



# Exposing the True Costs of War and Militarism Since 1985

# VETERANS FOR PEACE

Organized locally. Recognized internationally.

SUMMER 2015

## 30TH ANNUAL CONVENTION!!

**Jack Doxey**



The Golden Rule cruises San Diego Bay at sunset.

McGovern, Phyllis Bennis, Marjorie Cohn, and Dylan Rattigan are just a few of the speakers that unselfishly contributed to the success of each day.

The Saturday night banquet was a gala event and our keynote speaker, Seymour Hersh, praised the members of Veterans For Peace for their unrelenting work of promoting peace and encouraged us to never to give up the fight.

The Convention was enriched by the presence of the recently restored ketch *Golden Rule*, which sailed into San Diego Harbor and in the process completed its new maiden voyage. The *Golden Rule* is all about "One boat, one mission and one incredible story." Her original mission to abolish war and stop the testing of nuclear weapons in the Marshall Islands still holds true today.

We closed our convention by going offsite to the Joan Kroc Cen-

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Approximately 400 VFP members came from around the country and around the world to attend our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary national convention in the beautiful city of San Diego. If you arrived at night you couldn't help but notice the magnificent skyline and glistening lights that make San Diego such a extraordinary city. However, the city got considerably brighter by the presence of our members who carried into our town an enlightening message of "Peace and Reconciliation in the Pacific."

We were honored to have Anthony Pico, who served as chief of the

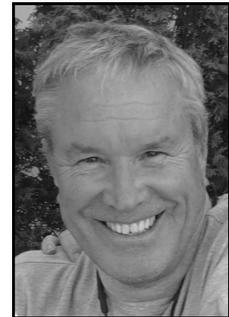
Kumeyaay Indians for 26 years, officially open our convention on Thursday morning with a cleansing ceremony. During the rest of the convention, fascinating speakers provided us with valuable information and inspiration to carry our message beyond the walls of the convention. Congresswoman Susan Davis, Ray

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# FROM THE PRESIDENT

Barry Ladendorf



Still feeling great vibes from our 2015 convention in San Diego? If you attended, I am sure you agree it was a great event: terrific workshops, plenary sessions, post-9/11 vets bbq, harbor cruise, the banquet with Seymour Hersh, and the magic of the Golden Rule. For me renewing friendships, meeting new members and listening to the likes of Jim Radford sing shanties into the early morning hours were at the heart of our successful convention. A measure of a successful convention is its ability to give us a boost of momentum for carrying on our work for a more peaceful world. That measure was truly met in San Diego.

In the 2015 President's Report that I delivered on Saturday morning at the opening of the business meeting, I returned to the themes I wrote about in the Spring 2015 newsletter. Those themes represent what I believe are the essential elements for the growth and continued influence of VFP: Financial Growth; Messaging; and Membership. Let me highlight a few points.

## Financial Growth

This year the Board engaged the services of *Foundation Search*, an organization which provides assistance to nonprofit 501(c) corporations searching for major funders, grantors and philanthropic organizations that specifically provide financial support and funding to peace organizations like ours. The services we receive include access to *Foundation Search's* database, one of

the largest of its kind, of potential supporters. Not only will we be able to access that information, but *Foundation Search* will also assist VFP in honing its message for the numerous grants we will be seeking over the next five years. The Board believes our association with *Foundation Search* will provide unlimited opportunities to attract major funding to VFP.

Obviously, we will continue to rely on the support of our members to help maintain a vibrant and effective organization. At the convention, I suggested members consider making ongoing monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual donations to VFP. Such ongoing donations ensure VFP has a steady income flow to meet our monthly obligations. They also mean more staff time can be spent on important VFP projects, and less on sending you those renewal notices (not to mention lessening the calls you receive from Doug Zachary), all of which cumulatively saves VFP money. To those of you have started an ongoing giving plan. . . many thanks. Just go to our website and sign up. Painless, easy and you are done.

## Messaging

1. Washington, D.C. presence: It has become increasingly clear that VFP must have a presence in Washington, D.C. This does not mean moving VFP headquarters to D.C. It does mean, however, that we must be able to more efficiently and effectively coordinate VFP events in D.C., develop legislative strategies, develop and maintain working relationships with other peace groups and even Left/Right veterans groups. While many veterans groups may not see eye to eye with some of our goals, we should not be deterred from exploring those areas where

we do have common ground. By the first of the year, we hope to make a further announcement on how we can make this happen.

2. Upgrade Status at the United Nations: VFP is THE only veterans organization that has Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) status at the United Nations. We will be looking at the possibility and advantages of upgrading to "Consultative Status". Consultative Status would provide VFP a unique means to present position papers at the UN, make oral presentations with certain UN committees, and expand our contacts with member nations.

3. Reestablish VFP's relationship with Soviet & Canadian veterans: As a result of a relationship with Soviet and Canadian veterans, in 1987 and 1988, veterans from all three nations issued a "Combined Statement". This statement called for a reduction of nuclear weapons and the abolition of war by 2000. I have spoken with some VFP members and a member of our Advisory Board who are interested in exploring how we can make this happen. With the U.S. and Russia standing eyeball to eyeball over Ukraine is there a better time?

4. Golden Rule Project: The arrival of the Golden Rule in San Diego was, for many, a very emotional and moving event. The potential for this beautifully restored first peace boat to continue its journey in educating the peoples of the world on the dan-

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## NEWSLETTER STAFF

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# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Michael McPhearson



This year the United States celebrates its 239<sup>th</sup> birthday. In 218 of those years, the U.S. conducted military operations or waged war.

Thirty years ago the founders of Veterans For Peace were inspired to take on an impossible mission. Led by Jerry Genesio, a visionary to whom I am forever grateful, fearless men and women put forth a challenge to end war. They then took action to achieve that goal.

Today members of Veterans For Peace are working to abolish war in every state of the union and nine other countries. We represent veterans from every walk of life. Our members span U.S. wars from WWII to the present.

Our vision of veterans working together for a world without war is spreading around the globe. We are all united on the premise that war is not the answer and we must struggle with our governments to change policy and our societies to change its acceptance of this vulgar, depraved, and cruel way to act in the world.

At times the task is overwhelming and we are pushed to the edge of hopelessness. We question our effectiveness and wonder if our labors are futile. This is understandable. We are up against the most powerful military in human history. Our endeavor is global in extent and biblical in its enormity. We are facing the equivalent of the systems that were led by Pharaohs and

Caesars. But that is exactly why we must take heart in our understanding of the importance of our efforts and our unique role in the struggle for peace and justice.

There are thousands of organizations and millions of people around the world working for peace. We must not take on arrogance in believing that we are the vanguard leaders of peace efforts. But it is our responsibility to raise our voice to tell the full truth of it as former combatants and those who have trained for war. This is a responsibility left to those who have experienced the killing, the training and brainwashing used to dehumanize us so that we can participate in it. We have a distinctive perspective to talk about the cost of war. We tell the world as U.S. Civil War Union General William Tecumseh Sherman did, "War is cruelty and you cannot refine it."

Looking back I wonder, if VFP was not founded, who would have done our work? Who would have established Arlington Memorials to highlight the cost of war, rather than to glorify it? Who would have helped Cindy Sheehan establish Camp Casey? Who would have made the direct connection to the post-traumatic stress, unemployment, and suicides in communities in the Persian Gulf and the U.S. Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina?



Who would have asked Lieutenant Watada to speak at their convention to tell his story of resistance for the world to hear? Who would have been there to help Military Families Speak Out and Iraq Veterans Against the War establish themselves? Who would lead a veterans' effort to make sure there is Full Disclosure in telling the history of Vietnam? I can go on and on asking who would be there. Most important to each one of us, where would we have gone when we needed to know there are other veterans who know what we know and are ready to take action to bring about the change that we seek?



## VFP CONTINUES TO THRIVE BECAUSE —



— generous, thoughtful people in years past put a charitable gift in their wills.

