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VETERANS FOR PEACE

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VFP Newsletter

Summer 2017

Masahide Ota, Presente!

By Douglas Lummis

Former Okinawa Governor and Veterans For Peace member Ota Masahide passed away on 12 June, 2017, of pneumonia. He was 92. He will be remembered as a fierce opponent of the U.S. military bases in Okinawa, and a tireless advocate for peace.

Forced into the Japanese military at 19 (in violation of draft regulations), he witnessed the horrors of the Battle of Okinawa. After the war, while Okinawa was ruled by the U.S. military, he was one of the few allowed to study abroad. He graduated from Japan's Waseda University, and received his M.A. from Syracuse. From 1958 to 1990 he taught at the University of the Ryukyus, serving both as Chair of the Social Science Department and as Dean of the College of Law and Letters. During his distinguished academic career, he published some 45 books, in English and Japanese, largely on Okinawan history and contemporary affairs, many sharply critical of Okinawa's colonial (now neo-colonial) masters, Japan and the U.S.

In 1990, Ota retired from the university and successfully ran for Governor of Okinawa Prefecture. During his tenure, he established an unprecedented (in Japan) model of the



ELLEN DAVIDSON

Masahide Ota addresses VFP delegation members during their December 2015 visit to Okinawa.

rebellious governor. In Okinawa, much of the land on which U.S. bases are located is privately owned. The Okinawan owners have contracts with the central government. Many owners oppose the bases, and when their contracts expire, refuse to sign new ones. Under Japanese law, the Governor can sign in their place, and before Ota, all had done so. Governor Ota refused, which meant that the U.S. military was occupying the land illegally. The central government quickly changed the law to allow the Prime Minister to sign them. Only then, to avoid

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REFLECTIONS

Memorial Day in D.C.

By Doug Rawlings

This past Memorial Day, approximately 50 members took VFP's message of peace to our nation's capital—specifically, to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (The Wall), to the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, to the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, and, finally, to the gates of the White House. Look for a detailed account of our actions in the Summer 2017 edition of our sister newspaper, *Peace In Our Times*, available through the VFP website. For the purposes of this newsletter, I would like to feature and discuss the organizational aspects of the action, and some of the possible consequences of what came down on those meaningful three days in May.

Reflections continued on page 6 ...

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An Invitation from Your President

Chicago (That Toddlin' Town) Welcomes VFP!

"I give you Chicago. It is not London and Harvard. It is not Paris and buttermilk. It is American in every chitling and sparerib. It is alive from snout to tail."

—H. L. Mencken, *columnist and social critic*



Mencken was right. Chicago will certainly be alive this year when the 32nd Annual Veterans For Peace Convention comes to the Windy City. As I seem to say every year, this convention will be one you will not want to miss. There will be some of the best music you will hear anywhere, notable convention speakers with informative plenaries and workshops, and get-togethers with comrades from across the U.S., and as far away as Japan, Okinawa, and the U.K. This annual gathering of the "tribe" will nourish, excite, inform, and entertain, while giving you the chance to enjoy one of the world's great cities.

You will not want to miss: **Col. Lawrence Wilkerson**, former Chief of Staff under Secretary of State Colin Powell, and staunch critic of U.S. policy in the Middle East, who will deliver the keynote address at the banquet; **Andrew Lichterman**, from Western States Legal Foundation, who will discuss the UN Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons; **Rev. Lennox Yearwood** with the Hip Hop Caucus; **Phyllis Bennis**, writer, activist, and analyst on Middle East and UN issues; the first annual Power to Peace Festival at the famous Vic Theatre; and so much more.

This year's theme is **Education Not Militarization**. The Chicago VFP chapter—Cpl. Joseph E. Powers Chapter 26—has done an excellent job working with the national office to bring together one of our best conventions ever. For years, the Chicago chapter has been one of the strongest critics of Chicago Public Schools' headlong dash to have the largest Junior ROTC program of any public school system in the country, so its members are well positioned to tell us why this struggle is important, how they challenge the system, and what we can do in our own communities to fight the encroachment of militarization in our schools.

Michael Geyer describes militarization as, "the contradictory and tense social process in which civil society organizes itself for the production of violence." Perhaps this explains why someone in America is more likely to be killed by the police or by a deranged person in a shopping mall than by a terrorist. And, of course, violence at home begets violence abroad and vice versa. Somehow, U.S. policy, in spite of evidence to the contrary, forges ahead with the belief that Americans will be safe if we invade more countries, drop more bombs, increase drone warfare, target refugees as suspected terrorists, and kill innocent civilians in Muslim countries. How do we confront the crisis of the growing militarization of our foreign and domestic policy? We will explore possible answers to that question in our plenaries and workshops, and with key speakers.

Be sure to join us at the Thursday night public event at the Chicago Veterans Town Hall to learn more about how the militarization of police, schools, and our communities affects people of color, Native Americans, veterans, and students. Gather information about what you can do to challenge the growing militarization in your own community.

Is there any bigger potential producer of violence than nuclear weapons? The U.S. continues hammering its refrain that "every option is on the table" in dealing with international conflict, including, of course, "the nuclear option." President Trump will continue the policy, put forward under President Obama, to modernize our nuclear weapons arsenal to the tune of about a trillion dollars over the next 30 years, while threatening to "solve" the North Korean problem if China will not. At the convention, you will have a chance to learn about VFP's new Ban Nuclear Weapons Campaign to challenge this insanity, why it is important to support the UN Treaty to Ban Nuclear Weapons, and what your chapter can do to advance the campaign.

More programs are being finalized, but one thing is sure: VFP will be a presence in Chicago. Collectively, we will say our "peace" with a major rally Sunday afternoon, hitting the streets to broadcast our message to the city as we visit the Vietnam Memorial, Trump Tower (from afar), and other sites along the route. Local and international chapters: Please bring banners announcing your chapter, state, or country, to let Chicago know that VFP stands in solidarity for peace with veterans from across the country and around the globe.

Finally, get ready to top off the convention with a great concert by VFP Advisory Board member, activist, and Rock and Roll Hall of Famer, Jackson Browne, who will play with Greg Liesz in a benefit concert on Sunday evening, August 13, at the Copernicus Center, with proceeds going to fund the work of Veterans For Peace.

Take time to enjoy Chicago and make it your kind of town!

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

Peace at Home: Mourning Philando

- Comments made at a June 17, 2017 anti-nuclear weapons protest in St. Louis, Missouri -



VFP Executive Director Michael McPhearson speaks on Memorial Day in Washington, D.C.

I'm Michael McPhearson, the Executive Director of Veterans For Peace, and I am here today, as a peacemaker and a justice seeker, to stand in solidarity with the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, commonly known as WILPF. But I am also here today as a Black man, to commemorate the killing of Philando Castile. Yesterday, Jeronimo Yanez, the St. Anthony, Minnesota, officer who killed Philando, was acquitted of all charges. You may remember that Philando, a cafeteria worker loved by his community, was killed last year during a traffic stop for a broken taillight. Philando's girlfriend live-streamed the aftermath of the shooting on Facebook. Their young daughter was also in the car.

Why am I talking about the life of a Black man and announcing "Black Lives Matter" at a rally to ban the bomb? Let me share a few words with you spoken by two men much more eloquent than I.

