



Exposing the True Costs of War and Militarism Since 1985

VETERANS FOR PEACE

Organized locally. Recognized Internationally.

VFP Newsletter

Winter 2018



ELEEN DAVIDSON

Forging Ahead A Special Message to Veterans, Supporters and Friends from VFP Board President Barry Ladendorf

On Friday, December 1, 2017, as my wife and I got ready to enjoy the last few days of a Hawaiian vacation celebrating our wedding anniversary, we found slipped under our hotel room door a note alerting us to the day's monthly test of Hawaii's statewide warning-siren system. This particular test would include a new, one-minute "attack warning" (or "bomb warning" as the locals called it). In a real attack, people would have about twenty minutes after hearing the not-so-subtle wailing sound to find shelter or perhaps say their good-byes. Welcome to the brink of nuclear war.

After nearly 11 months of the Trump presidency, our constitution is in shambles, bomb warnings are commonplace to many of our citizens, we have said no to alleviating climate change, and war continues unabated in the Middle East as more U.S. troops enter the fray.

VFP, however, is forging ahead. Take a look at the activities of our chapters across the country and internationally: we sent

delegations to Palestine and Okinawa; Mike Hanes and Rory Fanning embarked on a second speaking tour to Japan (the home of our newest chapter); Chapter 67 in Long Beach has initiated a program for developing peace clubs in Long Beach high schools; and in San Diego the NO MAS Campaign (No Miramar Air Show) completed its second successful year of drawing attention to the wasteful and polluting military air show which is a front for mass indoctrination of children and adults that war is a glorious adventure.

There is much more we can and must do to sound our own warnings. Get ready to participate.

Previously, I told you about an International Veterans Peace Conference that Veterans For Peace will be holding in New York in November 2018. The conference is planned to coincide with the 100th Anniversary of the armistice that stopped the fighting and would finally lead to a peace treaty months later, essentially ending World War I, "the war to end all wars." The Executive Director of the United Nations Department of Public Information Executive Committee enthusiastically supports the conference and has continually been assisting our efforts.

In October, our VFP planning committee held a successful meeting in New York. On October 5, VFP Board and planning committee member Brian Trautman and I met with the Republic of Vanuatu's Permanent Representative to the U.N., Ambassador Tevi. After the meeting, Ambassador Tevi announced Vanuatu would endorse and sponsor the conference, ensuring that VFP will have access to the grounds of the U.N. for part of the conference. Two of the three main issues to be discussed at the International Veterans Peace Conference—the abolition of war and the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons—are founding principles of VFP.

The Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

On July 7, 2017, U.N. member states overwhelmingly passed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, also known

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Changing Our War Culture Starts at Home



JONATHAN CLARK, NOGALES INTERNATIONAL

By Michael McPhearson,
Executive Director, Veterans For Peace

As we rush to meet challenges that appear to immediately threaten all of humanity—like nuclear proliferation—or just hundreds of thousands of people—like war on the Korean Peninsula—we often set aside other issues to be dealt with later. But the last few months provide very significant examples of why it is important to see peace as more than just the absence of war, and that cultivating justice on all fronts provides the fertilizer and topsoil needed for seeds of peace to sprout and grow. I do not believe peace can prosper in the depleted and poisonous dirt of fear, racism, and sexual assault.

Watching the news, I see a multitude of injustices, both at home and abroad. The anti-immigration and racist attitudes dominating domestic headlines are also central to U.S. wars. The dehumanization inherent in racism creates a xenophobic environment. White supremacy beliefs fuel anti-immigration sentiment. Fanning the flames of fear and hate provides cultural legitimacy to calls for the killing of Muslims and all non-White “enemies” of the U.S., boosting politicians’ ability to rationalize U.S. wars and military actions that dehumanize us all.

But possibly the most visible topic of the last few months has been sexual misconduct and assault. This, in my estimation, is perhaps the most important ingredient in war. I believe patriarchy stands alone as the foundation for war today. Not just U.S. wars, but war as a human activity. By that I do not mean that patriarchy is the cause of war. But I do see it as the reason war has become nearly universally accepted as a primary tool for solving international conflicts.

This is not an indictment of men. It is rather a call to change the global culture men have created. A culture that pushes aside nurturing characteristics and life-affirming values—values that both men and women share, but have been designated as feminine and weak—in favor of values and behaviors that are considered masculine and strong. This is dangerously out of balance.

With few exceptions, wars are declared, planned, and

fought by men. The policies that create the conflicts that lead to war are decided primarily by men. In fact, women are one of the spoils of war; for centuries, rape has been used in war as a tool of domination. But male domination extends far beyond war. Men’s physical and intellectual interpretation of the world dominates nearly every facet of culture. All of society’s main institutions—family, education, religion, government, our economic systems—are based on philosophies and structures developed by men. And while, historically, there have been a few women in most fields of discipline, only recently, as in the last few centuries or so, have women—through fierce struggle with men—achieved the freedom to influence these institutions and begin to change their direction.

Of course, there is nothing wrong with masculinity per se, but there is something profoundly wrong with values and actions that belittle and devalue other ways of being. U.S. blogger Amanda Marcotte, who writes on feminism and poli-

“Watching the news, I see a multitude of injustices, both at home and abroad... But possibly the most visible topic of the last few months has been sexual misconduct and assault.”

tics, defines toxic masculinity as “a specific model of manhood, geared towards dominance and control.” I use this definition because dominance and control are the primary characteristics of war and U.S. foreign policy. There is no doubt that the whole point of war is to dominate and control, no matter if you are the aggressor or defender. Killing is the ultimate form of domination and control. It is the most godlike act a person can take over another. Unfortunately, we now have a culture where domination and control are seen as the main way to solve all problems. Force and the threat of force is how we—the U.S.—dominate the world: We know best, and we must make all follow our way and/or bend to our will.

If we look nearly anywhere around the world, we see men dominating women and children. Men are taught that we must be strong, that we must suppress our emotions, that we must be in control, and that violence is the way to solve problems. As small boys, most men are taught not to cry. Show no emotion, we are told: “Be a man.” We are taught that war is the ultimate test of our manhood. Violent activities short of war—football, boxing and fighting—are close enough to use as a yardstick for measuring manhood. But war is the ultimate test; soldiers the ultimate men.

The drive to control is unrelenting, and constantly seeks out

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WHAT THE VETERAN SAID

They taught me weapons, but I never fought;
I was only a clerk, so I told my kids.
But cover my head with a broad-brimmed hat
If I must go out (the veteran said):
The sunshine is clean but I am not.

Those bar girls, to me, were never hot;
I was never there when the whore's hand
Trickled up my thigh till she asked for a drink.
But draw the blinds (the veteran said):
The sunshine is pure and I am not.

I never heard it when the mother caught
A bullet and the small child wailed.
I never saw blood pooling beneath
My friend's stretcher on the Huey's deck.
The sunshine is true and I am not.

The land gives judgment but the sea does not:
That sobbing old woman they detained,
All those sad-eyed prisoners—I never saw a one.
But keep me afloat, far from the land,
Sail me under the darkest clouds.

I must not be touched by a thing so fine:
The sunlight falls straight, but I do not.

(In Euripides' *Heracles Furens*, Heracles covers his head so
as not to pollute the sun by contact with him, after what
he has done.)

Paul Woodruff is a scholar of classical Greek at the University of Texas in Austin. Woodruff served as an officer in Vietnam with the U.S. Army, 1969–71.

WAS STARLIGHT ENOUGH?

The blanket of darkness,
Before it bleeds out of the sky
At dawn, should be safe
For every living thing.

The stars point us the right
Way but do not show us
Predators or Prey.
Unless we amplify
Star power.
Was starlight enough
To know that the blurred figures
Lurching toward us in the eyepiece
Of our stolen starlight scope
Were to be killed?

The scope magnified every photon
In green till we thought we could see
What was what, in 1970
In Cambodia, where we were not
Supposed to be at all.

Who were these runners?
And who were we by starlight?
How much light must I have
(Or make) to see the truth
Of life or enmity or love?

PAUL WOODRUFF

new people and places to dominate. The drive is so strong that service members are not safe with each other. A May 1, 2017 *Military.com* article noted there were 6,172 reports of military sexual assault in 2016, an increase of 89 from 2015.

The need to dominate leaves little room for varying one's behavior. One can never seem weak; so behaviors like backing down, talking things through, and sharing of emotions are not allowed. This very limited range of behaviors leads to single-minded escalation and suicidal actions. We have seen this over and over in the rhetoric between North Korean President Kim Jong Un and U.S. President Trump.

Many studies show how toxic masculinity drives violence and conflict within our society. A "new normal" of frequent mass shootings and rampant sexual assault has emerged from this toxic masculinity framework. But like climate change

deniers, many of us men, both conservative and progressive, revolutionary and reactionary, either deny the role of patriarchy in violence and war, or downplay it. And like all groups challenged to give up privilege, we men are very reluctant to give up ours, no matter how deadly it is to others or to ourselves.

I call on all members of VFP, but especially us men, to take up the struggle against male supremacy in your lives and within Veterans For Peace. We cannot fully address war if we do not confront patriarchy, and the best place to begin that struggle is in places we can most directly impact—our own lives. I can assure you it will be very hard, because the norms have been taught to us, and drilled into us, since birth. But we can do it, because we envision a better world and we are willing to do what it takes to bring it about.

Reflections on the 2017 VFP National Convention



BECKY LUENING

VFP members served as walking billboards when out and about in downtown Chicago.

Shifting Paradigms

Frank T. Fitzgerald, Associate Member & Chair, 2017 Convention Host Committee

VFP's annual convention is a venue for discussing organizational business, absorbing new ideas, reconnecting with old friends, and much more. But there's one important purpose that I think needs special emphasis: Using the convention to reach out locally to potential new members and allies as a way of bolstering the work and influence of the host chapter and ultimately of VFP as a whole.

We did some of this in Chicago, but, I think, not nearly enough, nor effective-

ly enough. At National's initiative, for example, we put together a public event with vets speaking out on issues of wide interest; we helped promote the *Power to Peace* concert that all hoped would have wide appeal; and we closed the convention with a march through downtown Chicago. Only the last of these attracted a noticeable, but still small, number of participants from outside VFP.

No room here for full diagnosis, but some observations: First, members of the host committee clearly preferred to work on arranging workshops and speakers rather than reaching out to local activists and activist organizations. Second, views emerged that ran counter to focusing on such outreach (too large a convention might become unmanageable; too many non-vet participants might turn us into a peace rather than a vets' organization, etc.). Third, because our theme was "Education Not Militarization," I proposed attracting public school teachers with a deeply discounted registration fee, but this never gained traction, and I failed to come up with an alternative that would.

This is not to suggest that we Chicagoans didn't pull off an impressive convention—We did!—or that everyone at National and on the local host committee didn't put in a lot of hard and effective work—Everyone did! But I am suggesting that future VFP convention organizers would serve their chapter and all of VFP by trying to focus more

effectively than we did in Chicago on leveraging the convention to reach out to local activists and activist organizations.

