

9-11-02 – A Day of Remembrances and Reminders

Today was filled with Remembrances and 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 our community, 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 20 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 11th since 9-11. The teachers gathered the children. We all stood together as I read my Global Voice of Peace prayer, my poem "Peace in the Silence" and then 1 minute of silence was shared. This was the first time I read these prayers out loud with a group. It touched us all deeply.

The day continued on with volunteers filtering through the park to offer their support and service. By day's end, 3,000 white bags each filled with 1 candle ringed the perimeter of the park. On the center green an 8th grader created the numbers 9-11 with the candle bags. An amazing sight.

I had coordinated with the 3 island schools, asking the children to express their thoughts and feelings about 9-11 and Peace through writings and drawings. The response was overwhelming. There were over 400 pieces of the most heartfelt expressions of insight and depth. 1st graders through 8th graders from all of the local schools contributed. 15- 8'x4' wooden boards were donated to us by a nearby lumber yard so we could display all the beautiful and precious outpourings from 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 hundreds of 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 initiator and MC of the evening's ceremony, I dedicated the evening's program entirely to the children's voices. 25 children offered to personally share their work with the audience. I introduced each child as they approached the microphone to read or describe their drawing as the song "the Greatest Love of All" played softly in the background. The hundreds of people gathered on the park grounds listened with respect and amazement as the children shared their inner most thoughts, feelings and insights of 9-11 and Peace. One child who came up to 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 and as his body quivered with tears, fears and pain of the images of this day a year ago, I continued to read his story.

The ceremony ended with a 4th grader singing "America the Beautiful" without the accompaniment of music. As she sang, the entire audience stood with tears in their eyes and a quiver in their voices joining her in song.

The skies began to roar with thunder and lightening electrified the skies. After 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 and everyone dispersed in silence.

After everyone was gone and the children's displays were 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 All of Us and Our Planet

In Loving Spirit... Gylian