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For more information contact Executive Director Michael McPhearson at 314-725-6005 or [vfp@veteransforpeace.org](mailto:vfp@veteransforpeace.org)

# ENTERING THE AURA OF THE DEAD, THE WALL

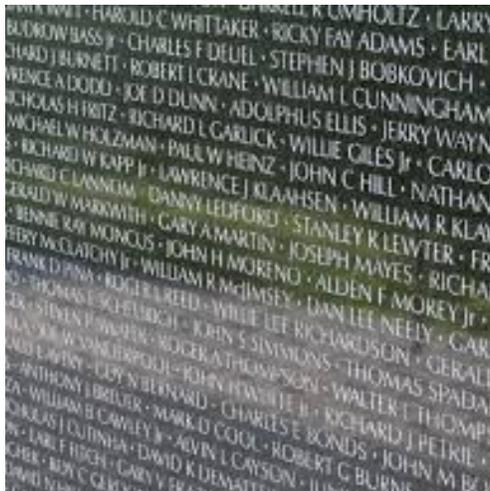
Michael Uhl

*This letter originally appeared as part of our Memorial Day Event: Letters in Support of Vietnam Full Disclosure and has also been published at [counterpunch.org](http://counterpunch.org)*

I knew two of the men whose names are engraved on the Vietnam Veteran Memorial. The first, Artie Klippen, I saw a lot of that season in '63 when we both played Lacrosse at Georgetown. We had one of those anarchic undergraduate arrangements where we briefly shared a car, a beat-up old Chevy with the gear shift on the steering column. Compared to so many guys at that age who are callow and two-faced, Artie was a straight-up, warm and friendly guy, qualities that make him continue to stand out in my memory, even though we never got to know each other well. After that year, I seldom saw Artie again. I had been in Brazil all of '64, but came back with too few credits to graduate with my class in '65, the year Artie did. Having completed ROTC, Artie got his lieutenant's butter bar along with his sheepskin. I was still at Georgetown, having stuck around an extra year in ROTC myself to avoid the draft, when I heard Artie had bought it in Nam as a platoon leader with a leg unit.

I read somewhere that the odds to survive a tour in Nam were a thousand to one. On average. The life expectancy for a grunt LT like Artie was averaged against that of a chaplain's assistant in the rear, a two-star general well behind the wire in his air conditioned trailer, a spoon in the mess hall who hugged an M-16 at night in a bunker to guard the perimeter, or a spook like me patrolling in harm's way by day, but generally secure overnight in a base camp. So Artie already faced poorer odds compared to most of

us. But a soldier's superstition held that, no matter where you found yourself in Nam, if there was a bullet in Hanoi with your name on it, you weren't coming home. We called that blind luck, and Artie didn't have it.



I don't recall how Artie died exactly. It might have been a bullet; more likely a booby trap. Out on patrol where you stepped, and where you didn't, made all the difference. But given the routinely barbarous acts American GIs perpetrated on innocent Vietnamese civilians, I feel confident that Artie made his unit play by the rules of engagement to whatever degree that was even possible in a peoples' war. He would not have been gung ho or reckless. Artie would have put a premium on the welfare of his men, even as he had the moxie to lead them in a deadly encounter. And if I were to learn Artie died bravely to ensure someone else might live, that would be consistent with the character of the man I knew. Even in an evil war like Vietnam, I want to believe a man like Artie Klippen could be a hero.

The other young man I knew whose name is on the Wall, wasn't even close to being a hero. But

he was a tragic loss, and just as chosen by misfortune as anyone else whose name is inscribed there. I believe that Stanley Reed was not yet twenty when he died, right in line with the nineteen year, ten month average age of all American soldiers who served in Vietnam. Stanley was average in other ways too, I guess. An average smart ass, authority-allergic American teenage white boy, likely from a blue collar background in which a college deferment was not an option, and who enlisted for four years to avoid being drafted into the infantry for two. The Army trained Stanley to be an interrogator.

When I took command of the 1<sup>st</sup> Military Intelligence Team of the 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, Stanley was already there in the interrogation unit. I had been trained as an infantry officer at Ft. Benning, then in a school for spooks in a compound near the Baltimore harbor. In the MI team, I ran the counter-intelligence unit, while interrogation was under the supervision of another lieutenant junior to me. The interrogation center was off site from our compound, so I seldom dealt directly with the interrogators, except after hours when all the team members filled our little club to drink beer over cards or ping pong.

I recall getting a whiff of Stanley's attitude a couple of times when he attempted to bait me in some childish test over authority. It was irritating, and I probably put him in his place. But I didn't spend a lot of time defending my military dignity. I detested the Army. Moreover I did not relish being officer-in-charge of anything, much less a team of fourteen American intelligence agents and as many South Vietnamese Army interpreters. In my mind I wasn't supposed to end up any-

*(Continued on page 5)*

# CHAPTERS GROW NATIONALLY, INTERNATIONALLY

## Casey Stinemetz



VFP Jax 174 - The Jacob George Chapter formed in December 2014.

In December 2014, National Veterans For Peace welcomed a new chapter in Jacksonville, Florida. VFP Jax Chapter 174 is named after Jacob George, IVAW and VFP member, whom we lost to suicide last September. We mourn the loss of Jacob, and his family was honored to know of this memorial chapter in his name. Earlier in the year, at the national convention, VFP Chapter 173 in Greensboro, NC was presented their official charter. Already, both chapters are becoming active in their local communities.

In January 2015, the membership committee received the chapter petition for a new international chapter, VFP 1002 - Ireland. The committee, chaired by board member Tarak Kauff, unanimously approved VFP Ireland, which will act as an affiliated organization.

Our first international chapter made up of international veterans was chartered in 2012 as VFP 1001 - United Kingdom. The VFP UK chapter coordinator, Ben Griffin, contributed to the development and formation of this new

chapter in Ireland. VFP UK held their second annual national convention in April 2015 and continues to attract new members across the United Kingdom.

Currently, we have four chapters in the formation stage. Please help spread the word to help them build their membership. We look forward to officially welcoming each of these chapters in the year 2015:

- #970 - Janesville, Wisconsin
- #972 - Fort Collins, Colorado
- #973 - Tijuana, Mexico
- #974 - San Luis Obispo, CA

Over the past few months, the national office has been getting many inquiries from members about starting a chapter, along with requests for materials to help them get out in their local community. If you would like any informational brochures, recruitment brochures, bumper stickers, etc. mailed out to help promote your local chapter and VFP's mission, please contact me at [casey@veteransforpeace.org](mailto:casey@veteransforpeace.org) or by calling the national office at 314-725-6005.



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where near the Infantry. It was a fluke. Like Stanley, I had joined something bad to avoid something worse. But here we both were anyway on LZ Bronco with the 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry.

My section, CI, was out in the bush a lot, working the fringes of the Phoenix Program. But the interrogators had no business going on patrol. Stanley got restless I suppose. Said he didn't want to go home without having some small taste of the field. When the squad came back at dusk, I got the news.

They'd made contact. In the fray, Stanley had been wounded, maybe a rocket from one of our own gunships, friendly fire. After a few days a couple of us flew down from Duc Pho to Qui Nhon to visit him at the evacuation hospital. The damage to some internal organs was serious, but he was expected to recover. Stanley was in good spirits, and he and I actually made real contact. I look back on that moment as redemptive. Two weeks later, the land line buzzed in my office tent when my colossal asshole lifer

boss up at Division called to tell me Stanley was dead.

That night Charlie pounded us relentlessly with mortars and rockets. The team huddled in the bunker to escape the shrapnel. Otherwise we were well protected from anything but a stray round, since the enemy's main target was the landing strip to our front. The news of Stanley's death had cast a spell of fatalism over all of us. No one felt safe that night. No one talked. No one played cards. Each individ-

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# INTERNATIONAL PEACE DAY

Ellen Barfield

*A Great Day for Public Peace Events, Especially to Challenge Pentagon Climate Impact*

September 21st UN International Day of Peace, occurs this year in the week of Pope Francis' visit to the U.S. Congress and White House and huge climate organizing to take advantage of that historic event. It will be a very busy time, and local VFP peace events could be lost in the shuffle, but perhaps the media and the public will be more primed to sympathy, too.

UN General Assembly Resolution 36/37 in 1981 created Peace Day, to strengthen ideals of peace, within and among nations and peoples. In 2001 in a unanimous vote the UN-GA passed Resolution 55/282 to designate 21 September every year for the observance of Peace Day for nonviolence and cease-fire. The 2015 Peace Day Theme is "Partnerships for Peace — Dignity for All."

Sadly, in the U.S participation in any UN observance is lower than in much of the world, because of the paranoid right-wing "black helicopters are coming to take over" conspiracy theorists, and the more general attitude that the U.S. is above international cooperation or law, but that can change! The fall is a good time for a peace event, as students get back to school and summer scatteredness settles down.

As part of our responsibilities in exchange for the access our Department of Public Information (DPI) affiliation gains us, VFP is supposed to encourage participation by chapters in these observations. The website [internationaldayofpeace.org](http://internationaldayofpeace.org) is collecting information on the hundreds of planned events, so get yours up. Follow @PeaceDay on Twitter and "like" the International Day of Peace page on Facebook for updates, ideas, and links to Peace Day events and activities. Candle



lightings, meals, concerts, vigils, speakers, demos, marches -- the possibilities are endless.

