

# BOUNDARY PEACE INITIATIVE

## The White Poppy

(Compiled from the Peace Pledge Union and Peace Poppy websites)

### What do White Poppies stand for?

White Poppies are worn in the run-up to Remembrance Day every year by thousands of people in the UK and beyond (Ed. Note--Including Canada). White Poppies have been worn in this way for over eighty years. They are distributed by the Peace Pledge Union (PPU). Ed. Note--Go to

<https://peacepoppies.ca/> for more information.

There are three elements to the meaning of White Poppies: they represent remembrance for all victims of war, a commitment to peace and a challenge to attempts to glamorize or celebrate war. White Poppies can be bought online and in a number of shops, cafes and other outlets. (Ed. Note--In Grand Forks and the Boundary contact Laura at [l4peace@telus.net](mailto:l4peace@telus.net) or by phone at 250-442-0434 or cell at 250-444-0524.)

### Remember all the victims of war

White Poppies recall all victims of all wars, including victims of wars that are still being fought. This includes people of all nationalities. It includes both civilians and members of armed forces. Today, over 90% of people killed in warfare are civilians.

In wearing White Poppies, we remember all those killed in war, all those wounded in body or mind, the millions who have been made sick or homeless by war and the families and communities torn apart. We also remember those killed or imprisoned for refusing to fight and for resisting war.

We differ from the Royal British Legion, who produces Red Poppies. The Legion says that Red Poppies are to remember only British armed forces and those who fought alongside them. (Ed. Note--The same applies to the Canadian Legion.)

We want to remember British (Ed. Note--and Canadian) military dead, but they are not the only victims of war. We also remember, for example, civilians killed in the bombings of London, Coventry and Belfast, and in the bombings of Dresden, Hiroshima, Baghdad and Kabul. (Ed. Note—and the list goes on and on and on.)

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## (From last column) The White Poppy Stand up for peace

White Poppies symbolise the conviction that there are better ways to resolve conflict than through the use of violence. They embody values that reject killing fellow human beings for whatever reason. Nearly 100 years (Ed. Note—it is actually now 100 years) after the end of the “**war to end all wars**” we still have a long way to go to put an end to a social institution that even in the last decade has contributed to the killing of millions.

From economic reliance on arms sales to renewing and updating all types of weapons, the UK (Ed. Note—Canada as well) government contributes significantly to international instability. The outcome of recent military adventures highlights their ineffectiveness and grim consequences.

The best way to respect the victims of war is to work to prevent war in the present and future. Violence only begets more violence. We need to tackle the underlying causes of warfare, such as poverty, inequality and competition over resources. A temporary absence of violence is not enough. Peace is much deeper and broader than that, requiring major social changes to allow us to live more co-operatively.

### Challenge militarism

A message originally associated with Remembrance Day, after the First World War, was “never again”. This message slipped away. In response, White Poppies were developed in 1933 by the Co-operative Women's Guild to affirm the message of “**no more war**”.

Many of the activities around Remembrance Day are detached from any meaningful attempt to learn the lessons of war. Arms companies allow their staff to pause work for the two minutes' silence. Politicians who plough billions into nuclear weapons lay wreaths at the cenotaph. Arms dealers sponsor Remembrance events even while their work makes war more likely.

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## (From page 1) **The White Poppy**

In 2014 for example, the British Legion Young Professionals' ball was sponsored by Lockheed Martin, one of the world's largest arms companies. Lockheed Martin plays a major role in manufacturing the Trident nuclear weapons system. Each Trident missile is capable of killing far more people than the 888,000 people represented by the Red Poppies that were displayed at the Tower of London at the time.

Working for peace is the natural consequence of remembering the victims of war. If, for example, we were remembering the victims of road accidents, we might well do so by working to prevent further road accidents. This logic, which would apply in other areas of life, is rejected by those who seek to misuse Remembrance Day to promote militarist values that only make war more likely.

## **International Day of Peace**

By: Laura Savinkoff

On September 23<sup>rd</sup> the BPI hosted an event with a panel of two young people, one 11 the other 12, who shared with us their thoughts and suggestions on Peace. The theme chosen by the United Nations this year for this gathering of humanity worldwide in search of a solution to the violence and abuse of which War is the ultimate expression was/is 70 Years of the Declaration of Human Rights and the Right to Peace. The thoughts these two young people shared with us were profound and gave us much food for thought. Notes were not taken nor is there a video record, sadly, but those of us who took the time to come out were impressed and left encouraged that there are youth who do care and who are already working towards a world of peace, social justice, equality, environmental sustainability guided by love of all Creation. We ranged from 95 years old to the 60 plus year olds and then these two children; missing were the 20, 30, 40 and 50 years olds? And that is a significant lack so please let us know how we can engage you, what is it you need in order to participate and stand up with your children and grandchildren to say Enough is Enough! No More War!

