VETERANS DAY/UNITY DAY

OMNI WORLD UNITY DAY NEWSLETTER #4, NOVEMBER 11, 2011, WE, THE PEOPLE BUILDING A CULTURE OF PEACE, Compiled by Dick Bennett

Here is the link to all OMNI newsletters:

http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/

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WORLD UNITY DAY

Category:
**Common Interest - Current Events**

**Description:**
A group to build awareness and support for the global observance of World Unity Day, November 11 - a 'day' to foster unity in communities throughout the world by serving as a catalyst for programs, events, curriculum and celebrations focused on "celebrating the diversity of the human family."

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**Recent News**

- Ethiopian Ambassador signs "Declaration of World Unity", and comments...
  "Our shrinking "global village" is evolving into a multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-religious society. Indeed, we are witnessing the emergence of a global consciousness - an increasing number of people are coming to see themselves as members of one family in an interdependent universe. So it is an idea whose time has come to have a World Unity Day. Congratulation for coming with this noble initiative. Let us also focus on Golden Rule as one practical way for a better world.
  Peace to all, Ambassador Mussie Hailu

- Sedona and Phoenix, Arizona, Mayors proclaim November 11, World Unity Day!

- "Declaration of World Unity" petition breaks 4000 signatures with Saudi Arabia and Jordan now represented...113 countries total! PLEASE SIGN & SHARE!!! - http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/establish-international-world-unity-day.html


**VETERANS FOR PEACE**

**Thursday, November 10, 2011**

**This Friday is Armistice Day!**
Several churches & other groups have committed to join Veterans For Peace in ringing the bells 11 times at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of the year.
Take a minute to hear Liam Clancy's touching rendition of Eric Bogle's "And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda," about an Australian soldier in the WWI butchery known as Gallipoli, says about all that needs to be said about Armistice Day. Ponder. Pass along. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFCekeoSTwq&feature=player_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFCekeoSTwq&feature=player_embedded)

Churches to Ring Bells on Veterans Day
[http://www.chieftain.com/life/local/churches-to-ring-bells-on-veterans-day/article_1f9be8d0-074c-11e1-9c3a-001cc4c03286.html](http://www.chieftain.com/life/local/churches-to-ring-bells-on-veterans-day/article_1f9be8d0-074c-11e1-9c3a-001cc4c03286.html)

VFP Chapters Participating in Armistice/Veterans Day

Events | Iraq Veterans Against the War
[ivaw.org/events](ivaw.org/events)

120+ items – Skip to main content. Iraq Veterans Against the War ...

Veterans Day Event Unveils "Cost of War" Sign

Attendees Raise Awareness about Veterans' Issues

**WHO:** The University of Rochester M.K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence joins members of Veterans for Peace, Iraq Veterans Against the War, and Military Families Speak Out to unveil an electric "Cost of War" sign.

**TIME, DATE, PLACE:** 1 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 11, at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality (402 South Avenue).

**WHAT:** In honor of Veterans Day, these organizations, all members of the anti-war coalition, come together to honor veterans from New York State. Before the sign's unveiling, veterans will read the names of troops from New York State who died in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. The seven-foot-long electronic sign, on loan from a Binghamton peace activism group, will be placed in several locations around Rochester through the end of December. The sign will scroll different messages at each location, to provide the public with information about the monetary cost of war as well as the emotion toll war can take on American soldiers.

On Thursday, the sign will scroll three separate messages: "Tonight 160,000 vets will be homeless"; "Today 18 vets will commit suicide"; and "All of our veterans need your support."

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Members of the media who wish to cover the unveiling should call on-site media contacts Kit Miller, Director of the Gandhi Institute, at 520-544-9013 or George Payne at 585-703-9230.

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Antiwar Veterans Redefine Veterans Day
By Clare Bayard, Z Magazine January 2011
http://www.zcommunications.org/zmag/jan11

IVAW’S OPERATION RECOVERY

Last November 11, antiwar veterans and their supporters marked Veterans Day with a range of coordinated events around the country. Until the 1950s, November 11 was known as Armistice Day to commemorate the end of World War I. This year, members of IVAW (Iraq Veterans Against the War) and their civilian allies evoked the original meaning of this holiday through Operation Recovery, a campaign to transition this country out of our declared "endless war" and heal some of its wounds.