Peace and Plenty

Miles Megaciph, VFP Member & Power to Peace Concert Coordinator

I feel this year's convention was more eye opening for me, due to my conversations and interactions with fellow veterans, despite my being more busy this year. Throughout my days and nights talking with Sarah Mess, Brittney Chan-tele, and Lloyd Hines, I learned that I



ELEEN DAVIDSON

Miles Megaciph performs at the Friday night Power to Peace Concert in Chicago.

have been suffering from PTSD all these years, even though I never saw combat. While sharing our stories, I learned that there are many others like me who have seen and experienced extreme trauma while serving time in the military and most of us don't make the connections between these traumas and the situations that we grapple with for years or a lifetime after.

While walking along the shore with Mike Hanes, I discovered I had latent guilt from my time in Okinawa, and the awakening to subconscious knowledge that I could have done something about it then. While serving in Okinawa, I was mentally "checked out," but I wanted to finish my tour for the benefits—benefits I never got to see anyway.

Continued on next page ...



BECKY LUENING

Members of VFP Japan proudly display their banners. Left to right: Rachel Clark, Takao Izutsu (former SDF ranger, VFP Japan president), Maki Toyama, and Masaki Hirata.



Sarah Mess at the Poetry Reading.

ELLEN DAVIDSON

Convention reflections continued...

An exchange overheard in front of the hotel taught me that the right way to “thank” a veteran for his or her service is to simply ask about their service, rather than blindly thanking people who may very well feel guilty about their tour(s).

Russell Johnson introduced me to Anna Bedinger, an associate member here in Kansas City, and we have worked together since. We are currently beginning to write a children’s book together, on peace.

These past three years working with VFP have been a whirlwind of awakening, bringing me to a new plateau at this year’s convention in Chicago. In both San Diego and Berkeley I was able to participate in some of the workshops, however this year I was not able to participate in even one workshop, due to the workload around organizing the

concert. But the conversations were as enriching as ever. Each year these conversations have been vital to my personal growth and development; they have inspired me to come back home and do even more of the most important work of my life.

Inspiration to Go

Monisha Rios, VFP Member & VFP National Board Member

My first VFP National Convention was an unforgettable experience. I was inspired by meaningful conversations with guests like Johnnie Aseron and Matthew Lone Bear, as well as with members from all walks who each in their own way spoke truth to power in support of much-needed paradigm shifts in VFP’s organizational culture.

I am still motivated by those dialogues, especially toward looking at



Mike Hastie gives an update on his My Lai mural restoration project at the Vietnam Full Disclosure workshop.

ELLEN DAVIDSON

how we get there together. How do we “do” peace at home in VFP—so that our deeds match our words? How do we grow as people and become stronger allies to one another in this very important work of waging peace? How do



ELLEN DAVIDSON

Jay Wenk at the Poetry Reading. Jay was officially named VFP’s new Poet Laureate, in a ceremony with outgoing poet Doug Rawlings at the banquet.

we navigate the pressures of it without getting knocked down (or knocking each other out) due to burnout? How do we break free of the internal “isms”—some coming from those toxic remnants of military culture—that hold us back from achieving our mission and purpose as veterans who are for peace?

More than anything, I walked away refueled by the ingenuity and tenacity of forward-thinking VFPers, visionaries who see the untapped potential that lies in our continuous movement toward truly inclusive peace work.

Forging Ahead ... Continued from page 1

as the Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty, the first legally binding international agreement to comprehensively prohibit nuclear weapons, and a solid step on the path leading toward their total elimination. For the treaty to become effective, signature and ratification by at least 50 countries is required. For those nations party to the treaty, it prohibits the development, testing, production, stockpiling, stationing, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons, as well as assistance and encouragement to the prohibited activities. For nuclear-armed states joining the treaty, it provides a time-bound framework for negotiations leading to the verified and irreversible elimination of its nuclear weapons programs.

VFP stands ready to embrace and promote the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Doing so will coincide with VFP’s Campaign to Ban Nuclear Weapons—the theme of *The Golden Rule’s* 2017 Summer Cruise along the West Coast of California. At the U.N. conference, we will have speakers knowledgeable about the treaty, and hopefully veterans and experts from around the world who can help us devise a plan to influence member nations of the U.N. to adopt and ratify it.

Abolition of War

On August 27, 1928, a treaty that has been assigned to the dust bin of history was signed in Paris. The treaty is formally

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Take action: Defend Our V.A. from Privatization!

Congress is debating whether and how to dismantle the Veteran Health Administration (VHA) part of the VA. We need to let the public know that not only is Affordable Care Act (ACA) under attack, so is the VHA.

This is a national disgrace! Our veterans didn't serve our country just to come back to wait in line for care or fight with big hospital corporations in the private sector. Vets want high quality care from their local VA hospital. That's what veterans deserve for the sacrifices they have made.



Demonstrating in NE Portland, Oregon, on Armistice Day, left to right: Cindy Feist, AFGE National Organizer, Ian Hoffmann AFGE Legislative and Political Organizer, Kimberly Bump, Professional Vice President of AFGE Local 2157 (Portland VA), Dan Shea, Board of Directors, Veterans For Peace, and Dave Bump, Vice President of AFGE Local 2157 and National Rep for the National Veterans Affairs Council.

Forging Ahead ... Continued from page 5

known as The General Treaty for the Renunciation of War as an Instrument of National Policy (the Peace Pact) or more commonly known in the U.S. as the Kellogg-Briand Pact. By the terms of this 1928 international agreement, the signatory states promised not to use war to resolve "disputes or conflicts of whatever nature or of whatever origin they may be, which may arise among them." The nations also pledged to resolve their differences by peaceful means. To date, the pact remains in effect and has been signed by 69 of 193 U.N. member nations including the U.S., Russia, China, France, Great Britain, Germany, Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, and virtually every NATO country. Bosnia and Herzegovina joined in 1994.

Of course, the treaty did not live up to expectations to "end all wars." Wars continued, militarism was not abated, and conflict remained. But was the treaty a complete failure? In their recent book, *The Internationalist: How a Radical Plan to Outlaw War Remade the World*, released this fall, Oona Hathaway and Scott Shapiro, international law professors at Yale Law School, argue it was not. They acknowledge that while the pact has not stopped war, it has changed the face of international law: War and the conquest of territory once considered legal is now illegal; the pact provided the basis for prosecuting war

While the VA is not perfect, dismantling it is not a solution, and will not improve care for our vets. Instead, it will degrade and eliminate care, and transfer billions of taxpayer dollars to for-profit private health providers. The VA will be reduced to a mere payer of medical bills and the VA's hospitals and clinics will be gutted. No private-sector provider can supply the comprehensive care that the VHA provides and veterans desperately need!

For a list of bills and important resources introduced in the U.S. Congress around this issue, go to www.ffvhc.org (Fighting for Veterans Healthcare) and click on News & Analysis.

Here is a simple action you can take: Call 1.833.480.1637, enter your zip code and you will be connected to your congressional office. Please leave a message for your U.S. House Representative, and then call two more times and leave a message for your U.S. Senators. Tell them:

"Hello this is [name] and I am a veteran who lives in [city/state]. I'm calling to ask you to fill the 49,000 vacancies at the VA. Please do NOT privatize the VA. Fully fund the VA in the 2018 budget. Thank you!"

The above telephone number and congressional contact system is sponsored by the American Federation of Government Workers (AFGE). This union represents over 220,000 VA workers and the VFP Work Group works with their members and staff.

To join VFP's "Stop VA Privatization, Fix, Fund and Fully Staff the VA" working group, please email Buzz Davis at dbuzzdavis@aol.com or call 608-239-5354.

crimes and, in particular, "aggressive war" against the Nazis and Japan and later at the International Court of Criminal Justice; It had a major influence in the formation of the U.N.; and it established the principle that a coerced agreement was, under international law, no agreement at all.

What impact would it have on the U.N. and the nations of the world if the pact again was brought to light and, one by one, the remaining states signed and ratified the treaty and said no to war? At the conference, we plan to discuss how we can energize veterans and others to join us in a campaign to lobby countries at the U.N. to sign the Kellogg-Briand Pact. If a radical pact, signed 90 years ago next year, was able to change the world, maybe bringing the pact to the forefront of the world peace movement these many years later will change the way we pursue peace today.

No matter how you usher in the coming new year, let us stand together to make our International Veterans Peace Conference a success, to encourage nations to sign the Treaty to Ban Nuclear Weapons, and to revive the Kellogg-Briand Pact. Recognizing what the treaty and pact have already done gives us renewed hope of each agreement's possibility to foment our cause for peace. Happy Holidays to all!

Barry Ladendorf

President, Board of Directors, Veterans For Peace, Inc.

Veterans For Peace Chapter Reports

#1 – Portland, ME

The Tom Sturtevant Chapter has again produced an 18-month calendar with portraits by Robert Shetterly, from his series, “Americans Who Tell the Truth.” These are primarily given to educators to be used in the classroom to expose students to “activists” who have made a difference.

Chapter 1 had a three-day presence in the Social and Political Action tent at the huge Common Ground Country Fair. Many great conversations, many VFP brochures handed out, many calendars distributed, and many cash donations accepted.

The Maine Peace Walk, held in Bath this year, included vigils held outside the shipyard, leafleting in the community, evening programs and discussions and music. The theme of the walk was, “Conversion, Community and Climate.”

Richard Clement

#7 – Los Angeles, CA

This February 15th will mark 14 years that we have put up the “Arlington West Memorial” in Santa Monica every Sunday. We’ve had thousands of visitors these past few months, and Armistice Day was honored with lots of visitors to our 4-by-8-foot map of the world showing the “footprint” of the U.S. military on our world, and its tremendous cost.

Students from Fairfax High School spent many Sundays with us, and the help was much appreciated. On two different occasions, 60 students from the San Pedro peace club came out to spend the day with us, and we had a good dialogue.

We are giving out tents and sleeping bags to the homeless. We raised \$2,500 for 250 sleeping bags, all given out.

We hosted the crew of *The Golden Rule*, much appreciated by all. We’ve attracted new volunteers and welcomed them into our family. Thank you, Veterans For Peace in St. Louis!

Ed Ellis



A strong showing of Chapter 1 members (20+) line the street in Portland, ME, on Armistice Day. With VFP flags waving in the cold air, they welcomed home veterans marching in the parade.

#11 – Santa Cruz, CA

It has been a busy year for the George Mizo Chapter, with plenty of challenging issues to face. We have chosen to work closely with other peace groups, against militarization (especially of the local police), in support of the homeless, and for gender balance. Earlier this year, we helped organize, participated in, and did educational tabling at a very large and energetic Women’s March.