Forrest and Aleena spoke about the bullying that goes on in school; the violence that is so prevalent in the school yard; the disrespect at school but also in the community for those less fortunate, those with substance abuse problems arising mostly from mental illness and other reasons for homelessness. They are troubled by this but see precious few of their contemporaries who care for and about the pain and the suffering that goes on all around us. Violence is not only from war but from the way we treat each other, the way we live our lives daily teaches our children and grandchildren how to act, how to treat each other.

Out of this discussion arose an action item that is still being worked on. Sadly, the peace movement is not allowed in the schools even though the military and other forms of violent teachings are and sadly very little, if any at all, information is offered about the United Nations.

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## (From last column) **International Day of Peace**

A volunteer stepped forward to accompany these two very brave young people to approach their school to organize an event to celebrate Human Rights Day which falls on December 10<sup>th</sup>. It may not be possible for this date this year but the Right to Peace and Human Rights is something we can and should work for and with and towards every day so the plan is actually to begin the dialogue in the school on this topic.

We will keep you updated on the progress of this initiative undertaken by two youngsters. Thank you Forrest and Aleena.

## **What Peace Means to Me**

By: Aleena Laramee (as presented on Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>)

Hello, my name is Aleena Laramee. I am going to be sharing what peace means to me. Peace is when people are good to one another. Peace is also when we are not violent or harmful to each other. When we are peaceful to one another those acts can carry on to future generations. With all the violence going on around us, leading a peaceful life may not be easy but we can slowly take action when we have a right mindset and positive intentions.

How do we, as individuals, lead a peaceful life? We can start by standing up for one another; helping someone who is hurt physically or mentally; we as people must realize when it's appropriate to listen instead of speak.

There is a poem by a Chinese philosopher from the 6<sup>th</sup> Century who summarized the ripple effects of peace very well.

This is the poem:

*If there is to be peace in the world,  
There must be peace in the Nation,  
If there is to be peace in the nation,  
There must be peace in the cities,  
If there is to be peace in the cities,  
There must be peace between neighbours,  
If there is to be peace between neighbours,  
There must be peace within the home,  
If there is to be peace within the home,  
There must be peace in the Heart.*

Some people achieve peace in the heart through good deed, through prayer, through singing, through artwork and even meditation. I don't believe there is a right or wrong way that one can achieve peace in the heart because everyone's experience, culture, upbringing and beliefs are unique. We should walk away from hatred and disrespect and strive for inner peace.

Thank you for listening.

## B.C. Southern Interior Peace Coalition Conference (BCSIPC) Fall 2018

By: Laura Savinkoff Coordinator

On October 27<sup>th</sup> the Boundary Peace Initiative took its turn to host about 35 people for a full day for the semi-annual conference of the B.C. Southern Interior Peace Coalition. The morning was devoted to the business end of participation in our local communities as well as national and international organizations that work for peace, social justice and environmental sustainability. As member groups reported on their activities since our conference in April we realized that working for Peace is Work, it means standing up and walking and doing and acting and writing and talking with our neighbours, our global family at every opportunity on what peace is and is not, how to get there together, how to build and create safe spaces for all of us. For some it means travel to conferences in different regions of Canada and at times internationally. We brought forward Motions passed into Resolutions to be sent to different levels of Government. We spoke to local, regional, national and international actions and activities that we could be involved with, are involved with, or plan to be involved with. Each of us participates with various groups and through sharing this information we learn that there is much that goes on in the world in the areas of Peace and Justice and Freedom. Sadly, many are unaware of the positive as well as negative actions globally because the North American corporate media reporting is lacking and stilted.

And so the BCSIPC and all our member groups exist to help inform and give space for the necessary discussions, plan actions and activities. We also honour all those who have, do and will continue to work to improve our world, to improve life and living for all humanity. And so this time we honour two well deserving elders in the Boundary with a Peace Award for a lifetime of Actively Living Peace: Christine Medvedoff who turned 95 this year continues to participate as much as possible in events as she did this day: Harold Funk who is 93 continues to do all that he is able to bring awareness to peaceful living but was unable to join us today (we will give him his award as soon as we can arrange it).