Fifty years ago, when asked about nuclear weapons, Dr. King Martin Luther King Jr. said, "I definitely feel that the development and use of nuclear weapons should be banned. It cannot be disputed that a full-scale nuclear war would be utterly catastrophic. Hundreds of millions

of people would be killed outright by the blast and heat, and by the ionizing radiation produced at the instant of the explosion... Even countries not directly hit by bombs would suffer through global fall-outs. All of this leads me to say that the principal objective of all nations must be the total abolition of war. War must be finally eliminated or the whole of mankind will be plunged into the abyss of annihilation."

In 1959, he is quoted as saying, "What will be the ultimate value of having established social justice in a context where all people, Negro and White, are merely free to face destruction by strontium 90 or atomic war?"

For King, Civil Rights was inextricably linked to peace. Remember the triple evils of War, Poverty, and Racism.

On April 1, 1961, the prominent Black writer James Baldwin addressed a large group of peace activists at a rally focused on "Security Through World Disarmament." When asked why he chose to speak at such an event, Baldwin responded: "What am I doing here? Only those who would fail to see the relationship between the fight for civil rights and the struggle for world peace would be surprised to see me. Both fights are the same. It is just as difficult for the white American to think of peace as it is of no color... Confrontation of both dilemmas demands inner courage."

Baldwin considered both problems in the same breath because, "racial hatred and the atom bomb both threaten the destruction of man as created free by God." [Martin Luther King Jr. and James Baldwin quotes taken from a Jan. 16, 2015 *Boston Review* article.]

This makes it clear why I invoke Philando Castile's name this morning. But I say to you that it goes much further than that. For us to win—and by us, I mean all of us, including the bigots, sexists, religious intolerant, and war mongers—for all of humanity to win, we as peacemakers and justice seekers must understand that all our struggles are inextricably

linked. That your struggle is mine, and mine is yours.

Fear is central to this struggle. It is one of the most powerful means to control us. To make us hate each other in order to justify war, religious intolerance, or whatever the case may be.

Domination is the hallmark of patriarchy. It is central to why the U.S. has the bomb as a nuclear umbrella to dominate and bully other nations.

And demonization, the hallmark of racism and all forms of bigotry, is central to war, for you must demonize a people to rationalize why it is okay to kill them.

I could go on, and I won't, but you can easily see why it is critical for us to stand and struggle united across what I call a full-spectrum movement for peace and justice, both at home and abroad. We must be hand in hand in this struggle to ban the bomb and to move forward all our struggles, not only because it is just and right, but because it is necessary for us to survive as a species.

This morning, before I left my apartment, I saw in the news that the Bill Cosby trial judge declared the jury hung. I don't know how you feel about Bill Cosby, but I see the hung jury as another example of the denial of a people's humanity. Yesterday it was Black people, today it is women. It is another example of why we must stand together in all our struggles.

Thank you for this opportunity to stand with you today in solidarity to remember and mourn Philando Castile. To proclaim "Black Lives Matter," and in the context of ending war and abolishing nuclear weapons, to say *all* life on the planet matters; and that we must work together for peace and justice, to ensure it is more than a slogan or an aspiration. In the end, *we*, as in all of us, must make it so.

Veterans For Peace Executive Director Michael T. McPhearson is the former co-chair of the Saint Louis Don't Shoot Coalition founded in the aftermath of Michael Brown's killing in Ferguson, Missouri.

Peace Abroad: VFP Delegation to Cuba

Fifth International Seminar for Peace and the Abolition of Foreign Military Bases

By Patrick McCann

Over 200 delegates from 32 countries assembled in Guantánamo, Cuba, May 4–6, 2017 for the Fifth International Seminar for Peace and the Abolition of Foreign Military Bases. Seven Veterans For Peace members attended, led by Col. Ann Wright, a featured presenter at the seminar. “Close U.S. Prison and Military Base at Guantánamo, Cuba, Close All US Bases in Other Peoples’ Lands!” proclaimed the VFP banner hanging on the wall in the theater of the University of Medical Sciences of Guantánamo. The day after the seminar ended, we presented this banner to Wilfredo Camos, General Studies Chair at the University of Guantánamo, at a rally of hundreds in Caimanera, the village closest to GITMO.

The U.S. Naval Base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, is the oldest overseas U.S. Naval Base, located on 45 square miles of land and water. The U.S. leased it as a coaling and naval station in 1903 for \$2,000, until 1934. In 1974, the yearly rent became \$4,085. The Cuban government has cashed no checks since 1959, and protests U.S. presence on Cuban soil, calling it illegal under international law, and declaring the base was imposed on Cuba.

At the UN Human Rights Council in 2013, Cuba’s Foreign Minister demanded the U.S. return the base, occupied since the U.S. invasion of Cuba during the Spanish-American War in 1898. Since 2002, the naval base has contained the Guantánamo Bay military detention camp for those captured during its Global War of Terror. Torture of prisoners, and denial of protection under the Geneva Conventions, is condemned internationally.

DAYS OF ACTION
AGAINST THE BLOCKADE
AGAINST THE BLOCKADE

Close the prison
Return Guantánamo to Cuba

TheInternationalCommittee.org

DAYS OF ACTION
AGAINST THE BLOCKADE
AGAINST THE BLOCKADE

With the exception of the first International Seminar for Peace and the Abolition of Foreign Military Bases, which was held in Quito and Manta, Ecuador, these seminars have all taken place in Cuba. But they have included presentations and discussion of foreign military bases worldwide, not just GITMO, and not just U.S. bases. As we in VFP know all too well, the number of U.S. bases dwarfs the combined number of bases of all other countries of the world, but presentations at this year’s seminar also included occupations by the Japanese (Takae in Okinawa), the Italians (in Sardinia), and Israel (in Palestine).

A First Trip to Cuba

By Patrick McCann

I visited Cuba the first week of May, 2107 as part of a delegation of seven Veterans For Peace members, to attend the “5th International Seminar on Peace and the Abolition of Foreign Military Bases” at the University of Medical Sciences of Guantánamo. I was awestruck by this island nation of 11 million people so close to our mainland, and couldn’t believe it took me so long to visit. The people are happy and healthy; education and health care are free.

The island is safe. (“No danger,” said the cabbie on the way from the airport to the hotel.) We went where we wanted island-wide, alone and in groups, visiting Havana, Camaguey, Guantánamo, Caimanera, Bayamo, Santiago, and Santa Clara. Our tour guides stated that everyone has a job, and pensioners make 90 percent of the salary they made when working.

Cuba’s international commitment, especially in Africa, has been stellar. Thousands of Cuban soldiers lost their lives aiding liberation struggles in Angola, Guinea-Bisseau, Namibia, Mozambique, and South Africa. They were the decisive force

Close the U.S. Prison and Military Base at Guantánamo, Cuba!

As observed by news analyst Aisha Maniar:*

“The closure of the Guantánamo Bay detention facility was a key election promise Barack Obama made in his 2008 presidential campaign. As president, he followed it up with a January 2009 executive order calling for the closure of Guantánamo Bay within one year, a moratorium on military tribunals, and a review of the detention status of all prisoners. Obama’s efforts to close Guantánamo failed spectacularly; nonetheless, he took immediate steps to break with the policies of George W. Bush. The reverse has been the case under President Donald Trump. There were 41 prisoners at Guantánamo when Trump assumed the presidency in January 2017, the same number as today. Of these men, only one—an Afghan national who has been cleared for release—was captured by the U.S. military. The others were either sold to the U.S. military by the Pakistani and Afghan authorities and warlords, or are victims of the CIA’s extraordinary rendition program. Particularly in the latter case, U.S. authorities have an interest in preventing the release of these men so that the conditions of their detention and the truth of the human experimentation they were gratuitously subjected to never comes to light.”