Operation Recovery: End the Deployment of Traumatized Troops was launched this past October 7, the tenth anniversary of the Afghanistan War, seeking to end the military's abusive practices of deploying soldiers suffering from traumas including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), and Military Sexual Trauma (MST). IVAW's research estimates that approximately 20 percent of active duty troops are suffering from untreated trauma. Many service members have shared stories of being denied treatment as well as being punished and mocked for seeking it, even as military suicides continue to rise. The Operation Recovery campaign is one step among IVAW's broader goals to not only ensure the right of service members to heal, but also to end the wars and occupations, deliver reparations to Iraq, and hold accountable the people who are responsible. Operation Recovery events included:

♦ An art opening and Warrior Writers workshop in Chicago

♦ Street outreach in New York, Philadelphia, Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, and Manhattan, Kansas

♦ Outreach on bases to active duty soldiers at Fort Riley,
They also included the public surrender of an injured AWOL soldier, Army Specialist Jeff Hanks, at Ft. Campbell, Kentucky. Hanks went AWOL to resist redeployment to Afghanistan last fall after the military refused to treat him for severe PTSD. Supported by military and civilian allies alike, Hanks and other veterans testified about the military's negligent and often abusive treatment of severely traumatized soldiers seeking care. Hanks decided he wanted to turn himself in publicly to draw attention to these widespread practices. If he is court-martialed, he could face up to two years in prison and a lifetime felony conviction on his record. The Army could also attempt to forcibly deploy him again. At the gates of Ft. Campbell, 25 supporters stood with Hanks as he told his story to reporters. Another AWOL soldier from his unit traveled to join the rally, disclosing similar experiences. One supporter explained that her husband, who is currently deployed, was sent against medical advice.

In the weeks following the November 11 actions, a number of other soldiers gone AWOL from the 101st due to mental health struggles have reached out to Operation Recovery for support.

Visibility and support are important factors influencing not only the morale of traumatized troops and their families, but also the military's treatment of people who go public. Aaron Hughes of IVAW shared with supporters that, "Jeff's command was extremely hostile when he turned himself in on Veterans Day, but after the CBS story aired on Friday, they changed their tune" (Hanks was interviewed by Katie Couric).

At an Operation Rescue event on the University of Illinois campus in Champaign-Urbana, IVAW members and civilian antiwar organizers publicly mounted a large display counting off the years' 334 Army suicides. The striking art drew veterans, students (including Iraqi-Americans), professors, and workers into conversations with the organizers. "It felt like an important presence to have because there were so many pro-military groups, including the military, who were there using the day to drum up support for the wars. We effectively inserted a different understanding of what it means to support the troops, which is to bring them home," said Sarah Lazare from the Civilian-Soldier Alliance, who helped organize the event.

In San Francisco, 50 people—from a range of veterans' and civilian organizations—gathered to launch Operation Recovery on the West Coast. IVAW members explained the campaign and strategized with people from over 15 organizations and at least 5 cities. They
subsequently kicked off a multi-year set of healing ceremonies and events led by veteran and non-veteran members of the Ohlone Nation, working alongside Veterans for Peace.

The November elections revealed a striking wall of silence around war as a campaign issue. Politicians across the spectrum seem to find it expedient to keep people from thinking about or discussing the wars. Unfortunately, the various forms of violence that people experience in the military, and the effects of bringing war home in their bodies, have long been taboo subjects in this country. But veterans and their loved ones are refusing to continue quietly confining health and safety impacts to their homes and bodies.

Clare Bayard organizes with the Catalyst Project (www.collectiveliberation.org) and War Resisters League (warresisters.org). Info on Operation Recovery at www.ivaw.org/operation-recovery.

OCCUPY VETERANS DAY 2011

Occupy Veterans Day by Kelley B. Vlahos -- Antiwar.com
original.antiwar.com/vlahos/2011/11/07/a-new-spin-on-veterans-day/Cached
1 day ago – He left the military and joined Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW), which has been front and center at the Occupy protests, including an ..
11.11.11 Occupy Chicago Stands with Anti-War Vets on Veterans Day
occupychi.org/2011/11/11/111111-occupy-chicago-stands-anti-war-vets...
11.11.11 Occupy Chicago Stands with Anti-War Vets on Veterans Day. Tags: Announcements · Press. Friday, November 11, 2011 11am: Veteran's Ceremony at ...