We have hosted screenings of several movies, including *Paying the Price for Peace*, with speaker S. Brian Willson, and *Do Not Resist*, with speaker Norm Stamper, former Seattle police chief and police reformer (as a part of the “Reel Work” May Day Labor Film Festival). We also hosted Medea Benjamin on her speaking tour for her new book about Saudi Arabia, *Kingdom of the Unjust*.

We organized community events with SCRAM (Santa Cruz Residents Against Militarization); events to mark the anniversaries of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; and events to welcome and celebrate the visit of *The Golden Rule* peace boat.

We gathered to promote Armistice Day and oppose the movement toward war with Korea, and have begun planning for a larger event on the theme of Armistice Day—possibly a parade in 2018 for the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I.

Our chapter is key in organizing and

putting on the Veterans Community Thanksgiving (and Christmas) Dinner(s)—feeding more than 1,200 at each.

Harry Meserve

#21 – New Jersey

Chapter members participated in the peace contingent of the Teaneck July 4th parade with Military Families Speak Out (MFSO) and other activists.

We held our annual barbecue in August and were delighted that many friends from Chapter 34 in New York City attended. James Williams of Chapter 34 spoke about his work with the Ramapough Nation. Then, in September, members attended the VVAW 50th anniversary celebration in NYC at which many of our members spoke.

On November 4th we participated in a veterans-themed parade in Jersey City. Chapter member Jim Fallon was designated an “Honored Veteran” by the City of Jersey City for the day. The Chapter had taken part in the planning of the parade with city officials for over six months.

Finally, on November 11th, members participated in the NYC Armistice Day parade along with members of Chapter 34, VVAW, Raging Grannies, the Granny Peace Brigade, and a large group of Japanese peace activists.

Wendy Fisher

Chapter Reports continued on next page...

Chapter Reports *continued*

#34 – New York City

The Kaufman/Pahios Chapter celebrated commutation of sentences of Chelsea Manning and Oscar Rivera; we marched with Oscar in the Puerto Rican Day Parade, and for Chelsea in the Pride Parade.

Chapter's 2017 Agenda: opposition to VA privatization, Islamophobia, outreach and education. Chapter Projects: Agent Orange, Elected Civilian Review Board, and Move the Money.

Monthly Meeting Topics: Standing Rock; Rachel Clark re Japan tour; VA Privatization; Michael McPhearson re VFP National Office; Nuclear Weapons Ban; Sherry Fine re Haiti; Ken Shelton re BLM; Meredith Reitman re SURJ; Counter-Recruitment; Skip Delano re GI and Veterans Anti-war Movement Exhibit; Vietnam Full Disclosure Campaign; and About Face: Veterans Against the War (formerly IVAW).

We participated in demonstrations, parades, educational events, peace vigils, marches, rallies, counter-recruitment activities, and film screenings with our many allies. Highlights include women's marches in both D.C. and New York City; a 50th Anniversary Reading of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Beyond Vietnam" speech; the People's Climate Mobi-



Over 100 marchers joined Chapter 34's contingent in New York City's Armistice Day Parade.

BUD KOROTZER

lization; Memorial Day Observance; and August commemoration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki anniversaries.

We hosted the 50th Anniversary Celebration of Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW), at which VFP Executive Director Michael McPhearson presented a plaque to VVAW on behalf of VFP.

Twelve members attended the National VFP Convention in Chicago; six (Susan Schnall, Tom Fasy, John Kim,

Rachel Clark, Claude Copeland and Matt Howard) conducted workshops.

Over 100 marchers joined our Veterans For Peace contingent in New York City's Armistice Day Parade; we distributed flyers and received a great reception.

Bob Keilbach

#35 – Spokane, WA

Greetings all! Here's a rundown of our year's activities:

Jan: MLK Jr. Parade, downtown Spokane.

Feb: Sponsored Friday reception at annual Peace & Economic Justice Action Conference, and presented workshop on military pollution/PTS/MST/TIR/Full Disclosure/Superfund Fairchild Air Force Base (FAFB).

April: Protested misuse of taxes w/Peace and Justice League of Spokane (PJALS). Two-day booth at Earth Day at Riverfront Park.

May: Organized a Memorial Day reading of *Vet Lit 2: So It Goes*, at the Community Building in Spokane.



Rusty Nelson, Chapter 35 President, reads at May 2017 release of *Vet Lit 2: So It Goes*, in Spokane.

JONATHAN ADAMSHASPERT

June: Members in court attempted “necessity defense” for blocking trains/ trespassing BNSF tracks; sued government over Commerce Clause violating Spokane’s right to clean water/air/soil. Paraded with Out Spokane!

July: Protested FAFB Skyfest Air Show.

Aug: Tossed 72 white chrysanthemums into Spokane River, commemorating nuclear bombing of Japan. George Taylor attended National Convention; subsidized room for new Fresno Chapter #180 president, Joshua Shurley.

Sept/Oct: Coalition w/WSRCAT/PJALS/PAX CHRISTI presented speakers on torture, Gonzaga University Law School; co-hosted Curt Goering, Center for Victims of Torture, at Lincoln Center. Sent letter to Bruce Jessen, imploring him to apologize for torturing people and donate \$5 million to torture victims.

Nov: Candlelight Vigil at mobile Vietnam Memorial Wall.

Met w/staff of Senators Murray and Cantwell. Sent letter to VA Secretary Shulkin. Met School Board president about TIR. Placed literature in schools.

Armistice Bell Ringing 11/11 at 11 a.m., and Auburn Vets Parade.

George won Necessity Defense!!

C U in Minnesota! PEACE!

Hollis Higgin

Ours was the largest single veterans’ contingent in the November 10, 2017 Barnstable Veterans Day Parade. Several of us participated in a “First Annual” Barnstable Veterans Town Hall the next day, cosponsored by the town and the Cape and Islands Veterans Outreach Center. At the event, conceptualized by journalist and veterans’ advocate Sebastian Junger and supported by Massachusetts Congressman Seth Moulton (an Iraq veteran), about a dozen combat vets from Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan gave 10-minute testimonies about their war experiences. It was well attended, very powerful, and vividly conveyed the true costs of war in stark relief.

Preparations are underway for our 23rd Annual “Voices of Peace” Poetry Contest in 2018. We are very proud of its status as a well-known and loved part of Cape Cod’s yearly educational, artistic, and peace-work calendar.

Duke Ellis

forget the enormous amount of dollars spent on war...and the innocent lives taken from us.

We are in the planning stages of placing another “educate the community” ad in our local paper, on the true cost of war.

Traverse City is now a member—the 173rd—of International Cities of Peace.



In September, Cape Cod chapter members participated in the “Out of the Darkness” Walk for Suicide Prevention, in memory of Cpl. Jeffrey M. Lucey. L to R: Billie Stewart, Joyce and Kevin Lucey (Jeffrey’s parents), Duke Ellis, and walk co-chair Carole Williamson.

Our mission in this endeavor is to promote a community that encourages our residents to respect all his/her neighbors no matter their ages, backgrounds, abilities and beliefs. Our goal is to empower our community in establishing an inclusive and enduring “culture of peace.”

Tim Keenan

#41 – Cape Cod

Our chapter continues to explore the possibility of creating a memorial to veterans who have taken their own lives as a result of the “hidden wounds” of war, and will soon be consulting with regional partners on the project.

In early September, chapter members participated in the South Shore/ Cape Cod “Out of the Darkness” Walk for Suicide Prevention, highlighting the shockingly high suicide rate among veterans, and were honored to be joined by Joyce and Kevin Lucey as we walked in memory of Cpl. Jeffrey M. Lucey, USMCR. We also participated in the ribbon ceremony for remembrance and hope on National Suicide Prevention Day.

#50 – Traverse City, MI

Veterans For Peace organized events on both September 21 and 24 related to International Day of Peace.

The September 21st event saw a sunrise greeting, a proclamation read at the Government Center by our mayor proclaiming Traverse City a city of Peace, and the planting of a Peace Pole.

On September 24th, we organized an event at our “Open Space” that included live music from three local bands and a “peace” march through downtown. This was our first such organized march as usually we are on our own. It was attended by some 200 people. The attendance was encouraging, as often it seems people

#61 – St. Louis, MO

There was a great turnout at the August 26-27 Festival of Nations at Tower Grove Park in St. Louis. Thanks to several solid volunteers, our chapter helped over 150,000 people keep waste out of the landfill over the weekend by collecting 5,100 pounds of compost and 13,000 pounds of recycling! The atmosphere was exuberant and festive atmosphere despite the heat.

On Saturday, August 19, Chapter 61 President Stan McCoy and VFP

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Chapter Reports *continued*

Chapter 61, St. Louis, MO, continued...

National Executive Director Michael McPhearson attended a Prisoners' Rights rally across from the Old Courthouse, organized by Hedy Harden of Missouri Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants, of which VFP Chapter 61 was a cosponsor, along with Missourians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty and others.

On September 9, Veterans For Peace co-sponsored a United We Stand St. Louis conference at Harris Stowe, at which Michael McPhearson and Stan McCoy were also present.

Stan McCoy was honored to represent Chapter 61 at a private fundraiser for Amnesty International on September 20.

Chapter 61 members including Michael, Tom, and Stan served as marshals in a Black Women's March in St. Louis on September 30.

Stanley McCoy



Chapter 63 is holding regular demonstrations in the movement against VA privatization.

#63 – Albuquerque, NM

Three of our members attended the National Convention in Chicago.

Willard Hunter rang the bell eleven times at 11:00 a.m., at the observance of Armistice Day, November 11 at the Veterans' Memorial Park.

We had one representative at the SOAW Convergence at the Nogales border. Paul Baker Hernandez, who performed at the Convergence, accompanied us to Albuquerque, where he gave a wonderful VFP Chapter 63-sponsored

concert and discussion of the Convergence and of the current situation in Central America.

We sent condolences to member Sherry Greason on the passing of her husband, Tom, who was a greatly valued associate member. His memorial service at the Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice was marked by memories of Grey Panthers and VFP, and beautiful renditions of peace songs by the New Mexico Peace Choir, of which he was a member.

We held a demonstration against the privatization of the VA, and have planned another one early in December.

Sally-Alice Thompson



Chapter 69's home, The San Francisco War Memorial Veterans Building, is located at 401 Van Ness Avenue, across from city hall.

#69 – San Francisco, CA

Did you know the San Francisco Veterans Building (home to Chapter 69) offers free tango classes to veterans and their guests? It's true, every Thursday and Saturday evening. And on Friday morning free guitar lessons are available. If you attend ten classes, you earn a free guitar and case. Friday beginning at noon the Writing, Arts and Music workshop meets. Following that, the Art Lab lets anyone free up her or his inner masterpiece. On Monday at noon is the Creativity Explored Class, and on the 2nd and 4th Thursday at 1:30 p.m. the Drum Circle welcomes everyone. Also in the San Francisco Veterans Building is the Veterans Success Center, where any veteran can get help finding a job, writing and printing a resume, dressing for success, and more. The Veterans Success Center supports every veteran with the resources, tools and guidance necessary to meet their employment and

career goals. And there's Veterans For Peace Chapter 69's monthly meeting on the third Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. All of this is happening at the San Francisco War Memorial Veterans Building, 401 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, California, across the street from city hall.