This effort is part of the UN's soft side, developing a Culture of Peace. ONE day ONLY for the UN to advocate for nonviolence and cease-fire, is sad really, not in any way living up to the very first line of the UN Charter's preamble, "We the peoples of the United Nations, DETERMINED to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war,..." But since the UN was intentionally created with no enforcement mechanism, all it can do is attempt moral suasion. Crowds of people are good at that, so gather a crowd for International Day of Peace!

A good focus this particular year with the huge climate change organizing to take advantage of the Pope's visit the week of September 21st, would be challenging the Pentagon's massive fossil fuel consumption. In fact, the Pentagon is the single entity with the highest fossil fuel use IN THE WORLD. Over 100 million barrels of oil alone according to the Union of Concerned Scientists. And of course we all remember the terrific placard at anti-Iraq war demos, "How Did OUR Oil Get Under THEIR Sand?" Wars for oil are real and continue. Environmental groups have almost uniformly declined to challenge the Pentagon

on its horrendous effects on nature and all forms of life, much more than just fuel burning of course, and VFP can be a real goad to change that tremendous oversight. Peace Day can also be Climate Day.

VFP chapters that are interested in this focus can think about another UN day, too; November 6, a Friday this year, is the UN International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict, UN-style voluminous verbiage for, "War is BAD for the environment!"

A really terrific banner designed by Ellen Davidson for the New York City climate march last year (shown in the accompanying photo) with a big blue globe, VFP marchers and the logo, is being re-designed in a smaller format for chapters to purchase for the November 6th, and maybe a combined Armistice Day event. The cost should be about \$90 and the banners will be available online soon, so keep this in mind! Make it a fall against the Pentagon's massive environmental damage!

*Ellen Barfield is VFP's Head Representative to the UN Department of Public Information.*



# VFP CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL PEACE DAY

Michael McPhearson

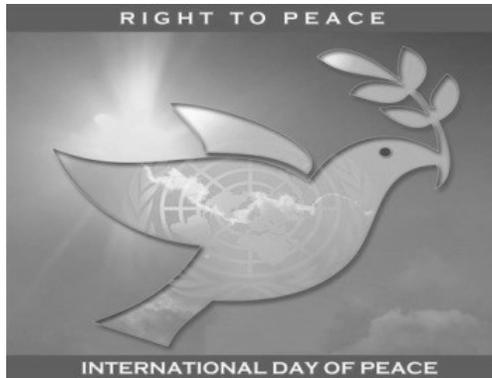
Each year the International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21 September. The UN General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples.

The theme of this year's commemoration is "**Partnerships for Peace – Dignity for All**" which aims to highlight the importance of all segments of society to work together to strive for peace.

To have peace we must build peace. It will not be built by politicians and nations. It must be made between and built by people. Veterans For Peace opposes war and will be a leading organization to build peace.

Veterans For Peace national is asking Veterans For Peace chapters to celebrate International Day of Peace by putting on an event or supporting, joining with and promoting current Peace Day efforts underway in your city or town.

It is the intent of Veterans For Peace National to help popularize International Day of Peace to the



point that it becomes part of mainstream culture. International Day of Peace does not mean peace somewhere else. To hold meaning to the average person, it must also mean peace in their community.

While each chapter should determine what themes are best to address in your community, VFP National suggests you use the U.N. theme for the day, but in a Peace at Home, Peace Abroad framework as a means to bring together constituencies who seldom find themselves in the same room.

In Saint Louis, with Peace at Home, Peace Abroad in mind, we plan to discuss immigration, the

movement for Black Lives, Islam in America and how these communities are impacted by U.S. militarism and wars. Within this framework, we will address ways the traditional anti-war/peace groups and domestic issues oriented organizations may partner to work for peace and ensure everyone's dignity as global citizens is recognized.

The event template is to find local speakers who can help turnout people, have in depth knowledge of the domestic challenges communities face and are also familiar with U.S. foreign policy. Partner those speakers with a person that the peace community will be excited to hear from who also understands how communities are negatively impacted by U.S. foreign policy. You may need to bring that person in from another city.

Time is short and you may not be able to do an event this year. No problem, Veterans For Peace National plans to make this a yearly activity. Begin planning for next year or do a simple peace building action - not a protest demonstration - to help people be aware of the day.

Here in Saint Louis we also plan to highlight the city's Peace Poles to help raise their visibility in an effort to increase conversations about peace. Let's do our part to make International Day of Peace a household holiday. We can make this happen.



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ual was preoccupied with his private grief, his private thoughts. Who next among us might be disgraced by fortune? If Stanley could buy it, then why not me?

We who served in Vietnam and came home, stand before our Wall as survivors, and we are drawn inescapably into the world of our comrade spirits. Entering the aura of the dead, our faces melt in tears. It is not strange or exceptional to witness two aging men

hugging each other, sobbing, shamelessly, inconsolably. They are still grieving the fate of a fallen brother, reliving the horrors of their war, crushed by the heaviness of the wound of survival they will carry to their graves. Me too. I have seldom wept as powerfully, as involuntarily, as profoundly intimately, exposing my most deeply buried existential sadness, as when I have stood before the Wall. In one sense, that's what it means to have beaten the odds.



# UPDATE: THE IRAQ WATER PROJECT

Art Dorland

Since the spring of 2014, four new reverse osmosis water units have been placed in Iraqi schools.

In March 2014 Life for Relief and Development, through its Iraqi partner alRafad upgraded the water systems of 2 schools at Khanaqin, Diyala Province. These included Mishkalan Boys School with 438 students, and the Kurdish Ziyad Boys School, 286 students. Khanaqin is located close to the Iran border. A combination of a reverse osmosis filter/water cooler together with a holding tank was plumbed into each school.

The following month the same combination was installed by alRafad at Zaituna School for Girls and Chiya School for Boys and Girls (boys morning, girls afternoon). These schools are also at Khanaqin, 550 students combined. The cost for both projects was about \$8000.

Just as importantly, we have managed to get some maintenance work done at previous locations. 15 units at various sites in or near Nassiriya, were repaired or serviced with replacement parts. Schools and clinics alike were revisited by our partner in southern Iraq, a Youth organization operating out of Nassiriya. This work came in at \$1750.

As this report goes to press, our Nassiriya friends have undertaken installation of four more water units in their area, funded by IWP at a price of \$3950. I should mention that along with the estimated cost we always send a couple of hundred extra dollars to this organization in appreciation for their valuable work.

Anyone who has watched the steady pattern of this project over the past several years will be puz-



Clean water unit in Iraqi school.

zled by the recent slowdown. Since the midpoint of its history, late 2006, IWP has placed some 150 small water units in various parts of Iraq, yet over the past year or so only four new ones, with four more in process. Why the decline?

You can't pull your oars efficiently upstream with the river in flood. Even before the disastrous US invasion and occupation, this was difficult territory to operate in, no matter how careful the Iraqi technicians, and anyone on our side of the world who casually watches any news program knows about the murderous catastrophe hurled upon northern Iraq and Syria since last summer.

United States foreign and military policy is not the only egregious bad actor in these badland parts. The already grievous suffering is compounded for the luckless people, and work made harder, or impossible, for NGOs and other groups trying to help them.

Life for Relief and Development, our partner since inception of this project in 1999, had to temporarily suspend water related work, and

concentrate its efforts on the exploding refugee crisis. The situation must be at least slightly improved, as they have proposed another project in Diyala Province recently and we pledged the funds. The killer heat wave throughout the Middle East is adding its own burden of difficulties.

The Nassiriya Youth Group is still with us and planning more water improvement activity which we hope to support. Their area in the south of Iraq is marginally more stable, though the average American would scarcely consider spreading out a blanket and picnic basket there either. As well, we are still engaged with Muslim Peacemaker Teams/Iraqi American Reconciliation Project in Najaf.

We can keep going as long as donations appear. Perhaps you might consider reaching a helping hand to the people of Iraq through our little project. There are few opportunities for Americans to do good of this nature in Iraq, but this is one.



# CHAPTER REPORTS

## CHAPTER 1 - PORTLAND, ME

**Richard Clement**

While the Tom Sturtevant Chapter walked with our VFP flags flying in the Brunswick Memorial Day Parade, member Doug Rawlings was in Washington D.C. laying letters at the foot of the Wall as part of the Full Disclosure Campaign. Very successful event! We also had members in 4<sup>th</sup> of July parades.

