

MEDIA ADVISORY
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Bring Them Home Now Tour Stops in Western Mass.

Gold Star and Military Families, Iraq War and other Vets bring message to 51 cities in 28 States, to Converge at Anti-War Rally in DC on September 24

MASSACHUSETTS – On Thursday, September 15, a bus on its way from Camp Casey in Crawford, Texas to Washington D.C. will arrive in Amherst, MA. Gold Star families, military families, Iraq Veterans and veterans of previous wars will participate in programs in Amherst and Greenfield.

WHO: Gold Star families, military families, Iraq veterans and veterans of previous wars. Local musical performers will include Sarah Pirtle, members of the Gypsy Wranglers, Tom Neilson and Morningstar and Moonlight, who is a Vietnam Vet.

WHAT: Area peace and justice groups host the Bring Them Home Now Tour

WHEN: Thursday, September 15

12PM Interfaith Service for the Human Family in the time of War and Natural Disaster

12:45PM Dedication of a memorial to the war dead. Reading of the names of the Massachusetts' soldiers who have died and a symbolic display of boots, led by The Rev. James Munroe, Vietnam Veteran, Board member of the Veterans Education Project, and other area veterans and military family members

4PM Press Conference, including student reporters and representatives

7PM "Straight From the Heart, Military Families, Vets, Speak Out, Sing Out for Loved Ones."

WHERE: All public events at Grace Episcopal Church, 14 Boltwood Ave. & the Amherst Common.

On August 31, the last day of the nearly month-long vigil outside Bush's ranch in Crawford, TX the Bring Them Home Now Tour launched three buses from Camp Casey, each carrying military and Gold Star families, veterans of the Iraq War and veterans of previous wars. The tour's first stop in Austin, Texas was met by 3,000 people. These buses will travel different routes across the country, converging in Washington, DC on September 21 for the United for Peace and Justice Mobilization September 24-26.

The tour will amplify the voices of Gold Star families, who show the devastating human cost of this war; the voices of military families, for whom each and every day that this war continues brings the potential for the most devastating of consequences, and the voices of veterans, who can share the ground truth about war and the impact on those who are sent off to fight it. At noon an interfaith memorial service will be held at Grace Episcopal Church, 14 Boltwood Ave. and will conclude with taps on the Common.

Casey Sheehan and all who have died in the war waged in Iraq will be honored with a 12-hour vigil on the Amherst Common. Set-up begins at 10am Thursday. Tents will echo the encampment by Cindy Sheehan, military families, and veterans outside the President's ranch in Crawford, Texas. Boots brought by the American Friends Service Committee commemorate the Massachusetts war dead. The public is invited to donate shoes to honor the Iraqi dead, and these shoes will be donated to Hurricane Katrina relief. Volunteers are welcomed to help. Tour members will also visit a peace studies class at Greenfield Community College during the afternoon and attend a press conference in the afternoon organized by Traprock Peace Center with special invitations to reporters from area college and high school newspapers and student peace or justice groups.

For further information on the tour, including a schedule of cities and dates, go to www.bringthemhomenowtour.org
Local co-sponsors include American Friends Service Committee, Amherst Vigil for Peace & Justice in a Nuclear Free World, Buddhist Peace Fellowship, Grace Church Peace Fellowship, Mt. Toby Affinity Group, Northampton Committee to Stop the War in Iraq, SAGE, Traprock Peace Center, Veterans for Peace (Wally Nelson Chapter 95), and Western Mass Interfaith Coalition for Peace & Justice.

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