

Dear VFP Members,

This is an extraordinary time in the United States, in the world-when we witness genocide committed against a people by a people who suffered a holocaust 80 years ago and cried never again—never again for them? For humanity? For all living things? When will we ever learn? And we find ourselves, those of us from the Viet Nam era, demonstrating once again in the streets against corporate power, against the elites that are destroying the world, against a president that seeks to destroy, to eliminate those who disagree with him, this bone spurs man who called us suckers and losers. So, let me begin by saying how fortunate it is to be in your company, you who recognize the evils in this country and work to makes this a better world for all of us.

This is my fifth year on the VFP Board of Directors, and my fourth year as President of the Board. We have come through tumultuous times together— in this country and on the national board. Thank you all for trusting me, the executive committee, and the board to bring us through a time of decreasing finances and dwindling membership exacerbated by political divisions and the isolation of the pandemic.

Let me take you back to February, 2022 when the Executive Committee reviewed our national bank account and learned that we were just able to meet payroll for the national staff-at half pay for the following two weeks. We called on you, our members, supporters, and donors to contribute and keep us functioning and developed a financial plan to move us through 2022. One of our active board members raised money through a substantial grant to help put funds back into our savings account. The VFP Executive Director worked with the national office staff and VFP Board of Directors until the end of 2022. We-the ExComm, Board, and VFP members- formed a Transition Committee that identified responsibilities of the national office and coordinated our work together—keeping the organization solvent and coordination, outreach, and communication functional. Mike Ferner applied for the job of Interim Executive Director and was amazing-reaching out to members, coordinating projects, and fundraising from March, 2023 until May 2024 when he moved to the position Director of National Projects. During these years, we recruited for the position of Executive Director, received a substantial number of resumes, interviewed multiple candidates. And, at the end of 2024 we formed a Search Committee of the Board that included Shelly Rockett. And, please join me in welcoming back Michael McPhearson who joined us early February, 2025.

Those years from 2022 were most stressful. We were faced with many additional issues that included political and personal disagreements in addition to the extraordinary financial problems. We-the VFP Board started to have meetings every two weeks as we came together with a major purpose: ensure the continued viability of Veterans For Peace. We worked together as a team; we resolved differences and disagreements, sought out assistance from members and kept trudging ahead. And we all became stronger and more knowledgeable—board members and national staff, members.

In 2022 the VFP Board through the By Laws Committee wrote a proposed change to the By Laws to honor and respect the partnership veteran members have with associate members by establishing an associate member seat on the National Board of Directors and expanding full voting rights to include bylaws, board elections, and resolutions.

Today we consistently track our finances and have over \$600,000 in operating, savings, and restricted accounts. We have transferred our money-checking and savings to Amalgamated Bank-founded by the Amalgamated Clothing workers of America nearly 100 years ago. It is considered the bank for the working people; the SEIU remains the largest shareholder. The board has implemented a policy that no money can be taken from savings account without board approval, and voted to have that decision reflected in our VFP Policies and Procedures. Many thanks to Mike Tork, treasurer, who over the past few years has maintained the budget, with reports at the monthly board meetings.

Josh Shurley, Chair of the Membership Committee tracks the new members by month and will give a positive report tracking the increase in VFP membership from last year. And, please, thank Paul Cox for those minutes of the Board-those detailed, documented notes from the Board of Directors meetings—in addition to his many other responsibilities in national Veterans For Peace, San Francisco VFP, the Vietnam Agent Orange Relief and Responsibility Campaign, American Legion, Veterans Healthcare Initiative, etc.

On September 25th, 2010 the Howard Zinn Fund was established in VFP. The Howard Zinn Fund for Peace and Justice endowment has been named in his memory to ensure that his legacy will continue through Veterans For Peace projects, services, and outreach. Each year a portion of the fund and proceeds are distributed to chapters based on their requests for support of a specific

project or program. This past year the board has funded two projects: 1) Support for the protests at the Holloman Drone Training Base in Alamogordo, New Mexico and 2) a project of the VFP Climate Crisis and Militarism Project to take action about No Military Air Shows that coordinates with other environmental and peace organizations to voice collective outrage protesting the US military's enormous contribution to the climate crisis as well as the tremendous financial burden of the cost of the military and depletion of resources for those in need. CCMP project to bring more attention to No Military Air Shows (No MAS) by mounting a van to travel to Blue Angels and Thunderbird airshows for 3 one-month bus tours, each visiting 3-5 airshows and join with other national groups. VFP's Climate Crisis and U.S. Militarism National Project continues to educate our members and the public about the connections between global warming and habitat destruction and the U.S. military.