*“One Hundred Days of President Trump at Guantánamo Bay,” *Truthout.org*, Saturday, April 29, 2017.

in many of these conflicts, and their contribution is unique in human history. Additionally, Cuba has trained thousands of doctors, sent them to many countries, and built hospitals worldwide.

The biggest problem in Cuba is the lack of resources, primarily a result of the U.S. blockade of Cuba, now going on 60 years. A major attack on, and insult to, Cuba's national sovereignty is U.S. ownership and maintenance of the prison at Guantánamo Bay, where captives are tortured in the U.S. Global War of Terror. Though allegedly a lease, the U.S. has occupied this island since its invasion in the Spanish-American

War of 1898.

Cuba weathered a "special period" of privation in the 1990s when the Soviet Bloc collapsed, wiping out 85 percent of Cuba's trade. Reliance on the masses of the people guided them through this struggle, but the scarcity of resources continues. The lifting of restraints on travel to Cuba is a good development, but the blockade remains, and must be abandoned and destroyed. Long live the heroic struggle of the people of Cuba! Close the U.S. Prison and Military Base at Guantánamo, Cuba! Close *All* U.S. Bases in Other People's Lands!

Personal Reflections from Cuba

By Monisha Rios, MSW

I went to Cuba and came back a different person. Among a multitude of lessons gained from VFP's first ever delegation to the Fifth International Seminar for Peace and the Abolition of Foreign Military Bases, there are three that have significantly shaped the trajectory of my peace work moving forward.

First was exposure to the undeniable impact of U.S. Militarism and Imperialism. I did not fully grasp the totality of the embargo until coming face to face with the reality of what it is doing to families. It is a sadistic punishment on a people who simply want freedom from the oppressive domination of empire after empire.

Nevertheless, the people of Cuba maintain resilience in the face of such unimaginable adversity. Time and time again, the people I met said that they did not blame the American people for their plight, as they understood that we, too, are oppressed by our government. Their empathy touched me unlike anything else I have experienced.

Perhaps one of the most meaningful connections I made was with a woman who had served in the Cuban military. She, Col. Ann, and I had an historic conversation one afternoon on the bus. We shared commonalities and differences in service to a military that exists strictly for defense versus one like ours, that is ceaselessly hungry for aggression and global dominance. It blew my mind to know that women in the Cuban military are treated with a level of respect and dignity many of us in the U.S. have never experienced, much less witnessed. I'll never

forget her face when I told her about the sexual violence we endure like clockwork. Such things are not tolerated there. In addition, their veterans do not have to fight for benefits.

Beyond our detrimental impact on Cuba, I learned of further harm to families caused by our military presence in Takae, a small village in Okinawa, where there is a long history of abuse and sexual violence in addition to the environmental hazards of Osprey test flights. In addition to these atrocities, there is the detrimental impact to the psychological health and well-being of those who reside near the base, particularly the children.

Finally, this immersive experience reaffirmed my confidence that peace is truly possible when people come together as people. I look forward to the next VFP delegations to Cuba and Takae!



Other international delegates listen in as women veterans from U.S. and Cuba build peace together through respect, openness, and dialogue. Pictured above, the three women conversing across the aisle are (left to right): Monisha Rios, Ann Wright, and Yania León.

SAMUEL WANITSCH

Reflections on Memorial Day in D.C.

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PEOPLE POWER: A FEW ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many members were involved in greatly expanding our Memorial Day activities—Tarak Kauff, Ellen Davidson, Vicki Ryder, Mike Marceau, Crystal Zevon, Gene Marx, Nate Goldshlag, Patrick McCann, Roger Ehrlich, Mike Tork, Nick Mottern, and Dan Shea, among others. We took the original idea generated through the VFP Vietnam Full Disclosure Project of placing letters at the foot of The Wall, which we have done for three years now, and moved into a more political action.

Countless conference calls were held in preparation—convened by Tarak Kauff, facilitated by Ellen Davidson, and recorded by Vicki Ryder—in which key details were hashed out and responsibilities were divvied up into committees led by Tarak, Gene, and Nate.

Email messages and phone calls were made to all chapter contacts encouraging participation—sending members to D.C., providing financial assistance, and, of course, encouraging the writing of Letters to The Wall. Extensive media and social media outreach was done. As a result, we saw participation grow from 10 members in the first year to 50 this year.

Everything was made so much easier by the logistical support of two members—Tarak Kauff and Mike Marceau. Tarak obtained the necessary D.C. per-



This is the third year Roger Ehrlich has brought this Belltower from North Carolina to Washington for Memorial Day. It is a beautiful, interactive monument to peace.

mits for what we planned over the weekend, and Mike lined up the equipment needed (podium, chairs, mics, etc.).

I cannot overstate the contribution that Roger Ehrlich has made over these three years to the success of our Memorial Day actions in D.C. First off, he brings the Belltower from North Carolina via an event dubbed “Sam’s Ride,” in which Sam Winstead, a 90-year-old WWII veteran, bikes up from North Carolina with a contingent of intrepid supporters to call for peace. Secondly, somehow, Roger obtains the permit to put up an army tent, a slew of signs explaining the Quaker vision of peace,

and scads of VFP flags and placards explaining our mission, not to mention the tower itself—24 feet high, with license-plate-sized metal cards (flattened aluminum cans inscribed with memorial messages) attached to wires circumventing the structure, with a huge bell hung high within, and a door to enter in and ring it, inscribed with the message, “From Swords to Ploughshares”—all this in a primo location, right where tour buses stop to dislodge passengers to view the Lincoln Memorial and The Wall.

HOW THE ACTION UNFOLDED

Sunday

We had decided to “perform” MLK’s Riverside Church Address at his memorial site on Memorial Day, after the placing of our letters at The Wall. The quandary of where to meet Sunday evening to rehearse the reading was solved by Crystal Zevon, who suggested the Code Pink House. Brilliant idea. It is a great place to do just what we did—gather, talk, and prepare. Leslie Harris, Code Pink member as well as an associate member of VFP, jumped into the mix and provided much assistance. I pro-



Mike Hastie’s iconic “Why Helicopter” photo, taken in Vietnam, was placed at the start of The Wall by fellow Vietnam vet, Mike Tork, “...the most appropriate location.... I could see the wheels turning in people’s heads as they thought, “Yes...Why?”

vided 16 three-ring binders containing copies of the speech—in large print—broken down into 16 parts. Readers were assigned their parts, and we did a quick rehearsal.

Monday

Memorial Day morning at 9:30, we gathered at the Belltower installation directly across from the Lincoln Memorial to prepare to distribute 71 letters written to The Wall plus 6 photos contributed by Mike Hastie. At 10:30am, at least 30 of us descended upon The Wall and placed letters there. Each letter was enclosed in an envelope, opened at the top, with the words “please read me” written on the envelope. This year, like the previous two years, we stood around afterward and watched as people came up to the letters and read them. To me, this is one of the most moving experiences in my life as a VFP member. Young and old, veterans and tourists, stop, read, think, cry, reflect, and move on past the memorial and back into their daily lives. I have no doubt that seeds are planted then and there. By the way, the National Parks Service collects all letters and places them in their permanent archives. We have left our mark.