Denny Riley

#71 – Sonoma Co., CA

I am happy to report that, as far as we know, no Chapter 71 members lost their lives or homes in the horrific October firestorm that brought unprecedented devastation to Northern California.

However, it is with great sorrow that I report the death of Lee Gooding, an active longstanding member of our chapter and founder of Helping American Veterans Endure (HAVE), a nonprofit service provider. Lee also established and maintained the Santa Rosa VA Clinic Veterans Organic Peace Garden. Lee was a visionary; a man of optimism, generosity and kindness. He is sorely missed.

We are proud to announce that Chapter 71 member, Susan Lamont, was honored with her name engraved in the Sebastopol Living Peace Wall for her life's work of activism in support of social justice and peace (read more at sebastopolivingpeacewall.com).

The Golden Rule sailed to Bodega Bay in June to encourage a nuclear free, peaceful world. We held a very successful, well-attended fundraiser with the help of Norman Solomon, who provided insightful and inspirational political analyses. Co-founder of our chapter and former Naval Officer, Fred Ptucha, joined the crew when it sailed south to San Francisco Bay, where it was welcomed by S.F. Chapter 69.

Bill Simon

#72 – Portland, OR

In August, VFP Chapter 72 was a cosponsor of the annual Hiroshima-Nagasaki remembrance on the waterfront spearheaded by Oregon Physicians



DAN SHEA

Reclaiming Armistice Day with Chap. 72 in Portland, Oregon: Cian Westmoreland speaks in memory of ALL people lost in wars and in walking meditation on all who still suffer from war. Cian had just returned from Germany where he delivered a speech and an apology for his part in drone warfare at a General Assembly, with a number of nations in attendance.

for Social Responsibility.

This fall, Dan Shea was included in an Oregon Public Broadcasting panel discussion of *The Vietnam War* special.

At an Armistice Day bell-ringing commemoration in Pioneer Courthouse Square, poems and statements were presented by veterans Jamie Skinner, Dan Shea, Mike Hastie, and Cian Westmoreland. Later, Dan Shea joined with union members in a “Save the VA” rally.

Meanwhile, Ryan Holleran and Becky Luening answered the call to join SOAW and allies for a weekend of education, action, art and solidarity in Tucson and Eloy, Arizona, and on both sides of the border fence that runs through Nogales.

Ryan Holleran has taken the lead in re-establishing a GI Rights Hotline in Portland. Associate member Nancy Hill is organizing, with others, an art contest on the theme, “What I will do for peace,” with winning entries to be displayed on city buses. WWII vet Will Pool’s self-published memoir, *American Fascism*, has been selling like hotcakes. Several VFP72 members are actively working to recruit younger veterans via college-level activities, while others are active in sharing their perspectives on war and military service in high school classrooms, when given the chance.

Becky Luening

#75 – Phoenix, AZ

In June, representatives of the Winter Soldier VFP Chapter—Richard Smith (USN 1965–69), Ahmad Daniels (USMC 1966–70), and Dennis Stout (Army 1966–69)—spoke at a Phoenix area Mennonite Church. Dennis appeared in Episode Five (“This Is War, This is What We Do”) of the recently-aired Ken Burns–Lynn Novick PBS documentary, *The Vietnam War*. The question-and-answer segment was lively and enlightening. Also in June, one of our members had a well-attended book signing for his book, *From Queens to Quantico: A United States Marine’s Story*, which was well received and prompted insightful discussion.

July saw representatives of our chapter entertaining questions from tenants of the Beatitudes, a Phoenix area retirement community.

However, it is our “participation” in the Honoring Arizona Veterans (HAV) Parade that deserves additional attention. Our chapter’s relationship with HAV has been tenuous over the years. This year’s parade witnessed our chapter being told it could not participate due to our flying the U.S. flag upside down, an indication the nation was in a state of distress. HAV demanded that we “properly” fly the flag.

Members of our chapter refused to do so, citing flag etiquette rules, all to no avail. At our next chapter meeting we will be discussing what to do about next year’s march.

Ahmad Daniels

#89 – Nashville, TN

Chapter 89 has shown its colors whenever and wherever local activists have confronted emboldened right-wing extremism in and around Nashville, including:

- marching with Black Lives Matter to demand justice in the police killing of a black man, shot in the back;
- protesting at the state park that served as the convention site for the white supremacist group American Renaissance;
- vigiling at a mosque that had been vandalized;
- attending a rally to demand DACA reinstatement and protection from ICE’s unjust, aggressive tactics;
- protesting recent “League of the South” white supremacist/anti-immigrant rallies in Shelbyville and Murfreesboro.

On a more upbeat note, our chapter took an active role in the solar eclipse community celebration, *Love and Unity Under One Sun*. (Nashville was smack-dab central in terms of eclipse totality.)

Our radio show, *VFP Radio Hour*, is working with VFP’s working group to raise awareness of the threat of VA privatization. To counter negative media treatment of the VA, we are featuring veterans who can speak from experience about their preference for VA over private-sector services.

We shared “before you enlist” info and chatted with over eighty students and their families at the Metro Nashville Schools College Fair.

Three of our members participated in a panel discussion this fall, hosted by Amnesty International, about the Burns/Novick PBS series, *The Vietnam War*.

Harvey Bennett

Chapter Reports continued on next page...



San Diego chapter members bannered the I-15 freeway every Thursday, all summer long, as part of a five-year campaign urging the public to boycott the annual Miramar Air Show.

#91 – San Diego, CA

San Diego Veterans For Peace had a very busy fall with a variety of activities. Now in our second year of a five-year program to convince the public not to attend the annual Miramar Air Show here, we bannered the I-15 freeway each Thursday all summer, gave talks at local clubs and churches, and got good quality TV, radio, and print interviews about why we were doing this.

Two of our members traveled to Arizona to attend events organized by School of the Americas Watch (SOAW) the weekend of November 10–13, including a rally at a private detention center in Eloy, Arizona, the VFP-led march to the border in Nogales on Saturday, and demonstrations on both the U.S. and Mexican sides of the fence. Veterans Day found the rest of us setting up our Hometown Arlington West Memorial, honoring the 300-plus from Southern California, fallen in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The peace boat, *The Golden Rule*, is now ported here in San Diego for the winter and will host events and trips out for interested folks.

Our chapter, recognized as the Chapter of the Year in 2017, plans on an active schedule of events here as the mild winter sets in.

Gilbert Field

#92 – Seattle, WA

In the aftermath of the Burns-Novick film series, *The Vietnam War*, a public forum was held at the University of Washington's Jackson School of International Studies, with Chapter 92 Vietnam veterans Dan Gilman, Mike Dedrick, and Allen Tlusty serving as panelists along with UW history professor Christoph Giebel. Many combat veterans and draft resisters attended the event. The film was overwhelmingly criticized as people spoke of their personal experiences during that era. The event was filmed by Mike McCormick of local indie radio station KEXP.

Our chapter is supporting Zahid Chaudhry during his arduous deportation hearings in Seattle, which have been re-scheduled yet again to next March.

Reclaim Armistice Day! After a bell-ringing ceremony at the church, we joined the Auburn Veterans Day Parade for the eleventh year in a row! We were the only pro-peace contingent in a very well-received march through downtown Auburn. About 20 total marched with us, including members from other chapters, plus a few non-member VFP supporters. Ironically, the only downside was hearing, "Thank you for your

service!" and we couldn't pass out VFP leaflets. Afterward, we had a chili and salad luncheon with music and poetry, making for a very successful event!

Kim Loftness

#93 – So. Central MI

The tenth annual John Lennon's birthday benefit concert was the most financially successful yet, netting over \$2,800 for scholarships for veterans and Michiganders in peace-related college programs. Local artists contributed their talents in presenting Lennon's and other composers' songs on peace-related themes. The two current scholars are both women. Teresa Azzam is studying international law at Case Western University with a goal of work on refugee problems with the U.S. Department of State or an NGO. Melissa Pavlik is at the London School of Economics studying prevention of terrorist insurgency worldwide.



Chapter 93's tenth annual John Lennon's birthday benefit raised \$2,800 for peace scholarships.

The widespread disagreement over response to the U.S. flag, Pledge of Allegiance, or national anthem has reached Ann Arbor City Council meetings, as some council members encountered criticism for "taking a knee" during the Pledge of Allegiance. Chapter 93 has written the council to support peaceful protest and freedom of expression for people on both sides of the issue, and to recognize the original protest's purpose of calling attention to instances of police misconduct or violence against

African-Americans and other persons of color.

Lynn Gilbert

#99 – Asheville, NC

Our chapter continues our weekly peace vigil, regardless of the weather, a long-standing tradition since before the invasion of Iraq, while expanding our community presence into marching in local parades to counter the usual presence of traditional veterans' organizations and ROTC units. In September we marched in the Canton, North Carolina, Labor Day Parade, and in November, the Asheville Holiday Parade, "firsts" for both the parades and for our chapter. We were enthusiastically received in both, and distributed almost 1,000 pieces of educational peace literature to a diverse spectrum of welcoming spectators.

Our membership is increasing, as is members' involvement in numerous actions and projects including SOAW Border Action/Encuentro, Peace Garden construction on the campus of St. George Center for Art and Spirit (where we have our office), Maine Peace Walk and the NoWar 2017 Conference. Our sponsorships/partnerships included the portrait/bio of Smedley Butler in the traveling *Americans Who Tell The Truth* exhibit, the 2017 North American Nakba Tour, a winter coat/gear drive for homeless veterans, and designation of our chapter as a World Beyond War



Chapter 99 members were happy to march in the first-ever Asheville Holiday Parade.



Chapter 102 President Mark Foreman rings the bell for peace 11 times to recall the original Armistice Day on 11/11, while Gerry Hills plays Native American flute.

local affiliate. A public showing of the first episode of Ken Burns/Lynn Novick's *The Vietnam War* was well attended and we were represented in the community's International Day of Peace observances.

To quote Buffalo Springfield, "*There's something happening here...*"

Gerry Werhan

#102 – Milwaukee, WI

An Armistice Day crowd at Milwaukee City Hall heard calls to speak out and demand U.S. diplomacy, not escalating insults and threats of war. John Nichols of *The Nation* roused the crowd with a fiery speech in which he recalled Senator Robert M. "Fighting Bob" LaFollette's warning about the importance of exercising freedom of speech during wartime, and reminded us of Wisconsin's historic opposition to war.

