought, well, that's not too bad, one more year to wrap things up seemed reasonable. Upon reflection, my thoughts are that it is not reasonable. It's not reasonable because nothing further can be gained by keeping our men and women there. It is counter productive to keep forces there that are being attacked by the very people they are training to take over their own security - the Afghans.

What is the gain verses the cost of remaining where we are clearly not welcome? The gains are negligible compared to the losses. The loss of additional American lives, the loss of billions of dollars, thousands more injured requiring extensive medical rehabilitation, and mental rehabilitation, more marriages destroyed by long and multiple deployments, including the Generals. And hundreds of children living with single parents, some of them permanently due to the death of one parent. This is no longer acceptable, it is time to end the charade of this terrible war.

What are the gains? War profiteers will continue to make billions while our young men and women who put their lives on the line, make pennies on the dollar compared to the war profiteers. The Afghans who profit by what we bring to their country, including millions of dollars given to corrupt Afghan politicians.

The election is over and the war in Afghanistan was hardly even mentioned during the campaign, let alone actually talked about. Why are we still committing our men and women to a war no one wants to talk about? It's not right and we need to end this travesty sooner rather than later.

I'm sorry Mr. President, the costs are too great, the loss of American lives is too great, and the sacrifices of the 1% are too numerous to justify continuing this war for another TWO years, because that's what you're really talking about.

Yes Mr. President, it's time for you to support the 1 percent now, it's time to bring our 78,000 men and women home from the longest war in our history, they have sacrificed enough, and so have their families. It's time to move that timeline up by one year and it's time to bring the 1% back to the country they fought for... America.

Most Respectfully,

*Marcia Reimers, California*

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT | Page 4

## Dear Mr. President

FROM PAGE 3

Please bring peace to our planet, Barack, bring our troops home and let us be a country of peace.

May compassion and sanity flourish in your next 4 years.

May the discussion of fracking, GMOs, smart meters, vaccines, factory farms, drones and war be given equal time by opposing sides. May the People have opportunities to dialogue and decide together how to solve these issues.

The Precautionary Principal is about erring on the side of caution. Please adopt it in your next four years.

**Kathy Cummings, Illinois**

I am so happy you're still in charge.

My priorities would be international relations, debt reduction and the environment.

And Single-payer Health Insurance for all.

Blessings~

**Devika, Massachusetts**

I was frantically worried that Romney/Ryan might get elected. Huge relief at election outcome. Proud of the people who stood in line for hours to vote. Dismayed at the voter suppression efforts and union busting efforts across the country.

Realize we MUST NOT let the right wing gain any ground. Religion has no place in politics, yet we know that religion has been at the root of many wars down through the centuries. Our country was founded on Freedom of Religion which means Freedom From Religion, as well.

When you hear people rant about Socialism, Communism, Fascism, Nazism, it is clear that they don't actually know the difference or of what they speak.

Most disappointing that people can be so disrespectful of the President, even after the election.

**Sarah Johnson, California**

Yes, perhaps one of the biggest sighs [of relief that the election is over] you heard was from me in the red state of Texas. I have hoped for peace as far back as I can remember.

President Obama, to me, brings back memories of Pres. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. They both seemed to have a vision for equality and justice. I am well aware of their imperfection as men, but they were great on the world stage.

**Sherron Josey, Texas**

*(GFP: Many thanks for asking us our advice, even if we are not American. This is a really good opportunity for us.)*

**I am a citizen of France**, which is a member of the European Union, and I would like to say first that I feel, as many people, a leaden weight on our heads and shoulders.

We who knew the liberal 1960s and 1970s with the opportunity for us to find a job and, most of all, the job we wanted, at any scale of society and in every field, are now facing a more and more technocratic society, with too many prohibitions and controls in our daily life. There are fines and obligations to pay more and more taxes while the wealthiest become more and more wealthy.

We are not any more in the democracy we enjoyed before, because our left or right governments do not require our advice any more, do not know what we need. Example: through a referendum, the French people, as the Dutch and the Irish, rejected the European Treaty (2012), but our governments did not respect our vote and signed the Treaty.

They are dismantling our social welfare introduced at the end of WWII and we become more and more poor.

In Paris or other French cities people are living in the street, 25% of them are young people, who don't have enough money to live, and 25% are old people facing the same distress.

The average salary is staying very low. We have an upper class, including our politicians, which became very rich and arrogant, don't know anything about our problems, and don't care about us. They give the good and well paying jobs to their families.

They are so arrogant that, for them, our crises are due to the poor people! (which is fake, according to **John Kenneth Galbraith** who, as with Maurice Allais, have never been read by the majority of our politicians and economists).

There is a huge gap between this leading class and us (the same social scheme as before the 1798 French Revolution) and the terrible thing is that they are leading our country.