The Memorial Day action took place at noon. Once again, we gathered at Roger’s site and proceeded from there to the stunning Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, a mere ten-minute walk from the Belltower. We set up chairs, a podium, and a mic just adjacent to the entrance of the memorial, and proceeded to read MLK’s Riverside Church Address. Originally delivered on April 4, 1967, it is an amazing statement that not only prophesied the disaster that the American War in Viet Nam would become, but also outlined forever the pitfalls of following future governments down the path of imperialism. Patrick McCann arranged for Rev. Graylan Hagler, Pastor at Plymouth Congregational Church and member of Pastors for Racial and Economic Justice, to introduce the speech and to wrap it up when we were finished. The reading

took approximately one hour.

We learned a lot through this initial effort—next year we want to bring banners and signs, have handouts of speech excerpts available, and have more chairs to entice passers-by to stay. All of the readers were superb, and the reading went off perfectly, despite the loud clatter of helicopters overhead and the hot, hot sun.

Our final Memorial Day event was an evening gathering of the tribe at the famous Busboys and Poets bar and restaurant. There, 50 of us met to eat, drink, be merry, plan ahead, and reinforce each other. At one moment, we all rose to be led by the inimitable Ellen Davidson in an inspirational rendition of the song, “We Shall Overcome.”

Tuesday

The day after Memorial Day, we gathered at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial at 11:00am to be further inspired by an array of speakers and musicians. Once again, Code Pink stepped forward in the person of Tighe, to help set up speakers and tents. Tarak Kauff and Ann Wright hosted the event, introducing speakers and encouraging us to persevere. We were deeply moved and often profoundly encouraged by the words of Barry Ladendorf, Chris Hedges, Medea Benjamin, David Swanson, Lyla June Johnston, Sarah Mess, Pat Scanlon, Brian Becker, Rev. Lennox Yearwood, and Matt Hoh (not necessarily in that order).

At the end, the amazing FUGS, from New York City, returned to D.C. after a fifty-year hiatus (they were there in

1967 to levitate the Pentagon) to lead us in an exorcism of the White House. “*Out demons, out!*” we chanted. And, by golly, there was evidence that, for a brief moment, we had succeeded.

But we weren’t done just yet. Next we gathered our banners and our spirits and our legs to proceed en masse, down the mean streets of D.C., to the White House, to carry our ten demands directly



After placing our letters at The Wall, we were touched and gratified to see people opening and reading them.

to the so-called president of the United States. Essentially, we were commanding him to turn his inflated military budget into a domestic-based plan to help all of us live better lives in peace. Once at the White House, we were re-inspired, by the words of Ray McGovern and Bruce Gagnon, to re-think our priorities and to re-double our efforts to defeat militarism. Reporters from Reuters, the *Washington Post*, Japanese and Indian papers, and other media outlets were there to receive our message.

And then we disbanded, this tired but exhilarated band of sisters and brothers, to regather our energies and prepare to fight another day.

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Reflections on Memorial Day in D.C.

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CLOSING THOUGHTS

We are building something here—an annual series of actions in our nation’s capital on Memorial Day weekend, to expound upon the principles and ideals of Veterans For Peace. One day, perhaps, we will rival the numbers of the annual SOA Watch demonstrations. In any event, it feels good to be in the company of so many dedicated, inspirational people.

And here’s a side note: What a great opportunity this was to engage with America’s youth. There were legions of young students milling about, led by their teachers, dressed in matching t-shirts, just gobbling up the sights and sounds of D.C. Maybe next year we could hand out flyers telling them a different side of the story they’re receiving, encouraging them to move from being tourists to becoming activists. Just saying....

OUR TEN DEMANDS

For Peace at Home, Peace Abroad: Stop Endless War • Build for Peace!

- Dismantle the U.S. Empire at Home and Abroad
- Close U.S. Bases on Foreign Soil; Bring the Troops Home
- Ban Nuclear Weapons
- Redirect the Pentagon Budget; Money for Education, Healthcare, Infrastructure and Sustainable Green Energy
- Dismantle Corporate Control of our Government
- Dismantle the School-to-Prison/Military Pipeline
- Stop Persecution of Migrants, Immigrants, and Refugees
- End Sexism and Gender Discrimination in the Military
- Respect and Honor First Nation Sovereignty and Treaties
- End Racism and Racist Violence



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.

For more information, contact:
VFP Executive Director Michael McPearson
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At the Lincoln Memorial



ELLEN DAVIDSON

Lyla June Johnston, Native American musician and community organizer, prays and sings for healing of “diseased” war makers.



ELLEN DAVIDSON

Rev. Lennox Yearwood, Jr., President of the Hip Hop Caucus, ministers to the crowd. Rev. Yearwood will be with us in Chicago.



ELLEN DAVIDSON

Sarah Mess, poet-member of VFP New Jersey Ch. 21, tells it like it is.

BEAR

I was patient,
 living high on the mountain
 on grouseberries, bannock,
 and cutthroat trout, high on
 the mountain
 where I hid
 for one full circle
 of the seasons.

After the war I wanted more
 elbow room and fewer people.
 It was perfect for that.
 There was nothing
 up there. Only
 the cinnamon bear.
 She reared up and hooted
 the first day she saw me
 sitting in the doorway of the cabin,
 as if she knew the whole story,
 as if she thought it funny—
 me living there
 beneath the fire-killed larch.

We became friends,
 but I knew
 with *my* luck . . .
 and that's the way it happened.
 She didn't make it,
 got in trouble killing stock
 down on the ranch.

One hot day a trapper
 blew her brains out in a thicket.
 I heard the shots
 and happened on them. He
 leaned against a tree,
 smoked his pipe and swatted flies
 while his Cree wife
 straddled the thing
 that used to be a bear.
 With a slim-bladed knife
 she slipped
 the hide from the carcass

Because of the heat—
 this is the way it's done—
 there had to be a distribution
 all up and down the valley.
 Everyone was obliged
 to gorge themselves
 to keep the meat from going off.

In the smoky cabin
 I kept the fire of jack pine
 burning.
 Winter passed.
 When spring came again
 I checked the maps,
 thought things might be better
 a little farther north—maybe above
 the Arctic Circle. If I
 could get across Eagle River,
 I could go all the way
 to the Beaufort Sea.

CHARLES SCOTT

- Scott is a veteran of the American War in Vietnam. The poem is reprinted from his book *Soft Water* (MadHat Press, 2016).

Masahide Ota Presente!

...continued from page 1

setting the precedent of the Prime Minister making the decision, Ota signed, an act about which opinions are divided.

Also during his tenure, Ota established the Cornerstone of Peace, on which, carved in stone, are the names of all who died in the Battle of Okinawa—Okinawan, Japanese, American, Australian, Korean, soldier, civilian—victims of battle, starvation, disease, murder, suicide, whatever—some 241,000 names in all. This memorial gives concrete expression to an utterly different way of memorializing war, and it was largely for this that he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017.

It was also during his tenure that he brought noted Japan/China scholar Chalmers Johnson to Okinawa and gave him a tour of the bases there, which shocked Johnson into reversing his view of the necessity of those bases, as related in the prefaces to his celebrated books, *Blowback* and *Empire of Bases*.

Defeated for governor in 1998, Ota successfully ran for the upper house of the National Diet, where he served until 2007. In 2013, he founded the Okinawa International Peace Research Institute, where he collected valuable books, documents and photographs on Okinawan history and peace issues, and where he continued his research and writing projects.

In 2016, Ota joined Veterans For Peace as a charter member of the Ryukyu/Okinawa Chapter (VFP-ROCK), and offered VFP-ROCK office space at his International Peace Research

Institute. He was also appointed to VFP's Advisory Board. His mind still sharp as a razor, he gave talks to both the 2015 and 2016 VFP delegations to Okinawa.