Our upcoming schedule is crowded and I will report on the following in the next newsletter: Parade in Hallowell on July 18<sup>th</sup>; Peace Fair in Brunswick on August 1<sup>st</sup>; Members attending National Convention in August; Peace Festival in Belfast on August 29<sup>th</sup>; Blue Angels Demonstration on September 5 or 6; tabling at Common Ground Country Fair (50 to 60 thousand attendance) on September 25, 26 and 27; Peace Walk from Ellsworth, Maine to Portsmouth, N.H. from October 9 thru 23.

## CHAPTER 14 - GAINESVILLE, FL

**Doug Bernal**

Chapter 14 has been pushed through highs and lows during the past few months. The Chapter was also the very proud recipient of an award given by the WILPF in Alachua County during the centennial birthday party for the Women's International League for Peace and Fellowship, as the, "Strongest Community Supporter of Peace".

In May, we held our sixth annual Peace Poetry contest. 34 gifted young minds won for their poems about what peace means to them. In addition, the Chapter awarded three \$500 scholarships to students who have demonstrated leadership in peace and social justice.



**Memorial Mile, Ch. 14 Gainesville**

Memorial weekend was our annual Memorial Mile event. Each year, the Chapter puts one tombstone for every fallen service member from the current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Laying out 6,828 tombstones serves as a reminder of the costs that come with war.

While remembering lives lost, we would also like to honor one of our own members who recently died. Kenneth Weeks left us on April 17<sup>th</sup>. He was a good friend to many of us, and a greater friend to the world around him, devoting his life to helping make the world a better place. He will be missed.

## CHAPTER 21 - NORTHERN NJ

**Wendy Fisher**

The Chapter has been very active in recent months. On March 27, along with Combat Paper NJ, Warrior Writers, and Post-Traumatic Press, the chapter co-sponsored "Vietnam on My Mind: An Evening of Art, Poetry, and Prose" at the Puffin Cultural Forum in Teaneck.

In April, members attended NJ Peace Action's event where Prof. Richard Wolff spoke on "The Economics of War." Also in April, members attended a meeting at the Palestine-American Community Center. The featured speaker was Haneen Zoabi, Palestinian member of Israel's Knesset who

was on the Mavi Marmara when it was attacked by Israel in 2010. The VFP statement on Gaza was distributed and warmly received.

In May, several members attended "Vietnam: The Power of Protest" in Washington, D.C. In Secaucus, members participated in the United National Anti-War Committee's convention and staffed a VFP informational table. On the 25th, we joined with Chapter 34 at its annual Memorial Day event in Manhattan. And on May 31st, members attended a talk on the Middle East presented by David Wildman at the Methodist Church in Sparta.

On June 6, the Veterans Peace Council of Metropolitan New York held a conference to discuss future events; four Chapter 021 members attended to plan joint projects.

## CHAPTER 23 - ROCHESTER, NY

**Jack Spula**

Our chapter continues its coalition work against drone warfare, specifically regarding two Air Bases in the region: Hancock Field, north of Syracuse, which has been a focus of peace demonstrations and civil disobedience for some years; and Niagara Falls, where drone piloting and related operations were begun quite recently.

We have been doing outreach to local veterans, with an emphasis on making connections to promote peace and justice. In June, for example, chapter members staffed an informational table at a local "Valor Day" event sponsored by a network of veterans groups (including the Canandaigua VA), colleges and universities, businesses and the local Bar Association. The event was designed to inform veterans about employment and educational opportunities as well as individual support services.

The chapter also has begun working with a member of the Rochester city school board to revive counter-recruitment in local secondary schools. Some years ago, chapter members regularly set up informational tables in city schools, handed out materials about alternatives to militarism and war, and shared their experiences to give students a sense of the realities of military service. We hope to do similar work during the coming school year.

We fielded a contingent in the 2015 Rochester Memorial Day Parade, as we have in previous years, in cooperation with the multi-group veterans' committee that sponsors this annual event and maintains the municipal War Memorial here. Our members, carrying VFP flags and banners and wearing VFP clothing, etc., were very well-received by onlookers, who numbered in the thousands.

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## CHAPTER 26 - CHICAGO, IL

### Arny Stieber

The key word for Chicago Chapter 26 is "outreach". We invite speakers from a variety of groups that are working on *Peace at Home* issues to address our monthly meetings. These groups have included the Chicago Alliance Against Racism and Political Repression and Urban Warriors (who connect vets with at risk youth and help both). We encourage each member to join a group that interests them, identify themselves as a VFP member, and start their own "allies" list and keep these allies informed of our actions and events.

A major part of our outreach is our initiative to de-militarize the Chicago Public School system where 10,000 children are being taught the military model of conflict resolution by violence. We had a successful crowd-funding program to erect billboards to educate the Chicago area on the myths of the military model of conflict resolution by violence. We are now developing a design contest for billboard content. It's a Chicago program with national implications and we're gearing it as such.

See our web site Chicago-VFP.org and our two Facebook pages – DeMilitarizeCPS and ChicagoVFP. We also Tweet at DeMilitarizeCPS.

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## CHAPTER 27 - MINNEAPOLIS, MN

### Dave Logsdon

We had a terrific turnout for tabling at Gay Pride, the weather cooperated, we sold some raffle tickets (for our handmade cedar strip canoe), and we met a lot of young veterans and few old ones and introduced them to VFP. We gave out FREE CHELSEA MANNING stickers and got a bunch of e-mails and phone numbers. The canoe raffle is equal parts fundraising and outreach. It is a vital part of our chapter that brings us together and builds camaraderie amongst us. Watching Vice-President, Mike Madden, biking the canoe to and from the two day event was quite a sight.

Two weeks after Gay Pride, we participated in a parade in River Falls, Wisconsin. With help from two VFPers from Northern Minnesota who hauled a Float 250 miles, we made a nice impression with our flags flying and handing out leaflets promoting the annual Peacestock event the following day with our statement of purpose on the back. It'll be interesting to see if we're invited back next year!

The following morning, three carloads headed to Peacestock! This annual event that Chapter 27 co-hosts with the Red Wing VFPers is a full day of music, food and speakers. A special thanks to Bill Habedank of Chapter 115 for his amazing work to make this happen.

We are looking forward to an August of arts, education, and action starting with a couple of Hiroshima/Nagasaki ceremonies at a local church and at the Japanese Peace Garden by a city lake. We'll end August with a commemoration of the Kellogg-Briand Peace Treaty on August 27th.

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## CHAPTER 31 - PHILADELPHIA, PA

### Chuck Rossi

On May Day (the real Labor Day), John Grant, Frank Corcoran, Cherie Eichholz, Tom Bradley, Chuck Rossi, and special guest Michael Uhl made up the Chapter 31 Precision Grill Team, cooking hundreds of hot dogs and hamburgers for our comrades in the labor movement. We also had a contingent in the Philly Gay Pride Parade for the third straight year.

Several members of the Chapter participated in a workshop at the Social Forum on "Getting the History of Vietnam Right" as a counter to the Pentagon's Vietnam War Commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the war. There was some spirited participation in the workshop, including a few curious young people who all said that they have been taught little or nothing about the war itself or the dissent and activism within the country at that time. There is work to be done.

Mike Felker did a presentation about his time as a Navy Corpsman assigned to a Marine Unit in Vietnam to the Kensington High School for the Creative and Performing Arts. The presentation is a gripping mingling of a young man's personal experience of the absurdity of his life at war and a broader account of the war itself.

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## CHAPTER 34 - NEW YORK, NY

### Bob Keilbach

Members of the Kaufman/Pahios Chapter have participated in various peace and social justice actions, and educational events.

Tom Gogan presented USLAW's vision for a peacetime economy, (<https://org.salsalabs.com/o/2488/images/Economic%20Conversion-Addiction%20to%20Sustainability.-Draft3.pdf>); John Kim discussed *Ending the US War in Korea*; Stephen Polk described the Peace and Planet events; Rachel Clark spoke about Hibakushas invited to the

Peace & Planet Conference; Alejandro Molina spoke about the May 30 Demonstration to Free Oscar Lopez Rivera, Puerto Rican political prisoner and Vietnam Veteran; Susan Schnall spoke about the Full Disclosure Campaign.

Events: St. Pat's for-All Parade; Jacob George Forum on PTSD, Suicide Prevention and substance abuse; Teach-in on Vietnam had 60 attendees; Peace & Planet Rally and March had 40 VFP participants including National President Barry Ladendorf and Michael McPhearson. [peaceandplanet.org](http://peaceandplanet.org)

Forty attendees at Memorial Day commemoration in Battery Park about the true meaning of Memorial Day for veterans their families and all victims of war; VFP marched with our banner in the NYC March to Free Oscar Lopez Rivera, and the Puerto Rican Day Parade. <http://boricuahumanrights.org/>. We marched in the NYC Heritage of Pride Parade, honoring whistleblower Chelsea Manning, and at the August 5 Hiroshima/Nagasaki Commemoration at Japanese Consulate in NY.

