

WE LOVE VOLUNTEERS!

OUR PROJECTS ARE ONLY A DREAM WITHOUT YOU. EVERY SUNDAY WE SETUP OVER 3800 CROSSES JUST A FEW FEET NORTH OF THE SANTA MONICA PIER, AND WE DEPEND ON THE STRONG SUPPORT WE HAVE GOTTEN FROM THE GREATER LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY SINCE WE FIRST BEGAN PUTTING CROSSES ON THE BEACH ON FEBRUARY 15, 2004.

THE PUBLIC IS ALWAYS INVITED TO INTERACT WITH THE MEMORIAL. WE ENCOURAGE THE PUBLIC TO ENGAGE THEIR HEARTS AND MINDS IN A TANGIBLE WAY WITH THE MEMORIAL BY SELECTING ANY NAME OF A FALLEN SOLDIER OR SAILOR, WRITE THEIR OWN THOUGHTS AND SENTIMENTS ON A PIECE OF PAPER, AND PLACE THAT ALONG WITH A FLOWER ON A MARKER.

MANY CROSSES CURRENTLY HAVE DEDICATIONS PLACED THERE BY LOVED ONES AND FRIENDS. THOSE WHO ACTUALLY KNEW THE INDIVIDUAL FOR WHICH A DEDICATION IS MADE WILL HAVE THAT DEDICATION/MEMENTO LAMENTED, WHICH WILL BE GIVEN A SPECIFIC LOCATION OUT AMONG THE CROSSES. A GOLD STAR IS PLACED ON DEDICATIONS MADE BY FAMILY MEMBERS OR OTHER CLOSE LOVED ONES WHILE THOSE THAT SERVED WITH OR WERE FRIENDS OF AN INDIVIDUAL HAVE A SILVER STAR AFIXED TO THE MEMENTO. WHERE THE MEMENTO WILL EVENTUALLY BE LOCATED IS DETERMINED BY THE SEQUENCE IN WHICH WE'VE RECEIVED THE DEDICATION, MAKING IT EASIER TO FIND AN INDIVIDUAL SHOULD THERE BE ANOTHER VISIT TO THAT INDIVIDUALS' MARKER. ARLINGTON WEST SANTA MONICA NOW HOLDS OVER 1200 SUCH DEDICATIONS WHICH ARE PLACED UPON OR AT THE DESIGNATED MARKER EACH AND EVERY SUNDAY BY OUR VOLUNTEERS.

WE INVITE ALL WHO EMBRACE THIS VISION TO JOIN US. PLEASE ARRIVE EARLY MORNING TO HELP SET UP, DURING THE DAY TO HELP MAINTAIN THE MEMORIAL AND MEMENTOS, OR TO ASSIST WITH TAKE DOWN STARTING AROUND 3:30 PM DURING THE WINTER.

WE ALSO OFFER COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS. TEACHERS AND STUDENTS, PLEASE CONTACT US FOR DETAILS. WE ALSO OFFER A 27 MINUTE VERSION OF THE ARLINGTON WEST FILM, SUITABLE FOR CLASSROOM USE. THIS FILM IS AN INVALUABLE TOOL FOR INTRODUCING STUDENTS TO THE MANY POINTS OF VIEW EXPRESSED BY VISITORS AT ARLINGTON WEST. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO EDUCATIONAL FACILITATORS, A CURRICULUM AND DISCUSSION GUIDE IS ALSO AVAILABLE ON OUR WEB SITE.

ARLINGTON WEST MEMORIAL IS NON-PARTISAN AND NON-SECTARIAN

VETERANS FOR PEACE, INC. (VFP) IS A NON-PROFIT 501(C)(3) EDUCATIONAL AND HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO THE ABOLISHMENT OF WAR. WWW.VETERANSFORPEACE.ORG

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 www.arlingtonwestsantamonica.org.