Most of all, our children, even if they are well educated, cannot find a job - and they are going to pay for the State and European debts for years. Officially, 25% of them are unemployed, but, as **Maurice Allais, the**

**French Nobel Prize Economist**, wrote, there are far more.

The problem is that our leaders let our industries - big, middle and small - leave our country many years ago to go to other places where the cost of employees is very low. So, we lost, in several years, about 3 millions jobs and our precious and very old savoir-faire. And, if one of the young wants to create his (her) own small business, it is so difficult with the administration that many of them can't afford it.

I feel like I am living in a country and a continent that is becoming like the Eastern European countries before 1990.

This long explanation is to tell you that, for us, North America is an open-minded continent, with an energy we do not have here anymore, and that it gives the opportunity to almost everyone to get a better life.

We feel that we have in common, despite appearances, the hope of overcoming our difficulties. The people of Europe and America have proved their courage during the wars and other disasters and the history of Europe and America proves that they always found solutions to their crises.

I find very much optimism in the fact that our country has a lot of young people, which means that the young parents believes in the future, and that, in America as in Europe, people show a growing solidarity.

And most of all, we are even much more close to you than in the past and we think that your President [Obama], even if he has to face political pressure and deadlock, does a great job, opens America to the new era and is able to do the best for your people.

Many people around us, here, have appreciated Obama's reelection speech and said that it would be good to have the same here!

**Catherine Duffour, France**

### Grandmothers for Peace Directory:

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PHONE: (916) 730-6476

# DOING SOMETHING

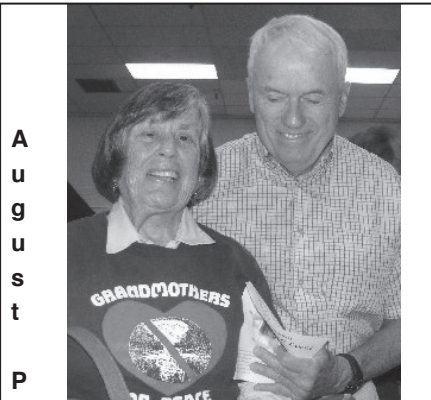
FROM PAGE 2

## North Carolina

### Lynn Heritage

Our Peace Day Celebration was a huge success with 140-150 people in attendance. There was singing, drumming, and peace readings from many sources.

Our purpose is to promote the idea that Peace begins at home.



Loretta and Dennis Schmitz, above. Kathleen Lane and Lorraine Krofchok, Sacramento, CA.

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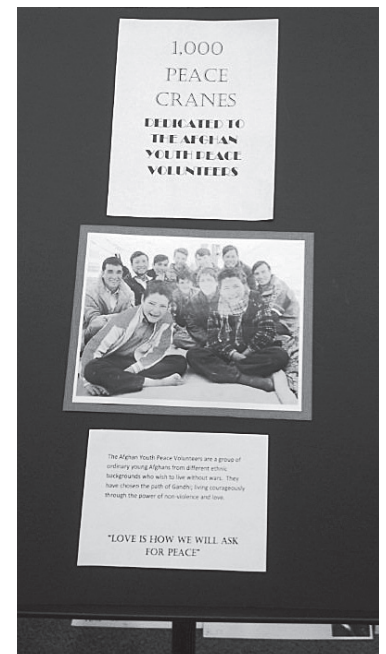


GFP Loretta Schmitz, right, and others protest the use of drones at Beale Air Force Base, CA. One of the signs reads: "No Flag is Big Enough to Cover the Shame of Killing Innocent People."  
May 2012



GFP Jan Provost, seated, and Karen Barschdorf beside a Christmas tree decorated with 1,000 Peace Cranes dedicated to the Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers. This is a group of ordinary young Afghans from different ethnic backgrounds who wish to live without war. They have chosen the path of Gandhi, living courageously through the power of nonviolence and love.

Visit their website:  
[www.youthpeacevolunteers.org](http://www.youthpeacevolunteers.org)



GFP Newsletter Mailing Party: Seated left, Nan Mahon, Pat Altenburg, Ellen Brooms, Sarah Johnson, Lorraine Krofchok; Standing left, Steve Krofchok, Clyde Ingalsbe, Pete Altenburg, John Bader, Loretta Schmitz.

"A WELL REGULATED MILITIA, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

What is it about WELL REGULATED some gun rights people do not understand? They scream about the Second Amendment and the right to bear arms, conveniently forgetting the first four words.

Has anyone considered why about 1.1 percent of the population, i.e. NRA membership, of probably less than 4 million vs 350 million population of the USA, control 100 percent of our gun policy? Yet I have read 70 percent of their membership favors tighter controls. Shall we follow the money, the donations to Congress and the huge donations to the NRA by gun and ammo manufacturers?

Now we the people MUST do something.

Please write and call your House member and Senator. Ask, no, demand common sense checks, rules and a ban on assault weapons. Please support Senator Dianne Feinstein's bill on assault weapons.

Senator Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senate  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The gun violence is out of control. And, it is not all mentally ill people. There are drugs and alcohol involved, plus "accidents" and domestic violence.

