

# WE, THE PEOPLE BUILDING A CULTURE OF PEACE BY AFFIRMING NATIONAL DAYS OF PEACE AND TRANSFORMING NATIONAL DAYS FOR WAR INTO DAYS OF PEACE

Compiled by Dick Bennett 6-8-08

COME JOIN THE PROCESS. WHETHER YOU LIKE TO CELEBRATE OR TO TRANSFORM, THERE IS A NEED AND A PLACE FOR YOU IN OMNI.

FLAG DAY and FATHER'S DAY are coming soon. What kind of alternative might OMNI offer and that can be accomplished by then? Or start planning for 2009.

## THE WEB OF A CULTURE OF PEACE

UN Culture of Peace Website

<http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/>

Values, Attitudes, and Behaviors: Culture of War to Culture of Peace

<http://www.afngeelong06.org/papers/mckeague-peace.pdf>

There is a UN initiative called the International Culture of Peace Decade (2000-2010) which is attempting to define the Culture of War and the Culture of Peace and move away from a war culture to a peace culture. The second site shows the contrast very clearly. Idealistic, you might say. But think about this: the US uses a show of military power to prove its strength. That's because the predominant culture in the world today is a Culture of War. If we changed to a Culture of Peace, how could the US successfully show its strength? And how much better for world would this response be? Just compare the consequences of the two types of responses.

But we cannot make this change so long as we celebrate the myths represented by the US official ceremonial Days, many of which directly support wars and preparations for wars.

George Orwell wrote in *1984*: "Everything faded into mist. The past was erased, the erasure was forgotten, the lie became the truth"—that wars are inevitable, that our species is inherently violent. Much of OMNI's work in building a Culture of Peace involves the struggle to reinforce peaceful values despite the power of innumerable species and nationalistic myths. In behavioral psychology, we are what we do. Most of the public mindlessly accepts the messages of special Days (Daze?) and holidays that promote military power, because militarism is not only inevitable but necessary, for our security, even though it is we who have attacked other nations, and since the War of 1812 and Pearl Harbor have never been attacked by another nation.

Here is a list of two kinds of Days. Some of them affirm peace (Martin Luther King's birthday). Most of them project the US nationalistic, patriotic, exceptionalist, militaristic, imperial Days. Days in bold are the ones OMNI is already actively engaged in affirming or challenging. The other Days have yet to be offered an affirmation or an alternative. Each of the Days need a coordinator, and the project needs an overall coordinator.

When people ask, What can I do, what can one person do, to change the world from war to peace? Here is one answer: Reinforce a peaceful day or Change a warfare Day!

When scoffers ask, what difference can we make here? We can answer: we are offering a

model to the world, and sometimes models grab the world's imagination.

Such a program is rare. Few peace organizations adhere to a comprehensive program like ours, based on the assumption that the US warfare state—Corporate-Pentagon-White House-Congress-Mainstream Media—is an interrelated complex, and we should counter it, point by point, by a peaceful complex. So we are experimenting.--like Gandhi, whose autobiographical subtitle is *My Life of Experiments*.

The following list is far from being complete. Please help complete it.

#### JANUARY

**BirthDAY Celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr., January 19. We have had an essay contest, but are now considering alternatives.** Please join the committee, and consider being the coordinator.

#### FEBRUARY

#### MARCH

**International Women's DAY, March 8: We have focused on celebrating peace, justice, ecology women heroes, locally, nationally, internationally.** Coordinator needed.

#### APRIL

Martin Luther King, Jr., Assassinated, April 4, 1968. 2009?

**Earth DAY, April: for three years we had out of town distinguished speakers. The past year we have merged with SpringFest.**

**Earth DAY at World Peace Wetland Prairie: A new OMNI tradition for Earth DAY is the celebration at WPWP on the Saturday preceding SpringFest.**

**Fayetteville's Annual SpringFest, April.**

#### MAY

May 1, May DAY, the international workers holiday. (Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger, among many others, were Wobblies, members of the International Workers of the World, IWW. An opportunity for great music.) Our neglect of this DAY should end.

