

9-11-02 – A Global Voice of Peace Event: A Day of Remembrances and Reminders, Key Biscayne, Florida  
By Gylia Solay

Today was filled with Remembrances & Reminders of 9-11, the importance of Peace, and how precious life is. As I prepared for the evening's Global Voice of Peace Candlelight Ceremony in my community on Key Biscayne, Florida, the sky was overcast with a puffy grey blanket of clouds adding a sense of security and serenity to the unnerving memories of this day.

I attended the Fire Dept morning services honoring firemen all across the nation who perished in the devastation of 9-11. It was a somber and reverent moment when the fire trucks' sirens signaled the collapsing of the South Tower of the WTC and twenty minutes later they signaled the collapsing of the North Tower. I was immediately taken back to being in my home watching this surrealistic sight on TV. The scars of those moments were ripped open and once again I was flooded with tears and anguish.

Afterwards, I made my way to the Village Green, the town park. Children, teachers, and mothers had gathered to prepare small white bags with sand and candles. It was 11 am and time for A Global Voice of Peace prayer as I have been doing every month on the 11<sup>th</sup> since 9-11. The teachers gathered the children. We all stood together as I read my Global Voice of Peace prayer and then 1 minute of silence was shared. This was the first time I read this prayer out loud with a group. It touched me deeply.

The day continued on with volunteers filtering through the park to offer their support and service. By day's end, school children had ringed the perimeter of the Village Green with 3,000 white bags each filled with 1 candle. One of the students was moved to write 9-11 with candle bags in the center of the Village Green. The bags represented the approximate number of people who perished on that day. A bittersweet sight!

I had coordinated with the three local schools asking the children to express their thoughts and feelings about 9-11 & Peace. The response was overwhelming: 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> graders from all three schools contributed **Over 400 pieces** of the most heartfelt expressions of insight and depth. Nearly 15- 8'x4' wooden boards donated by a nearby lumber yard, displayed **Every** precious piece of artwork & essay created by these children.

The evening's ceremony began with the Mayor and Fire chief welcoming the community. When the Mayor introduced me, I came to the podium greeted by the sight of the display boards laid across the grass in front of the stage and lined up around the gazebo. Looking out at the audience, I was met with nearly 700+ beautiful smiling faces of people of all ages from varying nationalities, languages, cultures, and countries, as ours is a community of much diversity. The candle's soft glow ringing the park created a warm embrace of all those gathered. I was deeply moved by the sight.

As Creator and MC of the evening's ceremony, I dedicated the evening's program entirely to the children's voices. Twenty-five children offered to personally share their work with the audience. "The Greatest Love of All" played softly in the background as I introduced each child who chose to approach the microphone to read their story, poem, vision, or describe their drawing. Those gathered on the park grounds listened with respect, amazement, & sniffles as the children shared their inner most thoughts, feelings and insights of 9-11 and Peace.

One child who read his essay, had been in the vicinity when the towers collapsed. He began reading and burst into tears. I asked him if he wanted me to continue reading for him. He shook his head yes. I held him close to me. His body quivered with tears, fears and pain of the images of this day a year ago, as I continued to read his story.

The ceremony ended with a 4<sup>th</sup> grader singing "America the Beautiful" without the accompaniment of music. As she sang, the entire audience stood with a quiver in their voices as they joined in her song.

The skies roared with thunder and lightening electrifying the skies. In thanking everyone for their participation and contribution to this magnificent evening, I asked all to imagine Peace within themselves, with their families, community, and the world. The song "Imagine" played as everyone dispersed in silence.

As the last of the children's displays was protected under the gazebo, the heavens opened up and poured down its tears of remembrances for this significant day in our lives.

***A Global Voice of Peace*** was heard this evening, on earth and in the heavens above.

Blessings on those remembered and Blessings for Our Planet to be at Peace  
In Loving Spirit... Gylan



Key Biscayne Village Green: School children ringed the perimeter with 3000 candle bags each filled with 1 candle. The bags represented the approximate number of people who perished on that day.

9-11 written in candle bags was placed by one of the students on the center green...  
An amazing sight.

**Over 400 pieces** of the most heartfelt expressions of insight and depth displayed on 15- 8'x4' wooden boards donated by a nearby lumber yard.

Two of the displays by Key Biscayne's Schoolchildren



Stage & Gazebo area where the children spoke & their work was displayed