Nan Kim, a University

of Wisconsin-Milwaukee history professor and expert on Korea, urged support for diplomacy to ease tensions with North Korea, and provided some needed background, insights and context for U.S.-North Korea relations and tensions.

The event was sponsored by Veterans For Peace and a coalition of peace and justice groups, and drew the largest crowd in the seven years we have been sponsoring it. We are continuing our efforts at coalition building and outreach to post 9/11 veterans, and both efforts are beginning to show results.

Bill Christofferson

#104 – Evansville, IN

VFP members and friends marched in the sun, carrying the VFP flag and banner in the annual Labor Day Association Parade in Princeton, Indiana. Our contingent made a similar statement on International Peace Day, displaying our insignias as motorists drove past the Four

Chapter Reports continued on next page...

Chapter Reports *continued*

Chapter 104, Evansville, IN, continued...

Freedoms Monument on Evansville's riverfront. The monument was also the scene of our Armistice Day observance, where kindred thinkers in the community joined us in a reading of excerpts from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech excoriating the war in Vietnam. During the first weekend in October, we sponsored a visit to our community by Paul K. Chappell, Director of Peace Literacy with the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. Paul made a series of public presentations that were well received. On the Friday before Thanksgiving, we awarded the 2017 Gary E. May Peace Scholarship to Bailey Schnur, a senior at the University of Evansville, for her essay: "How do we assess the true cost of war?"

John Michael O'Leary

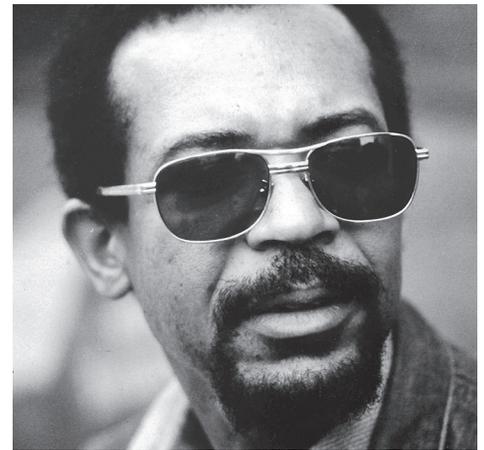
#106 – Dallas, TX

Since last reporting, Chapter 106 has hosted demonstrations for "No More \$\$ For War" and "No Fire and Fury on North Korea," as well as a well-received Texas tour of Dallas, Houston, Austin, San Antonio and the Gulf Coast for

VFP Palestine/Israel Delegation members sharing their riveting presentation, "Walls of Racism and Oppression." We co-hosted two Dallas-Ft. Worth peace rallies; screenings of *Junction 48* and of Regis Tremblay's *Thirty Seconds to Midnight*, plus Q&A with Regis; 2017 Exxon/Mobil Shareholders Meeting and "Stop ETP" protests; and a dinner program, "Russia, Refugees, Pipelines & Greed," with Ray McGovern.

We visited Senator Cornyn's office twice, and have attended Greenpeace and Tar Sands Blockaders' trainings, "Divest from Fossil Fuels" actions at three banks, and rallies/marches to end police brutality, support immigrants' rights, and stop privatization of the VA. Members have traveled to the D.C. Memorial Day Convergence, Democracy and VFP Conventions, and marched with the VFP contingent at the SOAW Encuentro in Arizona. At the Eloy Detention Center, VFP members from around the U.S. helped display "SOLIDARITY" in lights as prisoners waved back from their windows, moving some to tears. The next night, we displayed "NO BORDERS" in lights at the U.S./Mexico border in Nogales.

Leslie Harris



Horace Coleman, Presente!

#110 – Orange Co., CA

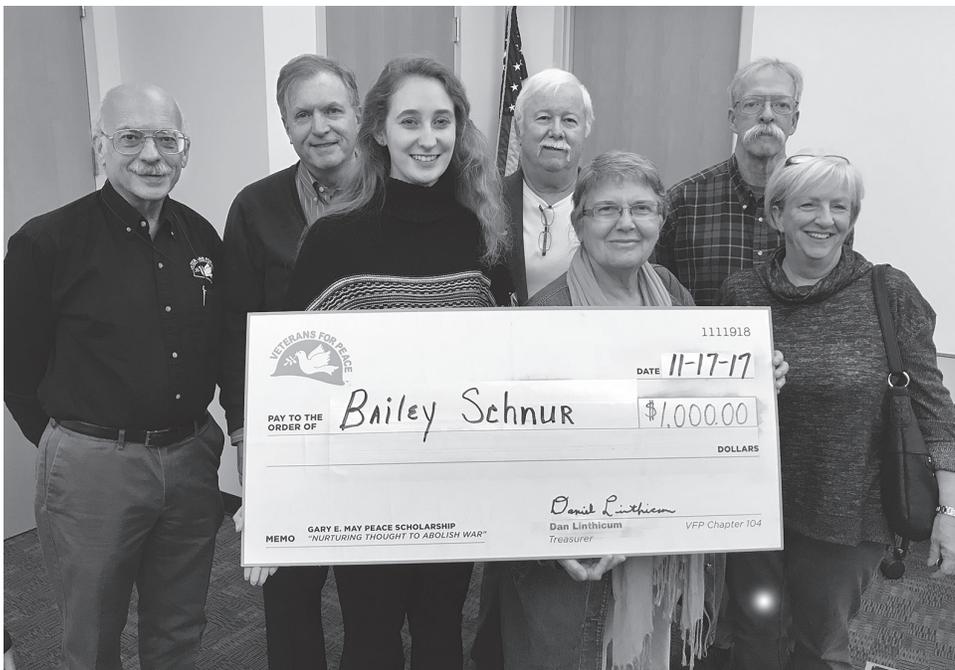
Peace lost an ally in September of this year. Horace Coleman was an outspoken, articulate pillar of the Southern California peace community and an active member of Orange County Chapter 110, serving as Chapter Treasurer until a severe stroke drastically limited his participation three years ago.

Horace deployed to Vietnam in 1965, where, as a captain in the Air Force, he developed his keen sense of war's folly and murderous injustice. A grassroots intellectual and activist ever since his return to the U.S. in the late '60s, Horace found his voice as the host and producer of the first black student-run radio show, at Ohio University. He and his colleagues were also the first to educate college students about the My Lai massacre.

A talented writer, Horace regularly contributed articles for the Vietnam Veterans Against the War newspaper. His 1995 book of poetry, *In the Grass*, earned praise from such figures as Howard University's E. Ethelbert Miller, who hailed the work as "a book of darkness and revelation." Among his other accomplishments, Horace's photography graced the pages of numerous publications, including the national Veterans For Peace newsletter.

We all miss him dearly.

Sam Coleman



Evansville, Indiana Chapter 104 members honor Bailey Schnur as recipient of the 2017 Gary E. May Peace Scholarship on November 17.



#112 – Ventura Co. CA

Chapter 112 hosted *The Golden Rule's* visit to the Oxnard Channel Islands Harbor in late August. We enjoyed potluck, music and an educational forum on nuclear and radiation issues. We presented the crew with chapter-made buttons of the ketch. Helen Jaccard's friend, Holly, was key to the organizing and publicity. Go to <https://youtu.be/XG9nURgp1go> to enjoy a part of *The Golden Rule's* trip.

Member Michael Cervantes joined with Santa Barbara's Truth in Recruitment to speak in north county high school classrooms. Michael also continues to review our chapter's supply of VFP brochures and literature in eight local high schools.

VFP 112 members took part in the first-ever Oxnard peace parade, then tabled at the Multicultural Festival in town. VFP member Joe Acebedo has tabled twice at Native American Pow Wows. We tabled at City of Ojai Peace Day.

Chapter 112 cosponsored an educational forum on California statewide non-establishment people's candidates for 2018. We were invited to lead an Armistice Day ceremony for the Green Party of California General Assembly in Ventura on Armistice Day. Member Cindy Piester arranged a presentation for Paul Baker Hernandez, renowned Central American musician activist.

Michael Cervantes



BART BOLGER

Chaper 132 in Corvallis, Oregon sponsored a lively public forum on October 4, following the PBS airing of the Burns-Novick Vietnam War series. In the fishbowl-style format, veterans were first to be invited into the center, to get the conversation started.



#132 – Corvallis, OR

Vietnam Discussion: In early October, the Linus Pauling Chapter hosted a discussion about the American War in Vietnam following the PBS airing of the Ken Burns and Lynn Novick documentary series, *The Vietnam War*. We invited the public, especially veterans who had spent time in country or in direct support of the war, and those who were active in the antiwar movement. Several members of Chapter 72 in Portland made the trek, and we appreciate their valuable contributions. We set up the forum as a "fish bowl" discussion, with chairs arranged in two concentric circles.

The inner circle was initially reserved for Vietnam-era vets and resisters, who began the discussion. Later, other attendees were invited to join the inner circle. A brief summary of the discussion and links to press coverage are posted at the VFP Corvallis website, vfpCorvallis.org.

DACA/#CleanDreamAct Rally and March: Members of VFP Corvallis comprised peacekeeper and legal observer teams for the November 9, 2017 rally at Oregon State University, organized in response to a nationwide call by United We Dream to demand a clean Dream Act. There were no incidents during the event, but our participation underscored VFP's ethics of fairness and racial justice and gave our chapter good exposure with student groups.

Bart Bolger



ELLEN DAVIDSON

On the evening of November 10, VFP members from Dallas Chapter 106 and other chapters display "SOLIDARITY" in lights, as prisoners wave back from their windows at the privately owned Eloy Detention Center in Eloy, Arizona.



#134 – Tacoma, WA

Chapter 134 had a booth in our large state fair nearby for four days in September. Many great conversations both pro and con.

With the Burns-Novick Vietnam War documentary approaching, I made up business cards inviting groups who
Chapter Reports continued on next page...

Chapter Reports *continued*

Chapter 134, Tacoma, WA, continued...

might be looking for a speaker or participation in a panel discussion to contact us. I think it's a great opportunity for our organization, but haven't gotten any bites yet.

Participated in two radio shows at a low-power station in Olympia with two friends from the Olympia Chapter. We three also taped an hour-long interview on a local access station, which was subsequently picked up and put on the Vietnam Full Disclosure website!

Two small tabling opportunities to report: Apple Squeeze in Steilacoom and Pumpkin Fest in Orting. We always have the sign-up sheet out with our literature. Many good conversations.

Looking forward to a large Veterans Day Parade in a nearby city with several of our chapters participating. Dickens Festival here in Tacoma in December and two MLK events in January we will be tabling at.

Peace and Love,

Dave Dittmore

#149 – Memphis, TN



On November 11, members of Memphis Chapter 149 led the Armistice Day commemoration at the steps of the First Congregational Church (photo above). The chapter was a co-sponsor of the event, which was observed on a beautiful Saturday morning by about 40 people.

