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Creating a Culture of Peace

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PREFACE

CREATING A CULTURE OF PEACE

War and violence have become a common topic that we hear and read about in the media on a daily basis. We are conditioned to regard violence as the solution to disagreements and problems. Yet, peace is the core issue for all humanity, but has resulted in many paradigms and paradoxes in its pursuit.

According to the Journal of the American Medical Association(Stark & Craft), a woman is battered every 15 seconds; as many as 70% of children who witness domestic violence are also victims of abuse themselves; and 2/3rds of men who abuse their wives also abuse their children. Children who grow up in a violent, abusive home have a 74% higher likelihood of committing criminal assaults in the U.S, and 81% of men who abuse their families had fathers who abused their mothers.

There is a need for all of us, adults, teens and children to view the world in a more peaceful light through education about nonviolent conflict resolution, peace-making events as well as to learn about the people who have dedicated their lives to the cause of peace.

The questions to ask are: Has society accepted violence as a norm? Can the cycle of violence be curbed and how? What kind of conditions would promote a change from a culture of violence to a culture of peace?

The Citizens for Peace have reflected on these questions and believe that there are options to consider. Beginning at the grassroots level in Livonia, one of the basic sources of information and education as well as a major support of the education system is the Livonia Public Library. After comparing the number of available books on peace with the books on war, the result is clearly in favor of war. To suggest that this outcome is a fault of the library would be in error. More accurately, it suggests that the broader culture has a higher interest in war and all that war represents. Hence, to help create a culture of peace there is a need to develop and promote a library peace collection describing peace movements, peace makers, Nobel Peace Prize winners and other materials emphasizing nonviolent solutions to conflicts.

This project of the Peace Collection for the Livonia Public Library is nearing the completion of Phase I. The Peace Collection bibliography will be an ongoing process as more materials are discovered. The entire bibliography have a link on the Livonia Civic Center Library Home Page. Phase II will be promoting this collection to the local educational institutions and the general public of this resource with a vision of shifting our culture to seeking ways to solve conflicts through nonviolence means thus creating a culture of peace.