Chapter Facebook page: [facebook.com/groups/116364085229453](https://www.facebook.com/groups/116364085229453)

## CHAPTER 35 - SPOKANE, WA

### Hollis Higgins

Greetings all. We welcome new members, Michael, Maevea, and Nelson. Our big news: Publication of *VET LIT; How We Remember War*, coinciding with readings Memorial Day weekend, 50 attending, (CD available soon, including a speech by Mike Hastie), and interviews on KYRS Radio, May 23rd, on Praxis; podcast at: [http://praxisradio509.podomatic.com/entry/2015-05-23T23\\_21\\_39-07\\_00](http://praxisradio509.podomatic.com/entry/2015-05-23T23_21_39-07_00). We paraded with OutSpokane June 13<sup>th</sup>, and sat with Occupy resisting the city's "No Sit-Lie Ordinance." We donated to Viet Nam Chapter #160, the Brian Willson movie *Paying The Price For Peace*, and to the "Splashdown" for the Golden Rule.

George Taylor attended SOA Watch in Georgia. We appointed our first finance committee, and will hold a chapter retreat in July. A committee is designing a full page ad addressing Full Disclosure of "America's Viet Nam War." Our Truth-In-Recruitment team met North Central High students. In March we donated \$500.00 for the annual Peace & Economic Justice Action Conference, and hosted dinner for Elliot Adams who participated in the Palestine workshop. We co-sponsored Chris Hedges speaking on Wages of Rebellion: The Moral Imperative of Revolt, March 10<sup>th</sup>, framing his appearance with the Drone Quilt Project we hosted 11 days.

## CHAPTER 41 - CAPE COD, MA

### Duke Ellis

On April 4th we joined with the Cape and Islands Veterans Outreach Center to host a community event focused on Mark Nickerson's book *The Wounds Within*. The book tells the story of Jeffrey Lucey, his family and his therapist and includes a more general discussion of PTSD. Mark and Keven Lucey spoke at the event which also featured portraits from Matthew Mitchell's "100 Faces of War Experience" with local vets reading statements by or about each vet portrayed. We are supporting an effort to spread the word about the book to other VFP Chapters.

On May 2nd our TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY "Voices of Peace" Contest was held. This year's event and book of winning poems featured statements of appreciation from some of the teachers who have been our most loyal supporters as well as poems by several of our chapter members and contest judges.

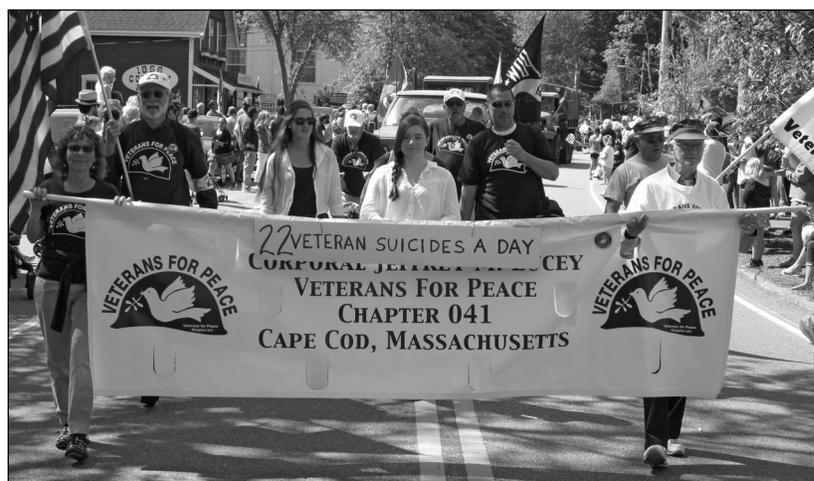
On Memorial Day in Hyannis, we again participated in the largest event on Cape Cod with our "22" armbands and message about the human costs of war. As before, we asked one of our young contest winners to read her winning poem as part of the ceremony (see the poem by Caitlin Hatch in on p. 19).

## CHAPTER 49 - INDIANAPOLIS, IN

### Ken Barger

The Chapter has made good progress implementing its 2015 Strategic Plan. At the July meeting, Ken Barger was installed as President for the coming year. Recent actions included cooperation with a Friends Committee on National Legislation initiative on "Will your US representative vote for endless war?" and a VFP initiative on "Do we have any long-term solutions for ISIS?"

The Veterans Discussion Series, a collaborative project between the Chapter and the Vonnegut Library, achieved a number of important objectives, and a final report has



Cape Cod Memorial Day Parade

been submitted to Indiana Humanities, which supported this project. The final report and summaries of the individual discussion sessions were shared with chapter members and our local networks and is also available online ([www.vfp49.org/documents/VeteransDiscussions-2015.pdf](http://www.vfp49.org/documents/VeteransDiscussions-2015.pdf)).

Ken Barger represented the chapter in a webinar on PTSD for community mental health professions in Indiana.

The Indiana American Friends Service Committee has passed on its exhibit of boots representing troops from Indiana killed in our Middle East wars. This exhibit will be used as a part of our Costs of War education efforts, and will be shown as a part of the Vonnegut Library's Veterans Reclaim Armistice Day in November.

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## CHAPTER 51 - SYRACUSE, NY

**Sharon Dellinger**

The Syracuse Chapter has reinvented itself and is now the CNY Chapter of Veterans For Peace (Chapter 51). After years of inactivity, a small group of interested veterans and associates has already met twice, once in May and again on June 17, 2015. At the June 17 meeting, they elected a Chair and a Vice Chair to help facilitate meetings and guide the chapter as it continues to grow its membership and find its niche in the community.

One of the activities the chapter has planned is tabling at a local Farmer's Market in downtown Syracuse, in concert with another group, the Syracuse Peace Council. It is our hope that a presence downtown will give us an opportunity to reach out to potential members and their families. The chapter is also planning to participate in a Hiroshima Day March in August and a Veteran's Day march on November 11.

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## CHAPTER 63 - ALBUQUERQUE, NM

**Sally Alice Thompson**

Our big project this summer is a Kellogg-Brand Day press conference. Ray McGovern will be the featured presenter, and City Council President Rey Garduno will issue a proclamation making August 27 Kellogg-Briand Day in Albuquerque.

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## CHAPTER 67 - LONG BEACH, CA

**Richard Madeira**



**A marker from Chapter 67's Teen Memorial**

The Chapter is the proud 2014 recipient of the Zinn Fund grant. Entitled the "Teen Empowerment Project For Peace," the grant project combines both new and ongoing aspects of our work in the Long Beach/Los Angeles area. It unites the existing foundation of the VFP 67 Teen Memorial (an Arlington West-like display of markers that honor the over 500 young 18- and 19-year-old teens that have been killed in our current wars), with 4 established local high school peace clubs, an adult community peace network/truth in recruitment movement and the Santa Monica Mountains annual youth Peace Camp.

The project intends to create an enlarged peace club network that will empower local youth to create

additional high school chapters that speak out and enact peaceful alternatives to conflict through numerous projects and well thought out ideas. Projects will include assisting in the display of the Teen Memorial and the Arlington West, attending Peace Camp, designing and painting a peace mural, teach-ins, tabling, writing and speaking with their peers about peace and generally strengthening their knowledge of peacemaking through conscious alternatives to conflict.

Our clear intent and goal of this project is to ensure a long lasting voice of youth for peace in our community that empowers on-going high school peace clubs in the process for many years to come. We thank the Zinn Fund for their trust and support of this exciting project.

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## CHAPTER 71 - SONOMA VALLEY, CA

**Bill Simon**

In addition to our ongoing tabling, most recently at Santa Rosa Junior College *Day Under The Oaks* event, we have been developing two new chapter projects. First, on Armistices Day (11/11/15) we are planning a display for the Santa Rosa Junior College campus lawn, adjacent to a very busy street and sidewalk. This display, initiated by Tom Meier, is presently a work in progress. We are planning to have 22 large red exes (Xs) representing the horrendous fact that 22 USA veterans kill themselves each day. We will have a sign explaining this symbolic representation and distribute a brief handout outlining this and other disturbing, factual hidden costs of war.

We also are developing a VFP Chapter 71 Writers' Group. This Group will meet regularly to work as a team to produce Op-Eds, Letters to the Editor, Press Releases, etc. on a regular basis with the goal of public education in a variety of local papers and electronic media.