Chapter Coordinator George Grider kicked off the ceremony by describing the history: how on November 11, 1918, guns throughout Europe stopped firing at 11:00 a.m., the silence replaced by

the sound of ringing bells. "People have largely forgotten that morning," Grider said. "So here, today, we'll bring it back, as a reminder that human beings actually do possess the ability to put aside our bombs and guns."

At 11:00 a.m. the church bell was struck eleven times, its celebratory sound heard throughout the mid-town neighborhood. Two or three other Memphis churches joined in with their bells. The First Congregational Church Choir performed the traditional Armistice Day song, "In Flanders Fields." Reverend Catherine Dixon led a liturgy to the stopping of war.

Participants wore the imitation poppies that signify the post-war rejuvenation of one Belgian killing field.

George Grider

#157 – Triangle Reg., NC

Chapter president Doug Ryder was one of four panelists presenting veterans' personal responses to a preview screening in Raleigh of the Burns/Novick series, *The Vietnam War*. He also appeared in Charlotte with Rev. William Barber II at a rally in support of the upcoming Poor People's Campaign. Member Matt Hoh spoke at the Raleigh Poor People's Campaign gathering, addressing the issues of the war economy, veteran suicide, and moral injury.

In September, associate member Vicki Ryder participated in the Kayaktivist Flotilla, joining Col. Ann Wright and other environmental/peace activists who paddled to the Pentagon with the message: "No War on Planet Earth." [https://youtu.be/1_rQiLgQM3g]

In October, our chapter helped to staff the iconic Peace Booth at the North Carolina State Fair, collecting 1,653 petition signatures to stop the deportation of U.S. veterans, an injustice perpetrated all too frequently here in the Tar Heel State.

And in November, aided by a \$20,000 grant from the North Carolina Humanities Council, associate member Roger Ehrlich again erected the Swords



Making its debut in this year's Armistice Day Parade in Raleigh, North Carolina, was Chapter 157's new "NO MORE WAR" banner.

to Plowshares Belltower on the State Capitol grounds for the week preceding Armistice Day.

Douglas H. Ryder

#161 – Iowa City, IA

In April 2017, Veterans For Peace Chapter 161 co-sponsored Ann Wright's presentation in Iowa City on the "Women's Boat to Gaza." In May and August, Chapter 161 participated with Chapter 163 in protest at Reaper Drone Iowa Air National Guard base in Des Moines.

During the summer we participated in the Coralville 4th of July Parade, had a booth at the Johnson County Fair, and five of us attended VFP's national convention in Chicago. We co-sponsored a September event on children and violence with University of Iowa and the Council on American-Islamic Relations. Also in September, we co-hosted Phyllis Bennis' presentation on Current Middle Eastern Affairs, and Chapter 161 Co-president John Jadryev presented on an Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) series. This series continues on December 10, with Kathy Kelly as featured presenter.

On November 11, Chapter 161 organized our eighth annual Armistice Day observance at Old Capitol in Iowa City, with ringing of bells, a free lunch, and an open-mic session afterwards. Activities during that week included poetry reading by chapter poet Joe Michaud, a public screening of *All Quiet on the*



Chapter 162 (East Bay, CA) members present on "picture day." Back Row (left to right): Maurice Martin, John Walsh, Cathe Norman, Fred Norman, Daniel Borgstrom, Rick Sterling. Front Row: Eugene Ruyle, Peter Straus, Gene Bernardi, Robert McCockran, Gregory Ross.

Western Front, a VFP guest column in the local newspaper, and a day with 7th grade classes sharing our experiences as veterans.

John Ivens

#162 – East Bay, CA

Our chapter continues to participate in three regular activities: First Friday tabling at the Oakland Street Party; regular monitoring of the militarization of the Berkeley Police Department at Berkeley City Council meetings; and participating at the Armistice and Memorial Day Vigils at the Crosses of Lafayette, with members reading poetry.

Additional activities this fall have included counter-recruitment presentations at several high schools in Berkeley, delivery of clothing and raingear to homeless vets in the East Bay, and workshops on deported vets. Also, one member traveled to Nogales, Arizona/Sonora, to participate in the SOA Watch and Deported Veterans activities.

In response to the call of our national office for nationally coordinated local actions to demand diplomacy, not war,

with North Korea, and the abolition of nuclear weapons and war, Veterans For Peace Chapter 162 participated in the Korea Peace Walk in Oakland, California, on November 11, which was jointly sponsored by HOBAK (Hella Organized Bay Area Koreans) and the Korea Policy Institute (KPI). We walked 20 blocks on Telegraph Avenue past Korean businesses and historic sites of labor and Black Panther Party activism, leafleting, drumming, and chanting along the way.

Cathe Norman

#175 – Janesville, WI

The United Nations International Day of Peace, commemorated each year on September 21, anchors an entire week of peace and reconciliation activities in Janesville, Wisconsin. This year, activities included presentations, discussion groups, meditations, and a video program presented at Janesville's Hedberg Public Library and Janesville's Peace Park.

This year's featured video, *One Peace at a Time*, is an inspiring look at the possibility of providing basic rights to every child in the world. I remember a won-

derful segment where Willie Nelson simply implied that we all know what is right to do, and now we must simply do it.

At the peace park ceremony, four inscriptions of the word "Peace" in different languages were placed on the Peace Pole, adding to the more than 100 inscriptions already on the pole. Veterans For Peace Chapter 175 planted a tree close to the pole, and placed a bronze plaque with the simple inscription, "One Peace at a Time – 2017," commemorating the year's International Day of Peace and reflecting on the video with the same title.

Norm Aulabaugh

#180 – Fresno, CA

This summer, our newly created Chapter 180 hit the ground running by tabling at two college campus volunteer fairs in late August. On September 29, Joshua Shurley and Eduardo Castro were present to protest an appearance of disgraced Sheriff Joe Arpaio, who had been invited to give a talk by the local GOP. Later that same night, Eduardo Castro represented Chapter 180 by protesting Fresno's anti-homeless ordinance on the lawn of City Hall.

In October, we hosted Col. Ann Wright, who gave an inspirational talk on speaking truth to empire. Eduardo Castro again represented our chapter during Indigenous People's Week on the local Cal State University campus. As an expression of gratitude for helping initiate our chapter, we created a peace award, with our first recipient being Hollis Higgins of Chapter 35 (hereafter to be known as the "Hollis Higgins 'Peace Multiplier' Award").

Additionally, we have been featured four times in recent months on local free speech radio KFCE. On November 11, Chapter 180 held a "Reclaiming Armistice Day" event at Fresno's Big Red Church, where we rang the bells 11 times for peace. Many thanks to our local progressive partners, Peace Fresno, WILPF, and the Fresno Center for Nonviolence.

Joshua Shurley

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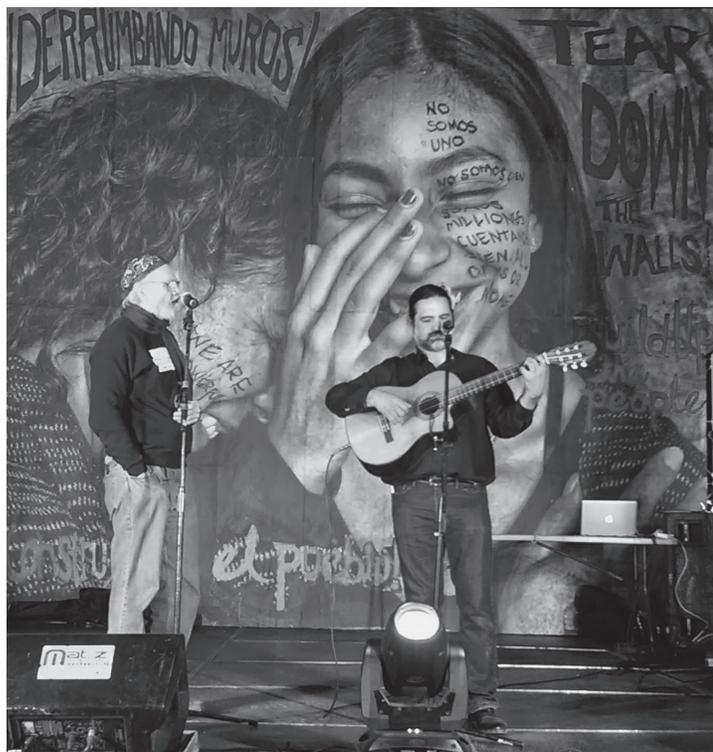
After Action Report: 2017 Encuentro at the Border

Despite being scheduled for November 10-12 this year, which presented a conflict for veterans involved with local Armistice Day rituals, a solid number of VFP and About Face (formerly IVAW) members showed up for the *Encuentro at the Border* organized by School of the Americas Watch (SOAW) in Tucson and Eloy, Arizona, and divided Nogales.

Reported by Mike Tork, SOA Watch Council member, Veterans For Peace Liaison with SOA Watch

Overall, this year's Encuentro was very successful. Our volunteers all thought it was great, and many attendees reported a powerful experience. It was better organized and went much smoother than last year—the interpretation, the legal, all of it. The crowd seemed a little bit bigger. We learned a lot in the first year, and we gained ideas this year on how to make it better going forward. I think everybody agrees that we should do it again next year—only not on Veterans Day.

Our workshops dovetailed very well with the demands we had defined, as intended, but some folks still felt there were too many choices, and others wished to see something more substantial come out of the Encuentro. So we talked about, in the future, having fewer workshops, more tightly focused on



A masterful duet by Charlie King and Francisco Herrera, above, was just one of many powerful happenings on the main stage, located next to the border fence in Nogales, Sonora. The striking backdrop was designed by the Stage and Program Collective.

our demands, authentic workshops that actually give attendees work to do! For example, a workshop on the Merida Initiative might involve writing letters or working on a legislative strategy to change it.

A few interesting little snafus arose during the Saturday morning march.

Ending militarization of countries all over the world, and

interventions, is really at the core of SOAW, and it's still about that. SOAW moved the vigil to the border to address the plights of the people that are directly affected by this rampant militarization. So this year we wanted the march to be led by directly affected families, and maybe some musicians, with veterans taking a supporting position, back behind. But no one had taken responsibility for making this happen. It was hard enough getting the march to leave on time, which was my assignment. So, by default, the veterans ended up leading again. In the future I will take more responsibility for this change in the SOAW march lineup, and I expect Veterans For Peace attendees will understand how important it is for us veterans to take a supporting position in this particular march.

One thing that caused a little ruffling of feathers was patriotic displays on the part of some of the Hispanic or Latin American veterans who marched on the U.S. side in support of the deported veterans in Mexico, as well as on the part of the deported veterans themselves. This took two different forms.

On the U.S. side, one man showed up for the march in his dress blues, and since militarization is what many folks came to protest, having somebody in a full-dress marine uniform near the front of the march bothered people. But for many Latin American veterans who served honorably, it is part of their identity, and in terms of seeking justice for deported veterans, it's part of the point—that they served honorably and did everything, and now they're treated like second-class citizens.