At the public memorial held for him in Naha, after his death, hundreds of people of all ages, in a line that spilled into the street, came to bid Ota farewell and to burn incense in his memory.

VFP CONDOLENCE LETTER

To the People of Okinawa,

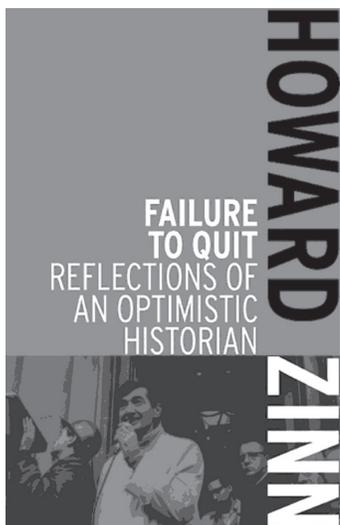
We've lost a true friend in peace, a gracious and humble leader much respected by the people of Okinawa, an inspiration to all of us who aspire to a world without war, without wasteful and destructive weapons of war.

Gov. Ota will be remembered with much admiration. He will long inspire our efforts as members of Veterans For Peace in cooperation with the people of Okinawa as we pursue our shared commitment to return the island of Okinawa to a place of peace, freedom, justice, and sustained life and vitality undamaged and unimpeded by unwanted military bases.

We feel honored to have known Gov. Ota for a brief time in his lifetime of distinguished service to the people of Okinawa, and people around the world.

With love and solidarity,

Members of the Veterans For Peace Delegation to Okinawa



FAILURE TO QUIT: Reflections of an Optimistic Historian

Howard Zinn (1993)

By Doug Rawlings

C'mon. Raise your hand if you're sick and tired of this hand wringing over "fake news." Gee, are you telling me that I can't trust the CIA, the FBI, or sundry representatives from our corporate two-party system? Well, what's a person to do? Forgive my sarcasm, but I bet all who get this newsletter are not terribly surprised that those in power, and their media lackeys, are not really interested in letting us in on the inner workings of the empire. Collapsing as it is. Okay. But we should be concerned about those less experienced (world weary?) than us. I'm talking about the students who will make up the next wave of resisters to the militarized culture being foisted on us right now. What can we do for them as they thrash around looking for some trustworthy voice? Answer: Turn them on to Howard Zinn.

Over the years, having read Zinn, attended his talks, even broken bread with him on two occasions, I was always struck by his ability to cut to the chase. One bit of advice he told my students two decades ago was to look for the underlying ideology of any person who supposedly has a message for you. Check

We should have history that enhances human values, humane values, values of brotherhood, sisterhood, peace, justice, and equality...

out the ground beneath the logical scaffolding presented as the "truth." Know that no one speaks from a completely objective perspective. Everyone has an ax to grind. Her or his ideology. Drill down, find that, and then decide if you should trust his or her argument.

Zinn's iconic classic, *The People's History of the United States*, should be required reading throughout our educational system. But his 1993 collection of essays, *Failure to Quit: Reflections of an Optimistic Historian* (Common Courage Press), is even better suited to our task at hand. In his concise, almost folksy style, he gives us 14 essays and transcribed talks that range from discussions of the Bill of Rights to the Supreme Court, to Karl Marx, to the role of historians in this complex, swirling world.

And if students want to know if the good Dr. Zinn has any street cred, you can tell them he was raised in the slums (his words) of New York City by immigrant parents, worked in a navy shipyard, flew as a navigator in WWII, worked his way through college, was arrested alongside his students during early Civil Rights-era protests, and even joined Veterans For Peace. The title of this collection comes from his life experiences: A charge levied against him and some 500 activists arrested for protesting war—there were so many of them, they had to be charged with "failure to quit." Zinn liked being part of that inconvenience.

So, let's look at some of his own words. To give you a taste of its power, and, I hope, to compel you to get this neat little book and use it, here are excerpts from each of the 14 pieces in the collection:

Who Controls the Past Controls the Future

"[H]istory is not objective... We should have history that enhances human values, humane values, values of brotherhood, sisterhood, peace, justice, and equality...[to] bring up a new generation of people who read history books and who will care about treating other people equally, about doing away with war, about justice in every form." (p. 11) "If history shows anything, to me, it shows that we cannot depend on those people on top to make the necessary changes towards justice and peace. It's social movements we must depend on to do that." (p. 21)

The Optimism of Uncertainty

"Massive violence, whether in war or internal upheaval, cannot be justified by any end, however noble, because no outcome is sure. Indeed, the most certain characteristic of any upheaval, like war or revolution, is its uncertainty. Any humane and reasonable person must conclude that if the ends, however desirable, are uncertain, and the means are horrible and certain, those means must not be employed." (p. 27)

Any humane and reasonable person must conclude that if the ends, however desirable, are uncertain, and the means are horrible and certain, those means must not be employed.

Objections to Objectivity

"The chief problem in historical honesty is not outright lying. It is omission or de-emphasis of important data. The definition of 'important,' of course, depends on one's values." (p. 30) "This unapologetic activism of the 1960s (making history in the street, as well as writing it in the study) was startling to

continued on page 22...

Veterans For Peace Chapter Reports

#1 - Portland, ME

Member Regis Tremblay completed his film, *Thirty Seconds to Midnight*, and continues to travel extensively with it.

Chapter 1 recognized the passing of two of our members, Art Whitman and Richard Bamforth. *Presente!*

A very successful workshop and musical presentation was held at the Holocaust Center in Augusta, Maine. We co-sponsored and made it happen with the War Tax Resistance group. Member Richard Clement spoke at a tax day event in Portland. The Global Day Against Military Spending has received good coverage the last two years.

Many members were in attendance in multiple cities in Maine (and in D.C.) in support of the Women's Marches.

Member Peggy Akers recognized the need for winter boots for refugees and immigrants in Portland and made their distribution a reality.

Zumwalt 12 protesters were found guilty of "Obstructing a Public Way" and sentenced to thirty hours of community service.

Three members took part in reading MLK speech at UU church in Portland on April 4th. Good attendance for this event.

At least five of our members traveled to D.C. to place "Letters" at the Vietnam Memorial Wall and participate in the day of action at the White House. Well done!

—Richard & Rita Clement

#21 - New Jersey

In April, several members of Chapter 21 attended the annual New Jersey Peace Action luncheon, at which Chris Hedges was the keynote speaker. In May, the chapter provided logistical support for a peace delegation from the Philippines touring the U.S., while they were in Jersey City. Members of Chapter 21 joined with Chapter 34 members in the annual Memorial Day activities in New York City. Several members also participated in Memorial Day events in Jersey City and Washington, D.C. Members



Chapter 27 had an impressive contingent in the Twin Cities May Day Parade this year.

Sarah Mess, Jim Fallon, Jan Barry, Frank Wagner, Walt Nygard, and James Yee continue to work with Combat Paper and Warrior Writers.

—Wendy Fisher

#25 - Madison, WI

Over the past quarter, to further our fundraising and engage those on our rolls who are less active, a core group of 10-12 members began discussions on why we matter. We realized that our enduring presence—in outreach activities such as our Memorial Mile, the thousands of grave markers set up to help passersby contemplate the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and tabling at events such as the Spring Green Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Willy Street Fair, and weekly farmers market—fight the current nationalistic fervor and glorification of war.