And finally, we along with San Francisco Chapter 69 and other Nor Cal chapters are proud sponsors of the 2016 VFP National Convention.

We are looking forward to workings with our VFP brothers and sisters on this exciting project.

## **CHAPTER 72 - PORTLAND, OR**

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### **Marian Ward**

In July, the Portland Chapter organized a fundraiser featuring musician-activist David Rovics and VFP member Lloyd Marbet, who spoke about his personal experience with Agent Orange as well as issues surrounding the Hanford nuclear site.

Chapter 72 endorsed a resolution asking the City of Portland to accept cleared-for-release prisoners from Guantanamo, at the behest of member Kevin Matronic, who drafted the resolution along with a representative from Amnesty International.

VFP members Dan Shea and Angie Hines painted a door that is part of a wall surrounding a homeless encampment known as Right to Dream Too, or R2D2. The camp is adjacent to a busy downtown street, so the VFP message will enjoy high visibility.

Chapter member Malcolm Chadock has been involved with Portland's Black Lives Matter since the beginning. He serves as a visible representative of VFP within the movement, and keeps the chapter apprised of ongoing actions.

VFP members who were unable to attend this year's convention in San Diego will march across the Steel Bridge with VFP flags flying to join the annual PSR-spearheaded Hiroshima/Nagasaki commemoration at Portland's waterfront.

In September Chapter 72 will table at the annual Vancouver Peace and Justice Fair.

## **CHAPTER 75 - PHOENIX, AZ**

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### **Aaron Davis**

March 21, 2015, the Winter Soldier Chapter facilitated 12th Anniversary of Iraq war with IVAW vets Miguel Colon, Andrew Long and Imam Didmar Fajia at ASU. VFP member Jim Lucas attended.

May 7, 2015-Visited and presented to four Compadre Academy Alternative High School classes taught by Juan Enriquez. Attending were Matt Nicholls, (who all the young ladies fell in love with), Rich Smith, Ahmad Daniels, Billy Clark, and Charlie Osburn.

May 23, 2015-Spoke & marched in the Annual March Against Monsanto in Tempe. VFP members Dennis Stout and Jim Lucas attended.

May 30, 2015-Camped at the occupied Oak Flat Campground with the San Carlos Apaches. Delivered supplies for occupation of the sacred site until section 3003 of the land swap is repealed. Rio Tinto/Resolution Copper want to "block cave" the entire mountain for copper.

## **CHAPTER 91 - SAN DIEGO, CA**

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### **Gil Field**

The Chapter had a very busy spring and early summer, making plans with the national VFP leadership for the annual convention in San Diego in August. In addition to all the work that has been done to make sure the August convention was a success, Chapter #91 members also participated in the very popular Earth Fair in Balboa Park (80,000 attendees), set up our Hometown Arlington West Memorial on Memorial Day, and marched in the San Diego Pride Parade on July 18<sup>th</sup>, by far the largest parade in San Diego each year, attracting 300,000 spectators. We continued to actively raise money from the public and buy and distribute sleeping bag sets to the nearly 1,000 folks (vets and non-vets) who live on our downtown streets, and will soon hand out our 2500<sup>th</sup> set. We remain thrilled that our aging ranks have been rejuvenated with numerous post-911 veterans, who bring their energy and keen insight to our meetings and outreach activities. Chapter #91 looks forward to the fall and plans on remaining an active force for peace and social justice in the growing San Diego area.

## **CHAPTER 92 - SEATTLE, WA**

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### **Keith Orchard**

On Feb 16 Chapter 92 supported a talk by Christian Appy, Professor of History of the University of Massachusetts speaking about his new book: *American Reckoning: The Vietnam War and Our National Identity*.

On March 14<sup>th</sup> the Chapter sponsored Former VFP President Elliott Adams speaking on his recent trip to the West Bank.

For Tax Day and GDAMS on April 15<sup>th</sup>, we leafleted to expose the grotesque amount our government spends on the military.

The Chapter sponsored the play *The Ghosts of Tonkin* at ACT theater May 2-10, 2015, a play about U.S. Senator Wayne Morse (OR) and his attempts to prevent the Vietnam War. Chapter Members Mike Dedrick, Will Aleckson and Howard Harrison participated in discussions after the play on various days.

Chapter 92 sponsored the movie *Kent State: The Day the War Came Home*, a documentary about the Kent State shootings on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1970. Chapter member Mason Rhoades led a discussion about his experiences that day as a student.

Chapter 92 Marched in the Seattle Pride Parade on June 28, 2015 in support of transgender Army intelligence analyst and whistleblower Chelsea Manning.

## **CHAPTER 104 - EVANSVILLE, IN**

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### **Caroline Nellis**

In April, members Lynn Kinkade and Gary May served on a panel following a screening of *Last Days in Vietnam*. Gary also acquired 40 donated refurbished computers via vet Larry McCord. Gary gifted those to VFP National Vets Court Computer Lab.

At our Earth Day booth, we disseminated literature and held kids' crafts. Our committee met in May to develop an annual peace scholarship to honor Gary. Local high school seniors and post-secondary attendees will be eligible for the unrestricted scholarship.

In May, four members, including Dave Helfrich, participated in a Vietnam-related, 90-minute panel discussion before students at the charter school at which Dave's daughter is an instructor, creating a ballet adaptation of *Romeo & Juliet* placed at Kent State during the '70s.

Our spring cookout at the local VA Clinic happened May 27. We grilled and served hot dogs for appreciative vets. Chandana Mathur, in the U.S. to publish her dissertation on the First Gulf War, visited our May meeting. Chandana, interested, too, in VFP's involvement with the Agent Orange issue, was put in touch with Agent Orange Project leaders.



Chapter 104 at cookout at VA Clinic

## CHAPTER 106 - DALLAS, TX

**Leslie Harris**

In lieu of our June meeting, we enjoyed an independent league baseball game. Member John O'Leary sang the anthem.

The Chapter has held weekly protests at Bush's home or Library; made several congressional visits re Fast Track; tabled at the 3-day "Earth Day Dallas" event; attended a screening of *Good Kill* together; participated in the "Dallas to Baltimore" solidarity march, the McKin-

ney demonstrations, and the "Peaceful Tomorrows" Memorial Day race. We helped artist Jenn Hassin roll paper made from military uniforms to create a large sculpture, called "A Battle Lost" raising awareness about military suicide.



VFP 106 rolling paper for "A Battle Lost" sculpture

Our tax-day demonstration turned into a civil rights protest when Postal Police accosted two of us outside the post office. Despite their bullying and threats of arrest, we flyered, displayed a VFP "How's the war economy working for you?" poster and a large "military spending" pie chart, and later displayed the message, "PENTAGON WASTE =/= SECURITY" in lights.

We've partnered with the Light Brigade for messaging including: We Are All One; Stop TPP Fast Track; Don't Fast Track A Train Wreck; Stop Killer Drones; Marriage Equality; Unlearn Racism; Stop Monsanto; <3 Flotilla III; Hug A Whistleblower; Stand Up For Truth; and on 4th of July, "Illusion of Democracy."

Several members attended "Shut Down Creech" and will take a road trip to the San Diego convention.

## CHAPTER 110 - ORANGE CTY, CA

**Sam Coleman**

Members of the Jim Brown Chapter marched in the Huntington Beach July 4 parade, billed as the biggest in the Western United States. Orange County's right-wing John Wayne reputation didn't

stop the spontaneous applause we received along the way.

## CHAPTER 115 - RED WING, MN

**Emma Onawa**

Peacestock 2015 was held at Hobgoblin Barn, Red Wing, Minnesota, on Saturday, July 11. The theme was "The War on Our Climate."

Dr. James Hansen, a retired NASA climate scientist now professor at Columbia University's Earth Institute and climate expert who has testified before Congress, spoke via Skype. Dr. Hansen was elected in 1995 to the National Academy of Sciences and named one of Time's most influential people in 2006.

Nate Hagens, former editor of *The Oil Drum*, now board member for Post Carbon Institute, Bottleneck Foundation, NER and Institute for the Study of Energy and the Future, also addressed this year's gathering.

Kathy Kelly, peace activist, author, founder of Voice in the Wilderness, spoke about her recent internment and current affairs. Music for the event was provided by the Wild Colonial Bhoys.

Chapter 115 has chosen the winning student, Marcus Warrington, of its Red Wing High School Kellogg-Briand essay contest *How Can We Become a More Peaceful People?*. Bill Habedank presented a \$500 scholarship at the award ceremony. Marcus attended and spoke at Peacestock.