VFP's most visible example of its anti-nuclear and peace position is ocean going sailboat the Golden Rule. A film has been produced about the Golden Rule. Gerry Condon: This film is more than a documentary, it's a vital opportunity for Veterans For Peace to reintroduce its mission to a world that needs it. In a time of growing nuclear threats, environmental collapse, and shrinking public trust, the Golden Rule story resonates deeply. What began in 1958 as a direct act of anti-nuclear resistance now sails again as a living, moving embodiment of VFP's values. The film doesn't just honor history, it calls people in. It invites new generations to understand peace as bold, creative, and necessary. This isn't nostalgia. It's an organizing tool. It's recruitment. And it's working. This film sparks conversation, grows membership, and restores visibility for VFP at a time when legacy organizations must evolve or fade.

Save Our VA presentations/meetings: This past year members of the group met with AFGE's National Lobbyist and with Minneapolis VAMC AFGE union leadership discussing workplace issues and SOVA's activities. Members also gave five presentations on SOVA and did interviews on two national radio shows: Friendly Fire out of Maine and Radio Free Nashville. SOVA members were invited by Minnesota Representative Ilhan Omar, who organized an August 2nd PACT Act Round Table led by Representative Omar & House Committee on Veterans Affairs (HCVA) Ranking Member Mark Takano.

Peace & Planet News is a powerful anti-war, anti-genocide, anti-fascist and pro-peace publication produced in a way that everyday people can understand and appreciate. Some of the best independent journalists as well as many veteran writers present the

case for peace, justice and the planet in down-to-earth language. This is a Veterans For Peace publication and the articles and stories in it are by some of the best journalists in the world. To our VFP members, I encourage you to get a copy, go through the pages, read it, and I believe you will understand why this is such an important newspaper to keep with you and hand out wherever you go. Please help distribute widely.

The Merchants of Death War Crimes Tribunal is a two-year project that gathered evidence of war crimes, crimes against humanity and support of genocide by Lockheed Martin, Boeing, RTX (formerly Raytheon) and killer drone maker General Atomics. Documentation is provided in 37 video episodes that include narrative reports and interviews. Along with World Beyond War, held a mock war crimes tribunal for holding MIC corporations accountable for crimes and complicity in crimes. Created recommendations to address the conduct of these companies and the growth of the MIC and its hijacking of the federal budget. Delegations delivered a group of subpoenas to MIC officials to create a narrative about holding these vultures accountable. Raised awareness of the MIC and its issues surrounding Armistice Day. Tribunal jurors included: VFP members Matthew Hoh and Ann Wright and VFP Advisory Board member Marjorie Cohn. To see the evidentiary episodes, statements of the jurors and recommendations of the tribunal: merchantsofdeath.org

The Rising Together Theater Company uses the transformative power of theater as a catalyst for education, civil discourse, and civic engagement. We link the issues of supremacy, equity, militarism, and sustainability across generations and identities and focus on underserved communities. We are a unique talkback theater company engaging diverse audiences in conversations about war and violence, community and communication, and human rights and ecosocial justice. Through free performances of thought-provoking short plays and moderated talkbacks, we engage diverse audiences in meaningful conversations centered on social justice, environmental awareness, and community building.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention those special projects developed by Mike Ferner: VFP Letter to State Dept on US complicity in Genocide by arming Israel: In February we sent our letter to the U.S. State Dept Inspector General and followed it up in March by delivering it to 16 domestic DOS offices. Several chapters also used it during the Sept. Days of Solidarity with Palestine actions. Students used it at campus protests, Fed4Peace distributed through USG offices, LOTS of circulation. ● Appeal for Redress v2: <https://www.veteransforpeace.org/>. It's going slowly, but c.o. applicants Joy Metzler, Larry Hebert and Juan

Betancourt started “Servicemembers for Ceasefire” to promote it with active duty, national guard and reservists. ● Student pledge started by Jack Gilroy and Nick Mottern. Met with Jack and Cornell students last month. They love working with VFP and we’re helping them promote the pledge ● VFP statement issued: AIPAC’s War on Democracy .

The Veterans & Allies Fast for Gaza began May 22 when six members of Veterans For Peace and allies traveled to New York City to stand at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations. It grew to over 800 people across the country, including small groups in South Africa, Canada, Italy, Germany, Ireland, Hong Kong and Australia. New York – “We did what we came to do. We made many thousands of people focus on the starvation and murder politicians are funding in Palestine with our money,” said organizers of the “Veterans & Allies Fast for Gaza.” “Our slogan has been ‘40 Days and Escalate.’ That time has come,” they added. “Our demands of full humanitarian aid to Gaza under U.N. authority and no more weapons to Israel have not been met”. The fasters at the U.N. and many of the others have limited themselves to 250 calories per day, considered medically to be a starvation diet and the amount reported early this year as the average available to Gazans. Others conducted Ramadan-type fasts or other variations. Southside neighbor Bill Hatton, a Vietnam veteran nearly completely paralyzed by Agent Orange, is anticipating death. He had two final wishes: to feel grass under his feet one more time and to protest war with his Vets for Peace colleagues. He wanted to join the daily Vets for Peace fast and vigil protest in solidarity with the starving children in Gaza in downtown Minneapolis, but his medical condition made that inadvisable. When the Vets learned this, they decided to come to him, moving their vigil near the Minnesota Veterans Home where Bill is in hospice. Thirty vets and friends joined in a moving demonstration of love and resistance. After the ceremony, his comrades supported him as he got his feet on the grass! Comment from Dave Logsdon: There are events that make you so grateful that you have chosen this path.