We were glad to avoid a run-in with the veterans group that was staging Nogales' Veterans Day Parade later that morning. But we were sorry to miss our planned meeting at the U.S.-Mexico border with the group marching toward the border from the Mexican side—a group that included a large number of Oaxacans and some Palestinians as well as the deported veterans. They arrived much later than planned, and interestingly, the reason they got held up was because the deported veterans were carrying the American flag, and both the Oaxacans and Palestinians refused to march with it. Finally, the deported veterans agreed to put the flag away.

Again, that flag is part of the deported veterans' message and their identity, so it's a difficult situation. How do you tell those guys, No, you can't have the flag, and No, don't wear your uniform? They're victims themselves. But it's easy to see why the Palestinians and Oaxacans didn't want anything to do with the American flag. After talking with Hector Lopez, a deported veteran organizer on the Mexican side, I think it will be easy to come to resolution around this next year.

The stage/program group did an amazing job. [Activist/artist] Olmeca really put in a lot of time, and a lot of thought, and the program they put together was really fantastic. I loved the backdrop they designed—the stage and program both

really shined.

We've talked about ways to improve the whole staging area—having it all under a big tarp, securing the streets better. We had tried to get a permit to close the streets this year, and the police agreed to it, and then the owner of the buses said, No, you gotta keep one of the lanes open. So we started off with constant trucks and buses splitting us right in half. I was there watching it, and I'm thinking, we gotta block the streets, this isn't working. And I heard one of the men from the Oaxaca group whistle really loud, and he gave a circle-about kind of gesture with his hand, and before I knew it, there were 20 cars, 10 on each end of the road, blocked, and they put up the banners, stopped the cars, and the cops just could not talk them out of moving. They said—very respectfully, in Spanish—We're not going to move, so forget about it, and the cops finally just left. And they really saved the Saturday event by doing that.

In closing, despite a couple of minor snafus, the Encuentro overall was better than last year, and we hope it will happen again and be better yet. We'd still like to do some kind of scaled-down event back at Fort Benning to gather up those people that maybe didn't understand the move or just couldn't get to the border for some reason or other. Fr. Roy Bourgeois and I have discussed the possibility of a Saturday afternoon meeting in the summertime, where we could do a report back and tell everybody about the Encuentro, update them on SOAW's plans going forward, and then on Sunday, a *No Mas, No More* litany. Even if it's real small, I think it's important.

First Impressions

For both Maggie Martin and Ryan Holleran—two members of Veterans For Peace and About Face (IVAW) who made it to the border this year—this was their first experience at a SOA Watch gathering. Here are their reflections.

Maggie Martin

The experience of the border Encuentro was really powerful and eye-opening. From seeing that huge rusty wall in person, to hearing the names of so many people who have died or been killed trying to cross, to hearing from indigenous leaders about how their people's lands have been split by the border, I felt a human connection deeper than I had before going. The vigil at the detention center was especially powerful and painful. Seeing silhouettes of those who are locked up, and imagining the family and the story that each person represents really touched my heart and made me want to do more. It was kind of nice that the event was over Veterans Day weekend, because it gave us the chance to use our voices and the occasion to stand up for the demilitarization of the border. Overall, it was a really positive experience and I hope next year we can return and maybe even present a workshop.



Friday, November 10, About Face (IVAW) veterans joined SOAW and local groups at the federal courthouse in Tucson to protest an unjust, expedited prosecution program named Operation Streamline, which criminalizes migrants en masse, stripping them of their individual rights to due process. From left to right: Anthony Gonzalez, Gina Bua, Michael Day, Ryan Holleran, Thuy Nguyen, Jae, and Maggie Martin.

Ryan Holleran

I have felt a passion for ending the School of the Americas ever since it appeared on my radar, but this was the first year I had the opportunity to attend the yearly gathering. Being a graduate of Sand Hill at Fort Benning, I was appalled to realize we were employing those same, and often worse, tactics against revolutionaries in central and south America.

For me, it was exciting to see School of the Americas Watch move to the border. So often we fail to ask ourselves the simplest questions concerning the nature of these conflicts. Why are massive numbers of people migrating? What are the conditions they hope to escape? What do they find when they get to the United States? SOAW moving to the border highlights the connection between United States involvement in the training, funding, and support of destabilizing forces and the conflicts immigrants are fleeing from. I was touched to have the opportunity, even for a few short days, to share in the struggles of people fighting for their families, their communities, and their lives.

One story that was particularly powerful concerned the caravan of the Rainbow 17—seventeen gay men and trans women who converged from Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Mexico, to travel together to the Mexico-U.S. border to seek asylum in the United States. Calling themselves *Colectivo Diversidad Sin Fronteras*, these brave men and women faced physical violence, harassment, and death as they made their way north on a speaking tour, collecting more members as they traveled along. Upon reaching the border, three were immediately turned back to their nation of origin. Eight were granted asylum, while five were put into detention and faced with isolation, hunger, sleep deprivation and assault. Hearing stories like theirs—stories of people fighting for better lives, against the oppressive systems that have brought them so much pain—is what inspires me to continue organizing. [For more info., please visit plumfund.com and search for “Rainbow17.”]

Vietnam Full Disclosure Campaign

50th Anniversaries Worth Commemorating in 2018

As evidenced in many of this issue's chapter reports, the wave of public discourse that followed in the wake of the airing of the Burns-Novick PBS series on the Vietnam War this fall was significant, and thanks to all your efforts, included many VFP voices. As the Pentagon continues to celebrate the "heroism and valor" of Vietnam veterans while repeating the "mistakes" of that war, play by play, in Afghanistan and elsewhere, we must continue to disclose the truth. One way to do that is to design our own 50th Anniversary commemorative events. Below is a chronological list of just a few significant events of 1968 that are worth commemorating. For more details, see <http://vietnamfulldisclosure.org/index.php/1968-3/>

January—Vietnam veteran Jeff Sharlet launches the first GI-run anti-war paper addressed to GIs, calling it *Vietnam GI* (VGI). His associate editor is David Komatsu, and the editorial board of ex-Vietnam GIs include Jan Barry, William Harris, Peter Martinsen, Dink McCarter, James Pidgeon, Gary Rader, Francis Rocks, David Tuck, and James Zaleski.

January—UFO coffee shop opens in Columbia, South Carolina, near Fort Jackson as outreach to GIs.

January 15—5,000 women rally in D.C. in the Jeannette Rankin Brigade protest, the first all-female antiwar protest aimed at getting Congress to withdraw troops from Vietnam.

January 21—20,000 North Vietnamese Army (NVA) troops attack the American air base at Khe Sanh. A 77-day siege begins as 5,000 U.S. Marines in the isolated outpost are encircled.

January 30–February 24—84,000 National Liberation Front (NLF), guerrillas aided by NVA troops, launch the Tet Offensive: simultaneous attacks on all U.S. military bases in Vietnam and 110 cities and towns in South Vietnam, including 34 of 44 provincial capitals and 64 district capitals. (The offensive was later recognized as the turning point of the war.)

January 31–March 2—In the Battle for Hue during Tet, 12,000 NVA and NLF troops storm the historical city. On the holiday morning of January 31, the NLF banner is seen flying atop the historic, 120-foot-high Citadel flag tower.

February—Daniel Berrigan and Howard Zinn travel to Vietnam during the Tet Offensive to "receive" three American airmen, the first American POWs released by the North Vietnamese since the U.S. bombing campaign began. [Resource: <https://www.howardzinn.org/remembering-a-war/>]

February 7—Attributed to an unnamed U.S. officer in an article by AP correspondent Peter Arnett, a comment about Ben Tre city is uttered that represents the tragedy of the entire war and is oft-quoted to this day: "It became necessary to destroy the town to save it," a United States major said today."

March 16—Hundreds of villagers in the hamlet of My Lai are massacred by members of Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry U.S. Army, while participating in an airborne



assault against suspected NLF encampments in Quang Ngai Province. Upon entering My Lai and finding no NLF, the Americans begin killing every civilian in sight, including women and children, and engaging in mass rape, interrupted only by helicopter pilot Hugh Thompson. Thompson and his crew prevent some killings by threatening and blocking officers and soldiers of Company C. In the nearby hamlet of My Khe, 97 people are reported killed by Bravo Company. (Eventually the story of My Lai was brought to light, but like most other massacres, My Khe received little notice outside Vietnam.)

March 31—President Lyndon B. Johnson announces his surprise decision to not seek re-election.

April 4—Civil Rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee, exactly one year after his "Beyond Vietnam" speech.

April 23–30—Students at Columbia University in New York City protest Columbia's institutional ties to the Institute for Defense Analysis, a weapons research think-tank affiliated with the Pentagon (as well as Columbia's plan to construct a gym with limited access for the Harlem community).

April 26—A million college and high school students boycott classes in opposition to the war.

May 10—Peace talks between U.S. and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam open in Paris, marking the beginning of five years of on-again, off-again official talks between the U.S. and North Vietnam.

May 17—The Catonsville Nine, Catholic activists including the Berrigan brothers, Daniel and Philip, enter the draft board in Catonsville, Maryland, take 378 draft files, pour homemade napalm over them, and set them on fire.

June 14—A Federal District Court jury in Boston convicts Dr. Benjamin Spock, obstetrician and author of influential parenting guides, and three others, including Yale University Chaplain William Sloane Coffin, Jr., of conspiring to aid, abet, and counsel draft registrants to violate the Selective Service Act. (The conviction was overturned in 1969.)

July 1—The Phoenix program (preparations for which had begun in 1967) is established with the objective of crushing the secret NLF infrastructure in South Vietnam, estimated to include up to 70,000 Viet Cong guerrillas.

continued on next page...

August 23–24—Over a hundred Black GIs at Ft. Hood, Texas, gather at a main intersection of the fort to protest being sent on “riot control” duty to Chicago, where the Democratic convention is being held.

August 26–29—The Democratic National Convention in Chicago nominates Hubert Humphrey, while outside, 23,000 police and National Guardsmen brought into Chicago by Mayor Richard Daley battle 10,000 antiwar demonstrators throughout the city.

October—The fifth GI coffeehouse in the nation, The Shelter Half is set up in Tacoma, Washington, near Ft. Lewis.

October 10—Susan Schnall drops flyers about the GI and Veterans March for Peace over five military installations in the San Francisco Bay Area and holds a press conference afterward to publicize her action. The next day, she is apprised of the AINav regulation prohibiting Navy personnel from publicly speaking out in uniform, but nevertheless wears her uniform to the October 12th march, where she gives a speech against the war. [Read more about Susan’s story in the interview below.]

October 14—A sit-down protest that comes to be known as the Presidio Mutiny is carried out by 27 prisoners at the Presidio stockade in San Francisco. The protest is in response to the death of Richard Bunch, a prisoner in the stockade, who was shot and killed by a guard after walking away from a work detail on October 11.