## CHAPTER 135 - NW FLORIDA

**Bill Sloan**

The Chapter's activities in the first half of 2015 focused on support and sometimes the leadership of local efforts. That has been our role for the dozen years we've been around. The many rallies, Armistice Days and name readings we've conducted have been supported, in numbers, spirit, and toughness by a formation of local activists, including a minority of veterans. Most loyal have been members of the Unitarian

Universalist Church, where Scott Satterwaite chairs the Social Justice committee. Bill Sloan recently organized a chapter of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship -- a national organization whose agenda parallels VFP's -- with a mission area of 63 congregations. Scott's church hosted a rally by Black Lives Matter. Bill is active in a local movement against police misconduct. Scott and Bill were both active in taking down the Confederate flags. Both of us identify ourselves -- in too many groups to recite -- as members of VFP. We intend, as we have done for all these years, to keep VFP prominent in pushing our mission.



Kathy Bracewell and Prof. Paul Croce

## CHAPTER 136 - CENTRAL FL

### Phil Restino

In April, the Chapter co-sponsored Stetson University History Department's screening of *The War at Home* chronicling the anti-war movement at UW-Madison in the 1960s. Associate member Kathy Bracewell, a student at UW-Madison when while her brother was in Vietnam, was featured for the Q&A. Kathy and Phil Restino were invited back to Stetson for a "Public Classroom" with history students and student veterans of the 9/11 Wars to discuss U.S. Foreign Policy. Both events have been posted on our CentralFloridaVFP YouTube channel.

On Memorial Day, the Chapter presented our annual Iraq/Afghan War Memorial at the Daytona Beach Bandshell. Notebooks listing the names of the over 6800

U.S. troops killed in the wars allowed passersby to remember the fallen. Iraq/Afghan veterans expressed thanks for remembering their comrades. We presented a special memorial to the 34 U.S. Sailors/Marines killed in the June 8, 1967, Israeli attack on the USS Liberty. Liberty Veterans Association president Ernie Gallo made a personal visit and thanked us on behalf of his shipmates.

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, the Chapter tabled outside of the Volusia County Administration Center concerning the Israeli attack on the USS Liberty and petitioning the U.S. Congress to conduct a new investigation and to declare every June 8<sup>th</sup> as "USS Liberty Remembrance Day."

## CHAPTER 157 - NC TRIANGLE

### John Heuer & Roger Ehrlich

Roger Ehrlich's Swords to Plowshares Bell Tower was on the move again in May, setting up on the National Mall near the Lincoln Memorial in time to welcome Sam Winstead's 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Ride for Peace from Raleigh, NC, to Washington on May 16. Sam led a total of 58 cyclists through the back roads of NC and Virginia during the 8 day, 350-mile route. 90-year-old Sam, who served with in the Pacific during WW II, was invited to join a Bike for Peace in Russia in July, but postponed the Russia trip until after his 2016 ride to DC.

New Chapter member Machai St. Rain, an Army Reserve veteran of the Gulf War era and grandmother of 5, launched her own Peace Is Possible bicycle ride 750 miles from Raleigh to Indianapolis before leaving for Eureka, CA, to support the launch of the Golden Rule Peace Boat.

Memorial Day events at the Vietnam Memorial saw the delivery of Letters to The Wall, a project of the Vietnam Full Disclosure Campaign, with the Swords to Plowshares Bell Tower serving as the gathering place for veterans and friends. Meanwhile, the Eisenhower Chapter held our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Me-

morial Day Veterans Speak in Poetry, Prose and Song at the Regulator Bookstore in Durham, NC.



Sam Winstead during Ride for Peace. Photo by Ahmed Selim

## CHAPTER 160 - VIETNAM

### Chuck Searcy

This year's Vietnam Peace Tour hosted by Hoa Binh Chapter ended with a major commemoration in Ho Chi Minh City of the 40th anniversary of the end of the war on April 30, 1975. For 17 days the group traveled from Hanoi to Hue, Quang Tri and the DMZ, A Luoi, Danang, Nha Trang, and Saigon. Families and programs living with war legacies of unexploded ordnance and Agent Orange were introduced to the delegation. Tour participants voted on how to allocate almost \$20,000 donated as part of the tour, to be distributed and monitored by Chapter 160. The 2016 tour will be March 14-30.

A plan for VFP and Project RENEW to seek funding from USAID to support Agent Orange families in Vietnam has made little progress. VFP and Project RENEW agreed to partner in applying for these funds, a VFP Board decision which caused much discussion and serious dissent among many members. USAID rejected the initial "concept paper" which was the first step in applying. The process is not over, but serious bureaucratic and policy obstacles remain, which must be considered.



## CHAPTER 161 - IOWA CITY, IA

John Jadryev

The past few months found us putting together an ambitious project, namely, a September barnstorming tour of Iowa by Ray McGovern, former CIA, and Coleen Rowley, former FBI. The theme is "The Truth Shall Set Us Free" with the intent to influence and improve the dialogue of the many presidential hopefuls coming through Iowa as they position themselves for success in Iowa's "first in the nation" caucus early in 2016. The 6-city tour of Dubuque, Davenport, Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, Cedar Falls, and Des Moines features venues at several seats of higher learning including the University of Dubuque, Loras College, St Ambrose University, The University of Iowa, Northern Iowa University, and Drake University. Other venues include the Cedar Rapids Veterans Memorial Building and the Iowa City Foreign Relations Council. Our deepest thanks to chapters 163 and 169 for their support and encouragement.

## CHAPTER 162 - EAST BAY, CA

Cathe Norman

We continue to participate in the monthly Oakland First Friday Street Fair Event. We occupy a booth filled with VFP materials, and we engage passers-by in discussions of Peace and Veterans issues. At times we are joined by Grandmothers for Peace

Members of our Chapter and Chapter 69, San Francisco, attended the Memorial Day Vigil at the Crosses of Lafayette. A member of Chapter 162 read one of his poems at the event.

We have twice participated in San Francisco middle and high school discussions on counter-recruitment.

## CHAPTER 168 - LOUISVILLE, KY

Carol Rawert Trainer



Ch. 168 tabling at Louisville Bats baseball game.

Chapter 168 has been busy and is growing!! Over the past quarter, we have published several letters in local newspapers regarding the wars, the VA, and veterans' support. John Wilborn had an especially pertinent and timely letter in the *Courier Journal* regarding military operations in the Middle East and elsewhere. In March, we volunteered at the Louisville National Public Radio fundraiser; the 3 stations made 9 announcements for our Chapter during that time.

On Memorial Day weekend, we tabled at Louisville Bats baseball game. Member Gregory Abati recently revised *Thou Shall Not Kill...* about his Viet Nam experiences as a combat Marine. His new book *The Journey* is published and marketed thru Amazon also. During our Chapter potluck dinner at the Trainer's on 6/20 Greg sold his books



Chapter 175 was joined by Rock Valley Fellowship of Reconciliation & Forward! Marching Band in the Milton, WI Independence Day parade

and generously donated the proceeds to the chapter.

We also sponsored and tabled at the *Shadows of Liberty* documentary screening event. John Wilborn participated on the panel discussion afterwards.

The struggle to relocate and build a new VA Hospital in Louisville continues, along with monthly vigils in remembrance and protest of war, troops and Obama Administration policies in Afghanistan, Yemen and the Middle East.

## CHAPTER 175 - JANESVILLE, WI

Norman Aulabaugh

The newly chartered chapter 175 in Janesville, Wisconsin joined with chapter 25 in Madison, Wisconsin to march in the Memorial Day parade in Monona, Wisconsin. As the marching unit carrying numerous VFP flags and a huge banner proclaiming, "Mourn the dead, heal the wounded, abolish war" advanced down the parade route, the applause from those watching the parade was loud and sustained.

On July 4, Chapter 175 was joined by the Rock Valley Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Forward! Marching Band in the Milton, Wisconsin Independence Day parade. Our theme was "Peace is Patriotic" and the response was positive. A short video from this parade is now on YouTube at <http://youtube/318K5nvbj4Y>



(Continued from page 1)

ter on the campus of the University of San Diego. The title of the event was "Peace and Reconciliation". After hosting a panel discussion, we all retreated to the beautiful garden area and conducted a bowl burning ceremony, which symbolized the leaving behind of past hurts and moving towards a positive future reflecting peace and harmony amongst all people and countries.

A special thanks goes out to our chairperson, Gary Butterfield, from the San Diego host chapter who tirelessly worked to make the convention a success. And yes, from all accounts it was a big success.



(Continued from page 2)

gers of nuclear weapons and saving the oceans and waterways is as exciting as its message is powerful.