WELCOME TO ARLINGTON WEST SANTA MONICA

EVERY SUNDAY FROM SUNRISE TO SUNSET, A TEMPORARY MEMORIAL IS CREATED ON THE BEACH JUST NORTH OF THE WORLD FAMOUS PIER AT SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA, AND AT THE STERNS WHARF IN SANTA BARBARA, AS WELL AS OTHER LOCATIONS AROUND THE COUNTRY. THIS MEMORIAL, KNOWN AS ARLINGTON WEST, IS A PROJECT OF VETERANS FOR PEACE.

THE ARLINGTON WEST MISSION STATEMENT IS

- TO HONOR THE FALLEN AND WOUNDED
- TO PROVIDE A PLACE TO GRIEVE
- TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE HUMAN COST OF WAR
- TO ENCOURAGE DIALOGUE AMONG PEOPLE WITH VARIED POINTS OF VIEW
- TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE NEEDS OF THOSE RETURNING FROM WAR.

VISITING ARLINGTON WEST

VISITORS TO ARLINGTON WEST WILL SEE MANY PLACARDS PLACED ON SOME OF THE CROSSES. IN GRIEF OVER THEIR LOSS, MANY FAMILY MEMBERS HAVE DEDICATED THEIR OWN WORDS AND MEMENTOS TO THEIR LOVED ONES. POSITIONED NEARBY STANDS A "WALL" WHERE THE PUBLIC CAN VIEW THE FREQUENTLY UPDATED LIST OF NAMES OF FALLEN AMERICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL SINCE THE U.S. INVADED AND OCCUPIED IRAQ. VISITORS ARE WELCOME TO SELECT A NAME FROM HERE AND EXPRESS THEIR OWN THOUGHTS AND SENTIMENTS AND PLACE THESE ON A CROSS ALONG WITH A FLOWER PROVIDED FOR THIS PURPOSE.

VISIBLE AMONG THE SEA OF WHITE CROSSES IS A THREAD OF RED ONES, EACH ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF 10 MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO'VE LOST THEIR LIVES. REPRESENTING THOSE WHO'VE LOST THEIR LIVES WITHIN THE WEEK PAST ARE FLAG DRAPED COFFINS AND BLUE CROSSES.

BY THE END OF JANUARY 2008, USING THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S OWN "OFFICIALLY ACKNOWLEDGED" ACCOUNT, THE DEATH TOLL FOR U.S. ARMED FORCES ALONE HAS SURPASSED 3,900 - NOT INCLUDING COALITION FORCES, JOURNALISTS, OR PRIVATE SECURITY "CONTRACTORS".

AS THE NUMBERS OF MILITARY PERSONNEL LOST AND WOUNDED ARE ACKNOWLEDGED, A SIGN NEARBY BEGS ATTENTION TO THE NUMBER OF IRAQIS KILLED. JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY BLOOMBERG SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH, PUBLISHED A SURVEY IN THE LANCET MEDICAL JOURNAL IN OCTOBER OF 2006. THIS SURVEY, KNOWN AS THE "IRAQI MORTALITY SURVEY," SHOWED STATISTICALLY THAT SINCE THE U.S. INVASION OF MARCH 2003, THE NUMBER OF IRAQI DEATHS EXCEEDED 655,000. BY SEPTEMBER 2007, A PRESTIGIOUS BRITISH POLLING FIRM REVISED THIS NUMBER TO OVER 1 MILLION IRAQI DEATHS SINCE MARCH 2003. NEITHER OF THESE TWO STUDIES INCLUDE MORTALITY RATES FROM THE AFTERMATH OF THE GULF WAR OF 1991 OR THE IMPACT OF 12 YEARS OF SANCTIONS. IN ADDITION, AN ESTIMATED 2 MILLION IRAQI'S HAVE FLED THE VIOLENCE IN IRAQ, SEEKING REFUGE IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES.

AS OF FEBRUARY 2008, THE COST OF THE U.S. WAR IN IRAQ, SUBSIDIZED IN LARGE PART BY U.S. TAX DOLLARS, IS ESTIMATED TO BE BETWEEN \$350 TO \$720 MILLION PER DAY.

WE HAVE TO ASK: IS THIS ALL PROOF THE "SURGE" IS WORKING?

»Setting up Arlington West Sunday morning« Foto: Julie Dermansky

