I know many of you wish Father’s Day (and Mother’s Day) were less commercial, less commodified (our deepest feelings exploited for profit), and more emphasizing meaningful relationships and the difficulties experienced by many fathers (and mothers) in our country and around the world.

As it happens, June 20 is also United Nations World Refugee Day, and the combination offers an opportunity for a more significant Father’s Day and increased support for refugee fathers. Any effort to relate these two important DAYS can have a transformative effect.

If we are some day to build a more peaceful world, we must reconceive the social structures that determine how future generations will behave and the decisions they will make. Compare Mother’s Day. In 1870, Julia Ward Howe wrote a Mother’s Day Proclamation for Peace that said, in part: “Our sons shall not be taken from us to unlearn all that we have been able to teach them of charity, mercy and patience.” As far as I am aware, no man has written a comparable Father’s Day Proclamation for Peace. But our peace tradition enjoys countless men who have opposed violence and war who can serve as a foundation for a Father’s Day for Peace.

Gary Snyder wrote during the 1960s struggle against wars, “It is best to think of this as a revolution, not of guns, but of consciousness, which will be won by seizing the key myths, archetypes, eschatologies, and ecstasies, so that life won't seem worth living unless one is on the transforming energy's side.”

Let us be on the transformative side for peace and compassion, by uniting Father's Day with UN World Refugee Day. Let us create a Father’s Day for Peace and write a Father’s Day Proclamation for Peace.

John F. Kennedy said: "Peace is a daily, a weekly, a monthly process, gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, quietly BUILDING NEW STRUCTURES." Father’s Day is one of those old structures. Transforming Father’s Day into Father’s Day for Peace is an example of what BUILDING A CULTURE OF PEACE means: not only educating generally but directly challenging the way people are conditioned to perpetuate the world as we know it.

Given World Refugee Day, an act that prefigures the future of Father’s Day for Peace is the transformation of the DAY into one of compassion for the father’s suffering from wars. For example, some six million Iraqis have been displaced by the US invasion and occupation. Multiply these millions many times by present and past wars to recognize how many fathers around the world are without...
employment and unable to provide for their families and who suffer other harsh realities that rob them of their sense of purpose and worth and lead inevitably to violence.

And already fathers are facing the new hazards and dislocations caused by global warming, as ice melts and seas rise, and weather becomes more extreme. The refugees from wars and warming are already on the move or have moved or try to survive in displacement camps.

Fortunately for these fathers and their families, people around the world are responding generously. OMNI’s Climate Change Task Force (Joanna Pollock and Nathan Wilson, co-chairs) is raising money for an orphanage in Kenya for children made homeless by climate change. (Silent auction art on display at OMNI during month of June.) The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) brings hope by supporting millions of displaced people, though their funding is never sufficient. Fortunately too, there are people like Mike Farrell, father of two children, hero of M*A*S*H, author of Just Call Me Mike: A Journey to Actor and Activist, truly a public citizen of the world, whose life of human rights activism serves as an example to the rest of us. He has worked extensively for refugees globally in CONCERN/America, is a Goodwill Ambassador for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and was co-chair of Human Rights Watch for 10 years. Let’s consider Mike our Julia Ward Howe for Father’s Day!

JUNE 20, 2010 FATHER’S DAY/WORLD REFUGEE DAY

1. World Refugee Day - June 20
Jul 9, 2002 ... Contains links to information resources and documents on refugees prepared by the United Nations and specialized agencies to mark World ... www.un.org/depts/dhl/refugee/index.html - Cached

2. On World Refugee Day, UN warns that many displaced are unable to ...
18 June 2010 – The United Nations is marking World Refugee Day by urging governments and individuals not to forget the 15 million men, women and children ...
Show more results from www.un.org

3. UNHCR - The UN Refugee Agency
Jolie, Clinton and Guteres joined forcibly displaced people in the live video event linking four locations around the world to mark World Refugee Day. ...
www.unhcr.org/ - Cached - Similar

4. UNHCR - World Refugee Day 2009
This World Refugee Day we ask you to remember the millions of forcibly displaced and stateless people under our care who are struggling with their ...
www.unhcr.org › Home › About Us › UNHCR Events -
5. **News for UN World Refugee Day**

**World Refugee Day** - 50 minutes ago

From June 18 to 20 the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) commemorates World Refugee Day in Washington DC, in order to draw the public's attention to the ...

*Sunday Times.lk* - 107 related articles »

Angelina Jolie's video for **World Refugee Day 2010** - *Los Angeles Times (blog)* - 493 related articles »


6. **World Refugee Day** - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

On 4 December 2000, the United Nations General Assembly in Resolution 55/76 decided that, from 2001, 20 June would be celebrated as World Refugee Day. ...

*en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Refugee_Day* - Cached - Similar

7. **UN Refugee Agency** - USA for UNHCR

The UN Refugee Agency protects and assists women and children fleeing violence, ...

*World Refugee Day Materials 2010* · **World Refugee Day 2010** - Organize an ...

*www.unrefugees.org/* - Cached - Similar

8. **World Refugee Day 2010** - **World Refugee Day 2010** - Organize an ...

Wear light blue (the international color of UN Aid workers) on World Refugee Day (June 20) and talk to friends about why you are wearing blue that day. ...

*www.unrefugees.org* › ... › **World Refugee Day 2009** - Cached - Similar

Show more results from www.unrefugees.org

9. Pelosi Statement on **United Nations World Refugee Day** -- WASHINGTON ...

"On Sunday, United Nations World Refugee Day, we again bring attention to the plight of men, women and children all over the world who have been forced to ...

*www.prnewswire.com/.../pelosi-statement-on-united-nations-world-refugee-day-96688384.html*

10. **VoRTCS - Volunteer Refugee Tutoring & Community Support Program** ...

In 2000, the United Nations General Assembly designated 20 June as World Refugee Day to recognise and celebrate the contribution of refugees throughout the ...

*www.refugeetutoring.org/world-refugee-day.php* - Cached - Similar

11. **UN marks World Refugee Day** by urging care for those unable to ...

The United Nations is marking Sunday's World Refugee Day by reminding the world of the 15 million refugees who are unable to return to their homes. ...
FOR A WORLD FREE OF WAR AND THE THREAT OF WAR, COMMITTED TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION, A SOCIETY WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL, A TRULY REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT NOT DOMINATED BY CORPORATE MONEY, 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.