In our work for peace, we participated in Madison's United We Stand conference and developed a letter standing up against Islamophobia. Our annual Memorial Day Peace Rally included: Fr. David Couper, well known for working on the demilitarization of police; Norm Stockwell, editor of *The Progressive* magazine, who helped us remember founder Clarence Kailin; and Matt Rothschild, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, who discussed

fighting fascism in the America. We also awarded our Dr. James Allen Peace Scholarships to high school seniors whose winning essays discussed, "Why I Believe War is Not the Answer."

Member Lincoln Grahlf kept us apprised of S-283 and HR 632, bills which, in addressing issues of Atomic Veterans, fight the proliferation of nuclear arms.

—Fran Wiedenhoef

#27 - Minneapolis

Chapter 27 has been *very* busy! Missed last newsletter's deadline, so lots to report. Last summer we celebrated our new office becoming a Peace Site. We raffled off our last canoe and co-hosted another successful Peacestock. Larry Johnson published a book entitled *Sixty-One*. We enjoyed another relaxing retreat on Lake Superior, and rang bells at our annual Armistice Day program.

Last fall/winter many of our members traveled to be in solidarity with Standing Rock. Steve McKeown continues to organize distribution of peace info at our sports stadiums and collection of signatures to ban nuclear weapons.

Several chapter members, notably Dick Foley, were influential in shutting down the JROTC program at St Paul Highland High School. This spring, we purchased our new mobile peace center

Chapter Reports *continued*

Chapter 27, Minneapolis, continued...

and are busy customizing it. We had a big presence at the May Day Parade and a good turn-out at our local Memorial Day Ceremony; Barry Riesch and several other members attended the activities in D.C. We hosted a concert for Paul Baker, who was on a U.S. tour from Nicaragua. He delighted us with songs of peace, beauty, joy, and struggle. We are busy planning and excited about hosting the 2018 National VFP convention in St. Paul!

—Mary McNellis



Anna Mullin, eighth grade student at Nauset Middle School on Cape Cod, poses with members of VFP Chapter 41 after the 2017 Memorial Day ceremony at which she read her very moving poem, "Hole in Our Hearts" (below), one of the award-winning entries in the chapter's annual Voices of Peace poetry contest.

#41 - Cape Cod

In March, chapter members joined with staff from the Cape and Islands Veterans Outreach Center (CIVOC) in a discussion following the showing of the film, *Almost Sunrise*. This moving film tells the story of two Iraq vets who take a cross-country journey in search of healing their "hidden wounds."

Then, in April, our 22nd Annual "Voices of Peace" Poetry Contest, with 869 submitted poems, 68 participating teachers, and 66 winners, culminated in an awards ceremony and reading with an audience of over 175 teachers, family members, and friends. This contest has become a regular part of a growing number of classrooms across Cape Cod.

In May, poet veterans Bob Silverberg and Max Money were part of a forum called, "Building Bridges Through Books: Conversations on Peace," which brought together two award-winning children's book authors and a group of local middle school students for a discussion of their latest books, which touch on the impacts of war and on working to create a more peaceful community and world.

Also in May, the chapter once again took part in the largest Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony on Cape Cod with one of our 8th grade contest winners reading her moving poem, "Hole in Our Hearts," about the loss of a military veteran parent through the effects of PTSD. We look forward to another year

HOLE IN OUR HEARTS

A world without hate, without violence, without walls and borders.
Where the shackles of the past are destroyed to reveal something beautifully simple.
I imagine a world where slurs of injustice, ignorance and broken dreams smear.
Where the war torn village is rebuilt
And the families' hearts have been mended.
Where the vast forest grows strong again
Glowing with health and rejuvenation as the unpolluted air fills our lungs.
Where the melancholy ball of destruction is fought
Fought with the stride of confidence.
When finally our eyes help us see the truth that lies within each and every soul.
To make a difference in the world no matter how insignificant it may seem.
To look past the obvious differences of color, gender, orientation and religion.
To place the foundation of brotherhood brick by brick
Never looking back.
To hold our arms out and embrace the future, optimistically and with wisdom
Leading each other to the golden gates of freedom.
In honor of all we hold dear.
For I have lost a soldier.
A father of a four year old girl.
The girl that cried after war struck, because her strong daddy had taken his life,
the visions he saw, the pain he heard destroyed her innocent heart.
This war had taken her hero, and replaced it with a river of tears.
And in order to save us from ourselves and the same fate
We must welcome all to a world of peace that we have yet to live, that our
imagination still can't grasp.
A world where all of our hearts beat as one, united for life.

ANNA D. MULLIN

Chapter 41, Cape Cod, continued...

of working for peace and against militarism, and we have begun to discuss the idea of proposing a local memorial to victims of the “hidden wounds,” especially those who have taken their own lives as a result of these wounds.

—Duke Ellis

#50 - Northern Michigan

Our Memorial Day event honors, with a display in the heart of Traverse City, those vets that have given their lives in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other senseless wars. We also honor all civilians killed in wars and those veterans that have taken their own lives.

Our chapter president, Tim Keenan, has been busy promoting peace and the book, *The Good Hike*, his story of a combat veteran's quest to silence the demons of PTSD by through-hiking the 2,178.3-mile Appalachian Trail. The book is available on Amazon and is getting excellent reviews. Tim's docu-



Photo submitted by Chapter 61: This is one stop along the route of the Walk of Trust sponsored by the St. Louis Archdiocese.

mentary, *Naneek*, about his return to Vietnam to meet his “enemy” and remember friends lost, won the audience award as best short documentary at Michael Moore's film festival. It is of particular interest to Vietnam vets. The documentary is available at naneek.com (password “peace”). Proceeds from sales of *The Good Hike* go to our John Lewis Veterans For Peace scholarship, given yearly to a child of a vet in financial need, and to educate our community on the true cost of war through education.

—Dave Lannen

#61 - St. Louis

The reading of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech on April 4, 2017, the 50th anniversary of its presentation, was a moving and inspiring event, bringing to light that we have much work to do. The speech was divided into seven sections, and the readings, by Veterans For Peace members plus three young people ages 9. to 12 years, were powerful and dynamic.

King's words, written 50 years ago, are still ringing true today in 2017. Dr. King stated, “The war in Vietnam is but a symptom of a far deeper malady within the American spirit, and if we ignore this sobering reality..., we will find ourselves organizing ‘clergy and laymen concerned’ committees for the next generation.” Well, here we are today with deeper maladies. The faces have changed, but the issues are the same—unproductive wars, poverty, civil disobedience, and prejudice.

Chapter 61 hosted a booth at Earth Day in St. Louis, April 22–23. This event came on the heels of the national office co-sponsoring a screening of *National Bird*, a documentary of the drone program.

—Stanley McCoy



Dave Lannen's son, Karl stands near the Northern Michigan chapter's Memorial Day display. Karl Lannen has been a member of VFP Chapter 50 since he was 11. Now 16 and a high school senior, he serves as the chapter's webmaster.

#63 - Albuquerque

Our VFP float was in the Albuquerque Dr. King Parade, and some members attended a concert of the New Mexico Peace Choir. We participated in the large Anti-Inauguration, Million Woman, Science, and People's Climate Marches.

The VFP National Board met in Albuquerque, participated in the “No Ban No Wall” solidarity rally at the Sunport, and honored our key founding member, Sally-Alice Thompson, with an award.

Our members participate in the weekly “Resist Trump” demonstrations at the offices of the New Mexico Congressional delegation.