Thoughts on Veterans Day

By John Cory, Reader Supported News, 11 November 10

t's Veterans Day.

A national Hallmark Card for war inked with survivor's guilt.

We have numbered wars like SuperBowls (WWI and WWII), marked them by time (the Hundred Years' War and the Thirty Years' War), masked them with a gentle oxymoron (the Civil War) and fogged their battles in terms of weather (Rolling Thunder and Desert Storm). War is a lesson in geography like the Spanish-American War, the Mexican-American War and the Vietnam War or, as the Vietnamese call it, the American War. Modern war is waged on an "ism" like Communism or Terrorism.

We never run out of names, terms or reasons for war. And there is always an anniversary for war or a battle or its start, a day of flowers and marketing to ensure romantic remembrance of death and
destruction.

That is war after all - a marriage of violence and glory "until death do us part."

War is a true never-ending story. And when the shooting stops, we file the body parts and memory fragments on a bookshelf for later reference when we write about war, searching for Kevlar words to protect the troops as we recon the thesaurus of emotions and memories for the building blocks that frame a new rationalization for more war.

And everyone wants a good war story to lead the six o'clock news or top the bestseller charts. It has to be heroic and noble, a tale of sacrifice for the greater good or better yet, a battle of reluctance turned into righteous annihilation of the enemy. It has to be a story about us versus the faceless and godless enemy that leads to triumph and victory, albeit a world-weary victory, thrust upon us. We didn't want to destroy the village but we had to destroy the village in order to save the village. Like that ominous voice of movie previews, we utter the words: In a world of kill or be killed, there can be no doubt.

Of course we don't tell real war stories. We write recruiting posters.

No one writes the stories of wives who organize and schedule jobs and school and extra-curricular activities so that by 8 pm everyone can gather around the warm glow of the computer and Skype with Dad and touch each other through the LCD screen of love and loneliness.

No one writes the stories of fathers who watch their daughters battle PTSD and TBI and the military and the VA for treatment and disability compensation year after year, long after they have returned from war. No one sees the father's pain and anger when someone tells him that his daughter wasn't a "real combat" troop so her injuries don't qualify for a Purple Heart, or that the VA and the government can't just hand out monthly checks to just anyone. The sting of the bullet words that say: "That's the trouble with these Vets, they want something for nothing."

No one writes of the mother who spends day after day fighting for reimbursement of gas money driving her amputee son or daughter to and from appointments for physical and mental therapy. It's a roundtrip of 143 miles three times a month, if you're lucky and got to the top of the waiting lists.

And no one writes of the children who watch Mom and Dad come and go while they live with Grandma or Aunt Jesse, and when Mom and Dad finally come home to stay but they are different. Mom won't let them walk down the street without her being on point to make sure nothing bad happens because the world is a bad place. And Dad can't stop hugging them and crying for a long time and then he can't sleep and then he doesn't talk anymore. He just sits in the rocking chair and watches the rain. He is gone again.

Bldg. 805 in Fort Bliss was supposed to be for treating soldiers with TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury), but is instead a structure of indifference and lack of funding. In Fort Carson there is what is known as "the warehouse of despair" where soldiers are medicated and left to wander in their own lost world.
We have perfected the **perverted normalcy of war** and made it a family affair.

In the recent election cycle only 3 percent of voters listed war as a topic of concern when voting for a candidate. Out of sight - out of mind.

A few more wars and we will earn another three-day weekend with half-off sales and discounted holiday airfares and bouquets for our loved ones. And war, like Hallmark, comforts us with the knowledge that we have made a good purchase because as the slogan says: **When you care enough to send the very best.**

And we care about war, right?

And we send the very best, right?

What more can we do?

-PEACE-

John Corey is a poet of sorrow and pain lived with and somehow survived. He understands the horror of our acceptance of such great evil that we will allow our children to die on the "fiery, iron altar of war" to bring power and wealth to a very greedy few. Bless you John, we can only share a very small part of your sorrow, and we do what we can to stop the insanity.

**END OF UNITY DAY NEWSLETTER #4**