May 1, Law DAY

National DAY of Prayer, first Thursday. Our alternative should be DAY of Prayer by people of all faiths? Will you coordinate it?

**Mother's DAY for Peace, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of May: 2008 marked the 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our Julia Ward Howe Mother's Day for Peace Celebration, usually a luncheon, but we are open to different event.**

May 10, International Migratory Bird Day.

May 15, International Conscientious Objectors' DAY

Arbor Day

World Vegetarian WEEK: this is one of our worst absences. Who will form a committee?

Vegetarianism is at the heart of resistance to both war and warming.

Memorial DAY, last Monday in May, formerly Decoration Day, a US holiday in remembrance of members of US armed forces killed in wars. It is time we offered an alternative.

#### JUNE

June 4, Wednesday, UN International Day of Innocent Children, Victims of Aggression  
June 5, Thursday, Anniversary of the assassination of Robert Kennedy in 1968

June 5, Thursday, UN World Environment Day

June 14, Flag DAY

June 15, Father's DAY

International Peace Prayer DAY, June 15.

Protest the Human Costs of Military Toxics WEEK, June 15-23.

Juneteenth, June 19

Gay Pride WEEK.

## JULY

July 4, Independence DAY

## AUGUST

**Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Remembrance of Victims/Celebration of Peace Heroes, August 6-9: our oldest activity, begun in the 1970s by our predecessor Peace Organizing Committee.**

## SEPTEMBER

Labor DAY, Sept. 1, for jobs, fair wages, health benefits, right to organize.

9/11 DAY, Alternative against retaliation and revenge and for reconciliation.

Interdependent Day, September 12 ([www.civworld.org](http://www.civworld.org))

**International Day of Peace, Celebration of Peacemakers, September 21: 2008 marked our 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary.**

**Banned Books/Freedom to Read WEEK, Sept. : OMNI has initiated activities and participated in others for a decade or more as of 2008. Coordinator needed.**

**Keep Space for Peace WEEK, Sept. 25- Oct. 2: For perhaps half a decade as of 2008 OMNI has sponsored a variety of programs, including bringing Bruce Gagnon here to speak.**

## OCTOBER

October, Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Gandhi's BirthDAY, Oct. 2

Universal Children's DAY, Oct. 4

**Fayetteville's Annual AutumnFest, October (Oct. 9-10, 2004): OMNI has had a table on the Fayetteville Square since early in its existence, 2002-.**

**Indigenous People's DAY (Columbus Day), 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday in October: As of 2008 OMNI will have sponsored this event for four years in conjunction with UofA's Native American Symposium Committee.**

World Hunger Day, Oct. 12.

World Food DAY, Oct. 16

**United Nations DAY, October 24 (UN Charter became binding treaty): OMNI has celebrated this day for five years as of 2008 by sponsoring notable speakers, including the president of the Central Ark. Chapter of UN/USA.**

Make a Difference DAY, October 25

## NOVEMBER

November, American Indian Heritage MONTH

Veterans' DAY, Nov. 11

International DAY for Tolerance, Nov. 16

International DAY to End Violence Against Women, Nov. 25

Buy Nothing DAY, Nov. 26

International DAY of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, Nov. 29

## DECEMBER

**Human Rights DAY, Dec. 10: Ever since OMNI's beginning we have celebrated this DAY, with**

events of various kinds, including music/readings at the local bookstore.

**Bill of Rights DAY, Dec. 15: OMNI has cooperated with the local chapter of the ACLU to celebrate this DAY, usually at the home of a member for a talk and dinner.**

OMNI, WE, THE PEOPLE,  
SEEK A CULTURE OF PEACE-- A WORLD FREE OF WAR AND THE THREAT OF WAR, A  
SOCIETY WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL, A COMMUNITY WHERE EVERY  
PERSON'S POTENTIAL MAY BE FULFILLED, AN EARTH RESTORED. GRASSROOTS  
NONVIOLENCE, WORLD PEACE, HUMAN RIGHTS, SOCIAL and ECONOMIC JUSTICE,  
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP PROTECTING SPECIES AND THE EARTH.

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