We attended a vigil for immigrants and refugees and tabled at the Military/Veterans Appreciation Day at our State Legislature, at the Earth Day Festival, and May Day Rally.

Charles Powell took the VFP Vietnam Tour, tabled at the Veterans Sound Off at the University of New Mexico, and attended the State Commanders and Community Party.

We tabled at the Memorial Day program at the New Mexico Veterans Memorial. We staffed the visitors center on the fifth Friday in March and will do so again in June.



Chapter 63 members tabled at the Memorial Day event at the Albuquerque Veterans Memorial Park.

Chapter 63, Albuquerque, continued...

We walked in the Cesar Chavez Day March and tabled at the festival. We joined the protests against the bombing of Syria and the use of the super bomb in Afghanistan. We helped host a leg of this year's Caravan to Cuba.

Kris Hardy, on Dr. King's "Beyond Vietnam" speech, and Charles Powell, on the Vietnam tour, spoke at the Unitarian Fellowship on different occasions. Charles also spoke about VFP to the fellowship's Race, Peace & Justice Study Group.

—Charles Powell

#69 - San Francisco

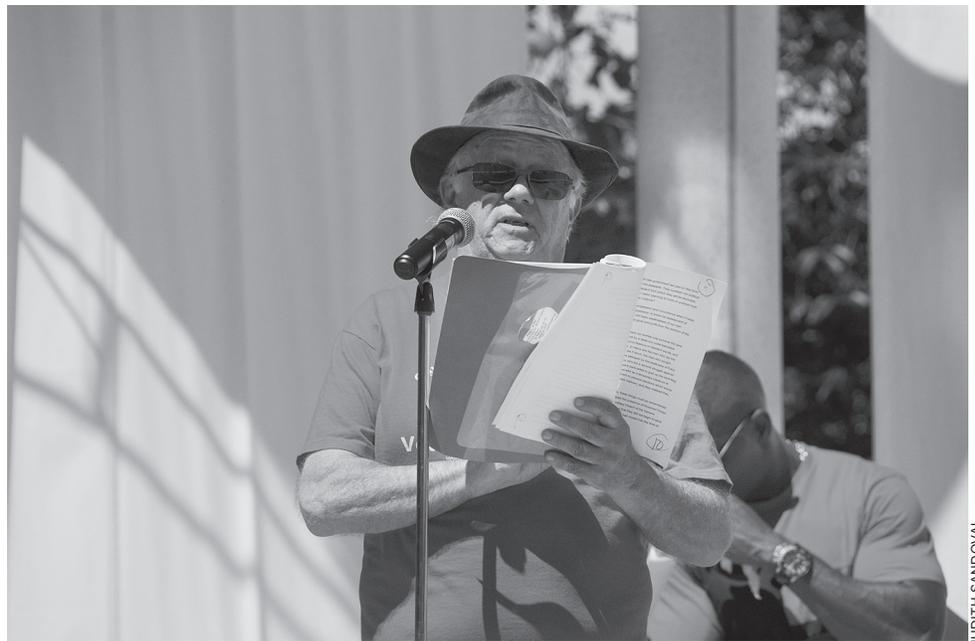
Heeding the call of the National Council of Elders, Chapter 69 members Sherri Maurin, Paul Cox, Bill Creighton, and Denny Riley, along with the Medea Project and BAY-Peace, staged a reading in San Francisco's Yerba Buena Gardens of Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech delivered April 4, 1967, at Riverside Church in New York City. "Beyond Vietnam" explained why he'd come out against that war. The speech, delivered fifty years ago, rings true today, as we see the White House's budget propose a ten-percent raise to the Pentagon for unspecified needs while slashing programs for the poorest. Dr. King said:

"A few years ago there was a shining moment in that struggle. It seemed as if there was a real promise of hope for the poor ... through the poverty program ... Then came the buildup in Vietnam and I watched the program broken and eviscerated as if it were some idle political plaything of a society gone mad on war, and I knew that America would never invest the necessary funds or energies in rehabilitation of its poor so long as adventures like Vietnam continued to draw men and skills and money like some demonic destructive suction tube."

—Denny Riley

an event organized by Peace and Justice Works and cosponsored by Chapter 72, WILPF, IVAW, and other local groups.

The chapter contributed funds to get Penny Dex and Ryan Halloran to the IVAW-sponsored About Face Veterans Action Camp held in late May at the Highlander Center in Tennessee, which they reported on briefly at our June meeting. Dan Shea participated in the VFP Memorial Day events in D.C., while Jenika Sharon, Harvey Thorstad, James Skinner, Nancy Hill, and Pam Allee brought VFP flags to the "official" ceremony at Portland's Vietnam Veterans



JUDITH SANDOVAL

San Francisco Chapter 69 President Bill Creighton reads a portion of Martin Luther King's "Beyond Vietnam" speech, fifty years after its first delivery at Riverside Church in NYC.

#72 - Portland, OR

Dan Shea took the lead on setting up a 50th anniversary reading of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Beyond Vietnam" speech. The April 4th reading at the Portland Art Museum drew a diverse crowd of at least 60. Other recent activities include an April 23 screening of Regis Tremblay's important film, *Thirty Seconds to Midnight*, and a May 16th dinner meetup with VFP Executive Director Michael McPhearson. Becky Luening spoke at the "Mother of All Protests" preceding a march through downtown Portland on Mother's Day,

Memorial. Harvey Thorstad, Dan Shea, Mike Hastie, and Rico Vicino returned to the memorial on June 2 to speak with students from a health and science high school, at the invitation of their teacher.

—Becky Luening

#89 - Nashville, TN

In April, VFP 89 co-hosted Regis Tremblay and a showing of *Thirty Seconds to Midnight*, and interviewed Regis on our radio show.

In March, Joey King held a half-day yoga and meditation retreat. In April, five of us traveled to Huntsville for the

Chapter 89, Nashville, continued...

annual conference of the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space.

Jim Wohlgemuth and Harvey Bennett gave “Before You Enlist” presentations to area high school seniors, including a “dueling” presentation with a Marine recruiter. In an interview on VFP Radio Hour, Metro Nashville Public Defender Dawn Deaner described the entrenched racism at all levels of the criminal justice system, this coming shortly after the death of a black man during a traffic stop at the hands of a Metro police officer. Although the victim was shot in the back and video showed him attempting to run away from the officer, the DA ruled the killing “justified.”

On Memorial Day, at the Tennessee Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall, we shared with visitors our commitment to honoring the dead by working for peace and reconciliation. We were gratified by the response to our message and the many sympathetic and sincere conversations we were able to have with people there.

—Harvey Bennett

 #90 - Broome Co., NY

Dario Schiappa (U.S. Army, Vietnam) was an organizer for a reading of Martin Luther King Jr.'s Riverside speech of April 4, 1967. Schiappa and 11 others stood at the steps of the Binghamton Federal Building and read Dr. King's words with respect and eloquence. The reading received good coverage on local television.

Chapter 90 flew our Veterans For Peace flag at the base of the Isaiah Wall across from the United Nations on April 12th in solidarity with a week-long fast in response to the misery of war imposed on the people of Yemen. The fast was sponsored by NYC's Catholic Worker. With a stroke of serendipity, several national Veterans For Peace members, on their way to deliver a letter to UN Ambassador Haley, stopped to join in with



Chapter 72 was cosponsor of a Mothers Day anti-war rally and march in Portland, Oregon. Allyson Sosa, the woman leading the chant in this photo (at right) is a mother and a member of About Face (IVAW's new name), and was one of the featured speakers at the rally.