### Membership

**GOOD NEWS!!** Last year we assisted 35 post-9/11 vets to attend our annual convention in Asheville, NC. This year we provided assistance to 60 or more. From those who attended, I heard nothing but rave reviews.

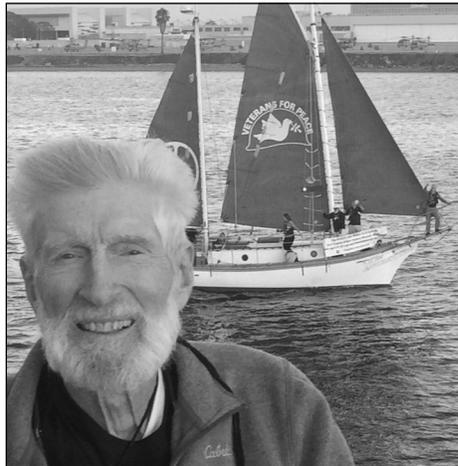
We also can report that in the last few months we have had a slight uptick in our membership. Hopefully, with our new programs and support for younger veterans we will see a steady growth in our numbers. There is much work to do, but we are in good hands with Membership Committee chair, Tarak Kauff.

In my first seven months as President of the VFP Board, I have been privileged to meet so many members from coast to coast. I am so impressed by your dedication and commitment to VFP. We can raise money, create new projects and increase members. Without your continued commitment and enthusiasm we will never reach our potential. Thank for your continued support of VFP. Forward Together.



Leah & Bart Bolger with part of the Drone Quilts Project.

## FACES OF THE 30TH ANNUAL CONVENTION



Orin Sherwood, member of original Golden Rule crew, with restored boat at sail.



VFP Poet Laureate and founding member, Doug Rawlings.



Two of many empowering speakers, Phyllis Bennis & Seymour Hersh.



Le Ly Hayslip, Vietnamese author, both received and gave a Lifetime Membership.



Ryan Hollaran & Matt Howard of IVAW present thank you gift to VFP, celebrating IVAW's 10th Anniversary.

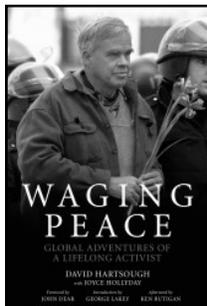


Local convention chair, Gary Butterfield.

# BOOK REVIEW: WAGING PEACE

S. Brian Willson

*Waging Peace: Global Adventures of A Life Long Activist* by David Hartsough (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2014).



We are fortunate to finally have David Hartsough's *Waging Peace*, an extraordinary description of his 60-year journey as an activist spanning the entire Cold War and continuing to the present. As one of today's authentic elders, Hartsough offers us a body of experiential knowledge presented in dramatic detail sometimes easily forgotten in today's digital era of short memories.

Hartsough shares wisdom garnered from a broad range of experiences: direct, nonviolent confrontation of Cold War policies during his travels in Europe as well as in the US; participation in the Civil Rights movement (he met Martin Luther King, Jr. at age 15); becoming a conscientious objector to US military conscription in the 1950s; participating with others in blocking weapons and military ships headed for Viet Nam; actively obstructing, with hundreds of others, the construction of nuclear power plants; accompanying impoverished campesinos facing historically repressive military threats in El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, and Palestine; facing death squads in the Philippines and Chiapas, Mexico; visiting Russia during the Cold War and again in 1991 when he joined many Russians in efforts to avert a coup ousting the reformer Mikhail Gorbachev; leading delegations to Iran creating citizen-to-citizen diplomacy; traveling over the years to the region of ex-Yugoslavia in efforts to participate in strategic

nonviolent alternatives to the violence unleashed when Yugoslavia was broken up significantly due to US policies; recently protesting drone warfare with increasing numbers of others by obstructing entrances to drone bases in efforts to confront the most insidious and diabolical of all terror policies; among many, many examples of citizen power.

In the chapter, "Assault on the Tracks: Facing Violence With Love and Courage," Hartsough describes his first-person, eyewitness account of the horrendous assault – attempted murder – that occurred at the Concord, California Naval Weapons Station on September 1, 1987—the first such account to be published, as far as I know. He was one of many protestors, organized under the name Nuremberg Actions that had been vigiling all summer, in direct confrontation of the movement of munitions by train and truck from the Pentagon's largest West Coast arsenal. Hundreds had already been arrested and jailed for trying to stop the flow of munitions to El Salvador and Nicaragua, where they were being used to murder and maim thousands of campesinos struggling for justice after decades of brutal, US-supported repression. President Reagan had signed new executive orders to counter "terror" at home and abroad, in effect reinstating the FBI's feared COINTELPRO—orders that remain in effect today. Reagan made the ridiculous claim that these impoverished people in Central America were creating a Soviet-inspired Communist beachhead "just two days driving time from Harlingen, Texas," and that the US Americans dissenting from his policies of murder were terrorists themselves. On that day in September 1987, three veterans, after providing plentiful notice and surrounded by 40 others in solidarity, including Hartsough, began a munitions train

blocking action just before noon. The train speed limit was 5 mph, its legal protocol required it to always stop awaiting arrests by police when demonstrators were present on the tracks. Two Navy spotters always stood on the front platform of the locomotive in radio contact with the engineer to assure clear tracks. On this particular sunny day, the locomotive accelerated to 17 mph, more than three times the legal speed limit, catching everyone off guard. One blocker (this reviewer) was unable to get off in time, losing both legs below the knee and suffering a fractured skull among a multitude of injuries. Hartsough, standing immediately next to the tracks, had his arm struck by the speeding locomotive knocking him to the ground from which vantage point he observed the dragged blocker "getting smashed from side to side as the train continued another four hundred feet before stopping." Of all of his years of resistance, Hartsough described this as "the most horrible experience of my life."

In 2003, as a result of his many observations of conflicts in various countries, Hartsough helped launch the Nonviolent Peace Force (NPF), deploying teams of multinational citizens trained in nonviolence to accompany and stand in defense of endangered people in critical global locations.

Hartsough's inspiring life story teaches us so much about the power of conscience and militant nonviolence, shaped by his years of participation with thousands of others in creative and educational resistance actions. He and his family also have modeled "right livelihood," with modesty and humble simplicity, conscious of the old motto, often ascribed to Gandhi, "live simply that others may simply live."

This is a primer for learning many practical approaches to militant, non-violent revolution. Read and study it. You will not be sorry.





### The Paper in My Hand

The paper in my hand states only one thing,  
loss sacrifice and despair

The paper in my hand was said to hold the message of honor  
but I only feel pain and sadness

The paper in my hand falls and I retreat to my room  
my life now split in half

The paper in my hand will stay on the floor hopefully forever  
I wish it would decay, along with my heart

The paper in my hand will spread its sickness  
to everyone I know and love

The paper in my hand states only one thing,  
my dad is gone.

- *Caitlin Hatch*

7th grade student at the Barnstable, MA  
Intermediate School. Winner: Chapter 41  
Voices of Peace Poetry Contest



### The Stick Soldiers

*To soldiers, I hope the war is fine.*  
-Girl Scout Troop 472

The children have colored the cards,  
dated from December,  
with Christmas trees, piles of presents,  
snowmen smiling, waving. Sara wants  
a doll. Evan, a dog. Kyle promises  
to pray for us.

Outside the hooch, we open mail,  
hundreds of letters  
from youth groups, scout troops,  
classes of school children.

Kearns wants to write back,  
ask for pictures  
of older sisters.

We tape our favorites to the door.  
In blue crayon, a stick-figure soldier poses  
as he's about to toss  
a black ball,  
fuse burning,  
at three other stick figures,  
red cloth wrapped over faces,  
*Iraki* written  
across stick chests.

In Jalula, the children draw us pictures, too.

In white chalk, on concrete walls,  
a box-shaped Humvee with two antennae  
rising like balloons from the hatch.  
A stick-soldier holds a machine-gun;  
he waves at us,  
us, in the Humvees.

Further down the wall, a stick-man holds  
an RPG  
aimed toward the Humvee,  
the waving soldier's head—  
what the children want for Christmas,  
or what they just want.

- *Hugh Martin*



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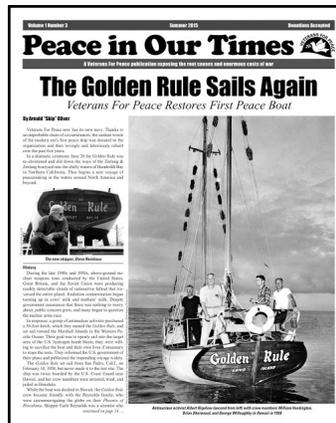
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