After a lunch of Borscht set onto the tables by three volunteers, and so many other things donated by individuals as well as Buy Low Foods, Save On Foods and the USCC Bread Committee it was time to hear from our very special guests.

Grand Chief Stewart and Joan Phillip joined us. On Friday they had been in Victoria meeting with Premier Horgan and Saturday they came to Grand Forks to share their insights into what the next steps are to stop the destruction wrought by the Fossil Fuel industry. Pipelines are only the symptom of a much deeper problem, they said. The Fossil Fuel industry must be stopped; although it will take time because we are all so addicted to this commodity but we must continue to strive for a world that values Creation and that moves away from self-destruction.

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## B.C. Southern Interior Peace Coalition

We all agreed that together we can make this happen. We need to pressure all levels of government to take action to actually ban the use of these fuels as other nations are doing. We have the technology to become a world free of the violence of 'dirty oil' of 'fracking' of 'nuclear energy' of war and all that it brings. A few suggestions arose out of the 2 hour discussion and hopefully you will see some of the results in the near future. The First Nations are adamant that these pipelines will not be built, that the Tar Sands will not expand, that Fracking of gas will stop. "We are one," said Stewart and Joan," so let's work as one to make our world better for ourselves and our future generations."

We continued our deliberations and passed some resolutions that will be shared once the amendments are completed, as will the minutes. I must say that our note taker Beth did an exceptional job so it won't take long to get the follow up finished. All in all the conference was enlightening and inspiring and gives us the incentive to continue our work.

We gather on a rotating basis, so the spring conference will be hosted in the Kootenays. I encourage you to join us as we step ever forward to create a safe space for love and peace to grow. We thank all who traveled through mountain passes and locally for taking time out of busy lives to join us. There are some who were unable to come but their spirits were with us. We are grateful to all who contributed food, time, energy and work to create a successful conference and those who continually support our work. Thank you.



### Our Mission

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents people of diverse backgrounds officially brought together in 2002 because of our mutual concern for the rise in world conflict. Our mandate is to participate in multilateral non-violent conflict resolution in support of global human rights, ecological and environmental sustainability and international law through education, sharing of information, dialogue and activism locally and globally. We encourage and seek your participation in our mutual work for true peace based on social justice, equality, accountability, integrity, honour, respect, etc in order to build a better world today and future generations.

**BPI web site: [www.boundarypeaceinitiative.org](http://www.boundarypeaceinitiative.org)**

***BPI meetings are suspended until at least 3 people commit to meet monthly. To commit call (250) 444-0524 or (250) 442-0434 or email [L4peace@telus.net](mailto:L4peace@telus.net).***

## What's Up?

Remember to fill in your Proportional Representation Ballot and send it off before November 30<sup>th</sup>.

Talking Peace Cafe @ Grand Forks Public Library on Nov. 24<sup>th</sup> @ 2 pm

Call or email Laura to buy a White Poppy: [L4peace@telus.net](mailto:L4peace@telus.net) or 250 442 0434 or 250 444 0524.



The BPI welcomes your input. Articles are the author's responsibility and may not be common consensus of members. To submit articles contact Laura at **250-444-0524 or 250-442-0434** or email [L4peace@telus.net](mailto:L4peace@telus.net).

The BPI is a member of: BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition, Canadian Peace Congress, Abolition 2000, Lawyers Against the War and an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. We work with a wide range of local and global peace, social justice and environmental groups.

Voice your opinion to the Prime Minister and all MPs. Free postage: {Name of MP}, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6  
Go to the Government of Canada website for MP contact information at <http://www.canada.gc.ca>



Photo by: Iskra Magazine

Group photo at the BCSIPC Conference on October 27, 2018 (Some attendees are missing)

Did I offer peace today? Did I bring a smile to someone's face? Did I say words of healing? Did I let go of my anger and resentment? Did I forgive? Did I love? These are the real questions. I must trust that the little bit of love that I sow now will bear many fruits, here in this world and the life to come.

*Henri Nouwen*

In my acquaintance with General Armstrong I never heard him speak, in public or in private, a single bitter word against the white man in the South. From his example in this respect I learned the lesson that great men cultivate love and that only little men cherish a spirit of hatred. I learned that assistance given to the weak makes the one who gives it strong; and that oppression of the unfortunate makes one weak.

*Booker T. Washington from his book Up From Slavery 1901*

"It would be naive to depend on the Supreme Court to defend the rights of poor people, women, people of color, dissenters of all kinds. Those rights only come alive when citizens organize, protest, demonstrate strike, boycott, rebel, and violate the law in order to uphold justice."

*Howard Zinn*