On the Path to Peace: My Piece of Peace

The Rotary Club of Grand Forks is honoured to once again be involved with a group of inspired organizations in hosting the Second Annual Peace Gathering in Grand Forks on April 29, 2023, at the USCC Doukhobor Community Centre from 8:30 am until 3:45 pm. Our collaborators table includes: the Rotary Club of Grand Forks, the Baha’i and Doukhobor Communities, the Boundary All Nations Aboriginal Council, the Grand Forks Secondary School Global Citizenship Club and the Boundary Peace Initiative.

Our Peace Gathering title this year is ‘On the Path to Peace: My Piece of Peace’. After the Land Acknowledgment and welcome to the Doukhobor Centre by J.J. Verigin, the Boundary Metis Community Drummers will welcome everyone to the event, followed by prayer. We will then review the events and outcomes in our community that took place after our Peace Conference in 2022.

We are thrilled to have three internationally acclaimed presenters this year:

1. **David Langness: How You Can Make World Peace a Reality**

David Is a long time journalist and health care advocate for the poor, co-founder of Homeless Healthcare Los Angeles in 1985 and currently serves as president of Hospitality House, a non-profit homelessness service agency in Nevada County, California.

He is a journalist and literary critic for Paste Magazine, a music, popular culture and independent arts publication and is editor of BahaiTeachings.org.

David served as a conscientious objector medic during the Vietnam war. He then expanded his peacekeeping efforts around the world, conducting relief mission airlifts to multiple countries gripped by war and revolution.

1. **Maria Kliavkoff: Healthy Conversations** **in Difficult times**

Dedicating her free time to Rotary and peacebuilding worldwide, Maria is co-chair of District 5080 Peace Committee and a Rotary Peace Speakers Bureau presenter. She educates and inspires Rotarians to engage in peacebuilding worldwide. Currently she proudly serves as president of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park.

Maria is an Author, Keynote Speaker and Director of Healthy Mourning Revolution, a training company dedicated to revolutionizing the way we think about grief and mourning. She and her team are dedicated to creating Compassionate Grief Communities around the world.

*Maria’s presentation will be followed by paired conversations amongst attendees, and then personal reflections on ‘my piece of peace’ which will be shared in small groups.*

1. **Rocio Graham: Expressing My Piece of Peace through Art**

Rocio is a Mexican Canadian multidisciplinary artist, community activator and arts administrator based in western Canada. Graham is currently a peer residency coordinator for the Alberta University of the Arts Student Association, serves on the Board of SEITTES (a publication and gallery for contemporary analogue photography), founder of Santa Rosa Arts and Healing, and is an equity seeker community artist.

After Rocio Graham has set the stage for our afternoon activity, the Doukhobor Choir will close the morning and uplift our spirits with their a cappella singing.

Lunch will be a feast of ‘Borscht and Bannock’. Students from Grand Forks Secondary School will have helped prepare the bannock with Indigenous elders and helped prepare the borscht with the Doukhobor Women’s cooking group.

The lunch will be served according to Doukhobor tradition and is an incredible experience in itself.

Right after lunch, the Boundary Indigenous-led Heartbeat Drummers will call us all back to the afternoon session.

The GFSS Global Citizenship Club will share with us the activities and events they are currently involved with and have been engaged with over the past few years.

This will be followed by the esteemed Grand Forks Choral Society.

We then have the privilege of listening to renowned music composer, arranger, singer and harpist Caroline Mackay. Caroline has six full-length CDs of original music. She is known for her cheerful, engaging instruction to hundreds of beginning and intermediate students, that is founded on her 3 Level Celtic Harp Studies series. She has performed in multiple venues and around the world.

We will be back with Rocio Graham, leading us in the ‘My Piece of Peace’ community art project. Participants will then have the opportunity to share their ‘puzzle pieces’ that will become a collective art piece.

We will close with a wrap up; acknowledgements and a final song by Caroline Mackay.

There is no fee to register for our Peace Gathering and Lunch but donations will be gratefully accepted at the door. Registration forms are available locally at The Grand Forks Public Library, Dave Dale Insurance, and USCC Administration Office, as well as by email: peaceconference.gf@gmail.com