Let me tell you a story. I began a correspondence with one of our international GFP, an American living abroad. She asked how she could help and told me a lifelong friendship was shattered because of their difference in gun control — my friend being against our lax gun laws. I felt bad, for the same thing had happened to me, not over guns, but issues. A couple days ago she sent me a message. Her lifelong friend, the shattered one, had shot and killed her husband here in the states! Alcohol was involved. Can it get anymore hideous with guns? Our children are dying and Congress is still whining "Constitution."

Did those men with muskets have the vision to see what horror was coming in the future? Frankly, they could have worded the Second Amendment in a better structured sentence! And, about the people who want to be armed against a government takeover. How is that gun or even assault weapon going to be useful against our

military, touted as the most powerful in the world? Haven't you heard the chants of "We are number one--woo,woo!" during demonstrations supporting the wars?

On January 20, 2013, I was privileged to attend a Martin Luther King celebration in Sonora, CA. There were tributes in word and song to Dr. King.

The guest speaker was my longtime friend Fr. Roy Bourgeois. Also honored was Del Berg, 98, one of the last two



Lorraine Krofchok, Del Berg,  
and Fr. Roy Bourgeois.

surviving members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. "During the Spanish Civil War (1936-39), almost forty thousand men and women from fifty-two countries, including 2,800 Americans, traveled to Spain to join the International Brigades to help fight fascism. The U.S. volunteers served in various units (medical, combat and transportation) and came to be known collectively as the Abraham Lincoln Brigade."\*

GFP and I have known and supported the work of Fr. Roy for at least 18 years. We have participated at many vigils at Ft. Benning to close the infamous School of the Americas.

Recently Fr. Roy was excommunicated by the Vatican. His transgression? He believes in equal rights for women in the Church. He — with a legion of supporters — believes it is time for female priests. It is about equality and human dignity. Fr. Roy has worked for peace and justice for over 40 years, in Central and South America and his dedication to close SOA — 22 years of protest. He is a kind and gentle man, but fierce in his dedication and focus. We will continue to support his work.

And, as I write this it is the day after the Inauguration of President Obama. His

speech was full of hope and inclusion of many. It was a day to be proud of our diversity. Now, it is back to work. May we have a better, safer world for the future.

*Peace to all of us, Lorraine*

For more information on the Lincoln Brigade: <http://www.alba-valb.org>

*I see the world erupting in conflict ... and was heartened that Obama spoke for peace in the Gaza outbreak ... and that Hilary worked with Egypt. This is the kind of behavior I endorse and expect from the United States, so am relieved that we did not elect a new "warlord." This poem:*

### Song of Doves

What if this language were a harp  
And when I plucked its strings  
You would turn to listen?

And what if one glistening leaf  
Were to dance, then spinning, fall,  
And ten thousand souls  
Were pulled out of their grief?

What if something in our hearts  
Were to grow and bloom  
So that we agreed—for just one moment—  
To be together in a room?

What if all song  
Was fluid in our veins?  
And we heard those little gods tapping  
Every time it rains?

Then, if there were no dereliction,  
And death--simply fiction,  
And every other ocean wave  
Were to extol our yearning love,  
Would it all—if combined—  
Summon the doves?

*c. Kay Weeks  
November 10, 2012*

### The Power of Grandmothers

The book *Grandmother Power: A Global Phenomenon* and its website "feature activist grandmothers worldwide who are fighting courageously and effectively to create a better future for grandchildren everywhere."




*Paola Gianturco*, author/photographer, is donating 100% of her author royalties to grandmothers in 15 African countries who are raising AIDS orphans. [www.globalgrandmotherpower.com](http://www.globalgrandmotherpower.com)

# Grandmothers for Peace International

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## ORDER FORM

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10. Baseball Cap with Logo (adjustable size) 	\$12.00						<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
11. Grocery/Everything Tote (Navy) 	\$12.00						<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
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13. Sew-on Logo Patch (S&H included) 	\$ 2.00						<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
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## Special 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Bonus!

Buy 1 shirt, bag, or cap and get a second item of your choice free. The lesser value item is free. Make your selection and put the price in the Total Column and then select your free item, indicating "Free" in the Total Column. You can have as many bonus combos as you want! Subtotal your items, add the flat \$8.00 Bonus Shipping fee, and fill in the Total price. Some sizes are limited quantities — please include your phone and/or e-mail:

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# Grandmothers for Peace International



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Although Grandmothers for Peace, as an organization or chapter, can not endorse any political candidate or group due to our non-profit status,  
**WE DO THANK EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTS PEACE.**



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11/2009

### Numbers You Need

**4,486 US Military Deaths in Iraq\***  
**2,176 US Military Deaths in Afghanistan**  
**Cost of Wars:**  
**\$1,415,893,859,716.00 (Trillion)\***

**President Barack Obama**

The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

E-mail: go to Website:  
[www.whitehouse.gov/contact](http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact)  
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(\*icasualties.org; costofwar.com; 1-22-13)