In October, 2024 and April, 2025 Chapter 160 Vietnam Educational Tour, coordinated by Chuck Searcy and Paul Cox with the donations of several thousands of dollars to various organizations in Vietnam that help victims of the two remaining and ongoing legacies of the American War—Agent Orange/dioxin and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO’s). Each person on the tour donates \$1,000.

In a powerful demonstration of international solidarity, seven members of Veterans For Peace

(VFP) visited Nicaragua in mid-to-late March as an official VFP delegation. Veterans from five U.S. states flew to Nicaragua on March 19 for a week-long visit to community clinics, regional colleges, vocational schools, youth groups and mayors in several Nicaraguan cities, including the capital Managua, Matagalpa, Masaya and Ciudad Sandino. The veterans were most impressed to learn that Nicaragua, the third poorest country in the western hemisphere, is providing free, high quality healthcare and education for all its people. Thank you, Gerry Condon for your great work in coordinating and reporting this trip.

This past year Veterans For peace has issued ten statements/call to action:

- Veterans Condemn Israel's U.S.-Backed Attack on Iran and the Deployment of the Military in U.S. Cities
- We Condemn the Attack on The Freedom Flotilla
- War No More, A Memorial Day Statement
- Veterans For Peace Celebrates the Gaza Ceasefire and Pledges to Defend It
- Pete Hegseth Is a Terrible Choice for Defense Chief – Veterans For Peace
- Veterans For Peace Applauds Israeli Soldiers Who Refuse to Fight in Gaza
- End Washington's New McCarthyism
- Veterans Call for Indictment of Blinken
- AIPAC's War on Democracy
- Veterans in 25 Cities Demonstrate for Gaza

And, despite all of our positive work, we are in this most destructive time, with our country governed by monsters collaborating with monsters committing genocide on a people and country thousands of miles from our shores—those military industrialists who have control through their greed and power. For some people, the easiest path through life is to turn away, simply move through their lives, abrogating responsibility—but not Veterans For Peace. Thank you all for your passion and belief that we can make changes, that we must work to stop this genocide in Gaza, that we must work to stop the kidnappings by ICE in our communities, that we can save veterans health care services and health care for those in need, that we must save our educational institutions.....

And, a special mention to the Inner Peace Working Group and Gerry Werhan: "Do We Have the Peace Inside Ourselves to Power the Peace that Our World Desperately Needs?" The genesis of this revival is a collaboration between Chapter 99, Western

North Carolina, represented by members Gerry Werhan and Craig Klawuhn (Klaw voon) and a local advocacy group, Peace Is Possible NC. Their initial, but not the only, offering

is the presentation of the Peace Education Program provided both in-person and virtually, at no cost by the Prem Rawat Foundation. Gerry has been here for the convention distributing information and talking to anyone he could find who yearns for peace and remaining sane while working at it. Ads have been running online and will appear in the commemorative booklet to be provided to attendees in the weeks ahead. His and Craig's contact information is not hard to find among all the information made available.

It is a pleasure to witness the growth of VFP members in the organization and your extraordinary activism on behalf of peace, justice, democracy. At the national level we continue our work to assist in the formation of national projects and chapters, assist local work as needed, send out communications via enews about local, national, and international activism, respond to local concerns, and assist in resolving issues as they come along. This past year the national board has continued to accept additional responsibilities and moved along board committees including Communications and Mobilization with Gerry Condon as chair and Transformative Justice with Kelly Wadsworth, reforming issues and priorities throughout this past year.

A reminder to those of you who are interested in the issues and deliberations of the national VFP board: the monthly meetings are open and we welcome your attendance, ideas, concerns. The meetings are on zoom-regular meeting format so all participants are seen if they wish. They are the third Saturday of the month at 12:40pm ET. The zoom link is posted on the VFP website and in the Enews. Thank you all for the work you do to save the planet and all living things.

And, if you've gotten inspired by this Business Meeting, please contact Ellen Barfield and run for election to the board! There are four board of director positions open this election cycle. You have until seven days following the close of the annual Business Meeting to submit an application to run for the board.

Yours in peace,
Susan