October 31—President Johnson announces a complete halt to U.S. bombing of North Vietnam. Throughout the three-and-a-half-year bombing campaign named Operation Rolling Thunder, the U.S. had dropped a million tons of bombs on North Vietnam—800 tons per day.

Commemorate this!

Becky Luening interviewed VFP’s own Susan Schnall about her 1968 war resistance while on active duty as a Navy nurse.

Becky Luening: When you joined up with the Navy, where were you at in terms of consciousness?

Susan Schnall: I was already against U.S. intervention in Southeast Asia, but I thought that I would be taking care of the guys who were wounded, get them better and back to their lives. It took only a short time for me to realize that once I was in the Navy, I was a part of the military machine causing death and destruction. I had become part of that killing force that enabled the U.S. to continue the war.

BL: How many years were you in?

SS: Two years active duty. I was enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at Stanford University when I joined. After graduation I went to Officers’ Indoctrination School in Newport, Rhode Island, for new nurses who were going to be serving in the Navy. It was a very frightening experience for me. I realized then that the military had complete control over my life. While I was there, Naval Intelligence



Left: Lt. JG Susan M Schnall, U.S. Navy, giving a speech at a GI and Veterans March for Peace in San Francisco, October 12, 1968.

Right: Susan reads a portion of Martin Luther King Jr.’s “Beyond Vietnam” speech with a group of VFP brothers and sisters at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C., May 29, 2017.

interrogated me about my activism. Apparently a classmate had told the Navy that I was going to peace demonstrations. I told them that I was against U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia. They sent a letter back to Naval Intelligence in Washington, saying, We’ve interviewed her, she’s not a threat to the U.S. military. They sent me on to Oak Knoll Naval Hospital, in Oakland, California.

BL: And then you became more active, obviously, leading up to this event, when you decided to—was that your idea, to do that leafletting?

SS: It was. I was at a meeting for the Medical Committee for Human Rights in San Francisco. There were two men in uniform who were organizing for the GI and Veterans March for Peace in San Francisco. I thought this event was something I’d like to get involved with. A group of us from Oak Knoll handed out flyers for the demonstration on the hospital base. We put up posters that were torn down almost immediately. Oak Knoll was an old hospital, built during WWII for the marines wounded in the Pacific. The hospital units were composed of long, wooden barracks, built up on stilts because of the hilly land. I knew we had to do something else to get out information about the demonstration to active-duty personnel. At that time, the U.S. was dropping flyers on the Vietnamese, telling them to go to “protective hamlets” to ensure their safety. I thought, if the U.S. could do this in Southeast Asia, why couldn’t we drop peace flyers on the U.S. military? I had a friend who had a pilot’s license. We filled a plane with the flyers about the march, and dropped them on five military installations in the San Francisco Bay Area: Oak Knoll Naval Hospital, Treasure Island, Yerba Buena Island, the Presidio, and on the deck of the USS Ranger, an aircraft carrier that was docked at Alameda Naval Air Station. At the court martial there was testimony from a serviceman from Oak Knoll who said that he saw the plane, and that we were headed in the direction of Alameda Naval Air Station. He called to warn them. And the guys from Alameda said, “Oh no, nobody would dare enter our air space.” A few minutes later, we were there.

BL: Do you feel lucky that you weren’t shot down?

continued on page 23...

Q&A: How did you become a veteran for peace?

Percy Hilo

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON • VFP MEMBER SINCE 2006

I became a veteran for peace while in the u.s. air force from Nov. 18, 1966 to May 5, 1970, long before the organization existed, having gone through profound changes in my social/political views during my enlistment. I've volunteered and created art in many areas of social change ever since, but had not heard of VFP till a number of years back when the national convention was held in Seattle. I loved the concept, volunteered, had a wonderful and informative time, and decided that since I was already a "veteran for peace," I should make it official and join. A simple natural progression that fits perfectly with who I was and am! I love the people, the programs and the goal! Onward through the fog!

Matthew Katz

ROOSEVELT ISLAND, NEW YORK • VFP MEMBER SINCE 2003

I joined the Queens College branch of VVAW after leaving the Army in 1970. Then, after the 2003 incursion into Iraq, I went on a march in Manhattan that ended at Union Square where there was a VFP table. I noticed on the masthead that my old friend from my Ft. Shafter, Oahu days, Sharon Kufeldt, who had been Air Force at Hickam AFB, was a Vice President for VFP. I joined the New York City chapter and marched with



Matthew Katz today.

them up Fifth Avenue on Veterans Day. My family was in the throes of a medical emergency when I left the service and I never had a homecoming after three years away. Being cheered by the throngs on Fifth Avenue provided catharsis that I didn't know I so sorely needed. Thanks for all you do.

Joey King

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE • VFP MEMBER SINCE 2003

I joined college ROTC in 1980 because President Carter instituted the Selective Service System in response to the Iranian Hostage Crises and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. As crazy as it sounds today, we were on the brink of war. While in ROTC, the civil war in El Salvador ramped-up and we all thought we'd be going. I was gung-ho; no question about it. I



Joey King in the summer of 1985 at Fort Benning Georgia: "My father is pinning on my Ranger Tab."

graduated from Airborne and Air Assault Schools as a cadet. Once I was commissioned, I graduated from U.S. Army Ranger school and was assigned to paratrooper units at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and Vicenza, Italy. Fortunately, my time of service was during peacetime, from 1984-87. I hated the military; however, I missed the sense of tribe.

In the run-up to the 2003 Iraq invasion, I went to several peace rallies. Every time, there were guys from the Nashville chapter of Veterans For Peace carrying signs. I ended up joining soon thereafter. One of the best things about VFP is that sense of tribe, that I missed about the Army. I've had the pleasure of serving on your board of directors for nearly 7 years.

Also see correction at top of page 23...

What's your story?

In your own words—around 100—briefly describe your own route to VFP, your evolution of consciousness over time. Send your story along with a high-resolution image of yourself—from the distant or recent past, your choice—to: editor@veteransforpeace.org. We encourage submissions from all members, young and old, veterans and associates alike.

CORRECTION

Ellen Barfield & Larry Egbert

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND • VFP MEMBERS SINCE 1988



Ellen Barfield (far left) and Larry Egbert (far right)

Ellen offered the following corrections to the text accompanying this photo in our Summer 2017 issue. —Ed.

The photo shows me farthest left, and Larry Egbert [my late husband], farthest right. We are not right next to each other as stated in the caption. And the Nevada nuclear weapons test site is for the entire U.S. government's nuclear arsenal, not the Army's. Lastly, I had intended for my piece to be titled with both Larry's and my names, as he and I both heard of VFP's existence and arranged to join after a talk at one of the Peace Camps at the Pantex nuclear weapons plant that he and I and many others organized through the 1980s and '90s.

50th Anniversaries: Susan Schnall

Continued from page 21...

SS: Oh absolutely, yes. When we were flying into Alameda Air Station, the pilot, my friend Bill Gray, asked me to look out the window on my side and let him know whether there were any fighter jets coming at us. My response: "Bill, by the time I see them, we're dead." We were very lucky, yes.

BL: And very ballsy, I have to say... I'm curious about what happened on the ground. Has anyone ever come up to you and said, I was on this or that base, and I got one of those flyers...?

SS: No.

BL: But the march was well attended?

SS: The march was well attended. It was October, 1968.

I had been very concerned about the antiwar organizations I would work with. I didn't want to be used as a member of the military, and I was impressed with the two airmen who spoke at the MCHR meeting. Second Lt. Hugh Smith and Airman First Class Michael Locks were articulate and passionate about their opposition to the United States war in Southeast Asia. Hugh walked in the demonstration and spoke; Michael and I wore our uniforms and spoke.

BL: So you were charged for that, and also for dropping the leaflets from the plane?

SS: I faced two charges: (1) Violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, Article 133, Conduct Unbecoming an Officer, for dropping flyers on military bases that were designed to promote disloyalty and disaffection among members of the Armed Forces; and (2) Disobeying a Navy Regulation (ALNAV 53) by wearing my uniform when speaking out publicly and participating in a demonstration that was in the furtherance of political views. This regulation was issued by the commanding officer of Oak Knoll on October 11, the day after we distributed the flyers from the plane. At the court martial I stated that, in fact, these acts raised morale among the troops who felt that they were not alone in their opposition to the war and could act, even when a member of the military. I had raised morale. I also said that when our government is committing genocide, we have a responsibility to speak out.

BL: That's the Nuremberg principles.

SS: Exactly. But the judge at the court martial said he was not qualified to judge it, and so he sent this issue on to the appeal process.

BL: What finally happened? Did you actually serve time?

SS: I was found guilty of both charges and sentenced to "forfeiture of pay and allowances for six months, six months confinement at hard labor, and dismissal from the Navy." But at the time there was a general Navy regulation that said if a woman received a sentence under a year, she didn't necessarily have to serve it. So they sent me back to work.

BL: And that was because—

SS: The government didn't want a martyr. We thought that the court martial decision actually came from Washington to give the appearance of a sentence as a warning to other active duty military personnel.

BL: It seems to me going against the first amendment that a member of the military can't speak out.

SS: Yes, but as a member of the the military you are held to the Uniform Code of Military Justice, not civilian justice or rights. You can give your life for your country, but not speak out.



VFP continues to thrive—
thanks, in part, to generous, thoughtful people who, in the past, remembered us with charitable gifts in their wills.

You can easily do this, too.

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Chapter Reports *continued from pages 7-19...*



#1003 – Ryukyu/Okinawa Chapter Kokusai (ROCK)

This December, Veterans For Peace will deploy our third and largest Okinawa Solidarity Delegation (14 members) to join the Okinawan people's resistance to U.S. military base expansion into what has been a pristine environment—Oura Bay at Henoko. Stopping the base construction at Henoko will demonstrate to the world that people working together in solidarity for common cause can stand victorious against even the most powerful military and governmental forces.

The delegation is expected to be partly funded by the Henoko Foundation, and will be hosted by VFP-Ryukyu/Okinawa Chapter Kokusai (VFP-ROCK). VFP-ROCK is presently setting up the Delegation's Okinawa schedule in coordination

with the Delegation leaders. The delegation members are: Monisha Rios, Mike Hanes, Will Griffin, Ellen Davidson, Bruce Gagnon, Pete Doktor, Adrienne Kinney, Hanayo Ota (filmmaker), Miho Aida, Russell Wray, Miles Megaciph, Enya Anderson, Ken Mayers and Tarak Kauff.

Edward Heinrich Sanchez

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NEWSLETTER

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Jackson Browne donated all the proceeds from his Chicago concert to VFP. He was recognized with this special plaque, presented by (L to R) VFP Board Member Tarak Kauff, President Barry Ladendorf, and Founding Member Doug Rawlings. Find additional convention photos and reflections on page 6-7.

ELLEN DAVIDSON