BECKY LUENING

the Yemen demonstration. Veterans For Peace shirts and hats were clearly visible at the small gathering, mixed with the business attire of VFP President Barry Ladendorf and VFP leaders Tarak Kauff and Dan Shea, who then went across the street to deliver their letter that, in short, noted: “VFP is profoundly disappointed the United States has refused to take part in the negotiations at the United Nations to ban nuclear weapons.”

Then, on Earth/Science Day, Saturday April 22, Dario Schiappa organized two VFP tables behind the Martin Luther King Jr. Monument in Binghamton, New York, and distributed dozens of VFP buttons and bumperstickers to interested folks who stopped to talk. It's been a busy month for Chapter 90!

—Jack Gilroy

 #91 - San Diego, CA

Since January, Chapter 91 in San Diego has been involved in many diverse activities. Several chapter members have been working with local representatives of the local Islamic community, sup-

porting them in their attempts to reduce fear and to eliminate bullying at local schools, and they have spoken at our monthly meetings.

Our chapter efforts to decrease attendance at the annual San Diego Miramar Air Show begins its second year (of a five-year plan) with a professional video, available speakers, as well as banner and informational handouts at local events. April 23 found us at EarthFair in Balboa Park, and on Memorial Day (May 29), we set up our Hometown Arlington West Memorial on the lawn of the USS Midway Museum, where we conducted a quiet ceremony to honor a local veteran suicide victim.

The chapter's Compassion Campaign continues to provide sleeping bags sets downtown to the growing homeless population in San Diego, and we will give out our 3,000th bag in June.

We look forward to the convention in Chicago this August.

—Gil Field

Chapter Reports continued on next page...



San Diego Chapter 91's Hometown Arlington West Memorial, set up in front of the USS Midway Museum on May 29, 2017

#92 - Seattle, WA

In March our chapter provided a free screening of *The Draft and The Vietnam Generation*, a documentary by a local woman, Beth Sanders, who was present for a lively panel discussion with the audience afterwards.

NO MORE WAR! We had our Tax Day event at the Federal Building, passing out informative, colorful pie-chart flyers to pedestrians showing that over 50 percent of our tax dollars fund U.S. illegal occupations.

Early May Day morning, we participated in a Washington Veteran Action Network rally at the Garden of Remembrance, which drew a good crowd and the press. Then we all marched three miles to join the main march—whew!

Kim Loftness and Ray Nacanaynay were arrested at SUBASE Bangor for the Mother's Day civil disobedience event with activists from Ground Zero Center For Nonviolent Action. Kim, Ray and 12 others are going to court to plead their case for abolishing nuclear weapons. Case dismissed? We hope so.

Transgender whistleblower *Chelsea Manning is Free!* Marty Kunz facilitated our contingent marching the last six years in Seattle's Pride Parade—mass leafleting to educate people about her unjust incarceration. Mike Dedrick organized a public celebration; we all wrote messages of thanks and love to Chelsea!

—Kim Loftness

#93 - So. Central MI

For the first time, Chapter 93 members tabled at the annual Rotary Peace Conference, held in Ann Arbor, Mich., March 31–April 1.

In another first, the chapter has arranged with the main library in Ann Arbor to present “Martin Luther King Jr. as a Peace Activist” on January 16, 2018, the day after presenting the same material at the University of Michigan and Eastern Michigan University on King's birthday.

Members joined with the Detroit Chapter in a Memorial Day “Arlington” observance, May 29, with a cross for each Michigander killed in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. A plan is in the works to collaborate with the local Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice on a Hiroshima Day observance on August 6.

Chapter 93 made a donation to a project of the Peace Studies Program at Michigan State University—a collection of Benin children's stories that students had printed up and distributed in Benin, a small west African nation lying between Ghana and Nigeria.

Bill Shea is gathering materials suitable for distribution in counter-recruiting efforts in local high schools, including a sample “opt-out” form for students to get their name removed from the list provided to military recruiters.

—Lynn Gilbert

#99 - Asheville, NC

Chapter 99 held its annual public Memorial Day Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Western North Carolina War Memorial with music, song, readings, poetry, and prayer, and with about four times as many people attending as in 2016.

Chapter sponsorship of and attendance at community events included Pastors For Peace, the Just Peace Israel/Palestine film series, and The North Carolina Commission of Inquiry on Torture presentation, “Seeking Truth and Transparency.”

The chapter has resumed its active membership on the Buncombe County Veterans Council, a local alliance of all veterans organizations advocating for the rights and benefits of all those who've served as we have.

Since the beginning of 2017, various members showed up for peace and justice at a variety of actions/venues including the Asheville Islamic Center, the presidential inauguration, Women's March, and Climate March. Our chapter president was interviewed by



Chapter 93 Treasurer Mike Muha tabled at the 2017 Rotary Peace Conference held in Ann Arbor on March 31 and April 1.



The wreath laid by Chapter 99 members at this year's annual public Memorial Day Ceremony at the war memorial in Asheville.

Chapter 99, Asheville, continued...

NPR during the protest, specifically with regard to the VFP perspective on being in D.C. for the inauguration.

In addition, chapter members Cindy Heil, Ellie Halsey, and Ken Jones attended the two-day Global Network event, "Pivoting Toward War: US Missile Defense & the Weaponization of Space."

"Action is the antidote to despair."

—Gerry Werhan

#104 - Evansville, IN

Chapter 104's annual John Lennon Night (Dec. 8) concert featuring local musicians packed the Bokeh Lounge and raised \$1,451 for the Iraq Water Project. Our chapter was one of several community groups to hit the street on Inauguration Day in a rally that drew 500 people advocating for human rights. In February, we worked with "We Are Not Your Soldiers" to bring a live video feed to North Posey High School's history club. Veteran Lyle Rubin shared his experience of a firefight in Afghanistan with this takeaway: You risk losing your humanity in combat. There were more than a hundred students in attendance—you could have heard the proverbial pin drop.

In mid-May we served hot dogs, drinks, and snacks to veterans and staff outside Evansville's VA Clinic. During

May and June, we sponsored selected programs on the local PBS radio affiliate, raising public awareness for peace with 15-second announcements about our chapter's activities. President Gary May and member Ray Kessler joined the Stop Endless War rally in D.C. over Memorial Day weekend. Gary, a Vietnam veteran, was overwhelmed by the warmth a Vietnamese tour group showed him.

—John Michael O'Leary

#105 - Baltimore, MD

On Saturday, May 20, Baltimore Phil Berrigan Memorial Chapter 105 held its usual commemoration of the "Catonsville 9" Vietnam draft file-burning action taken by its namesake Phil Berrigan, along with eight others. Over a dozen VFP members and friends gathered at the site of the action, the Catonsville Knights of Columbus hall, which hosted a draft board office during Vietnam.

The year 2018 will mark the 50th anniversary of the draft-file burning, and planning is already afoot with other community organizations for a series of commemorative events, including a presentation by Frida Berrigan, the oldest daughter of Phil Berrigan and Liz McAlister, and expected films, plays, and

panel discussions.

After an extended struggle with paperwork and state tax standing, the chapter is very proud to have moved its bank account from Wells Fargo, a major supporter of the Dakota Access Pipeline and other fossil fuel infrastructure, into a local credit union.

—Ellen Barfield

#109 - Olympia, WA

Chapter 109 organized two 50th anniversary commemorative readings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech, "Beyond Vietnam," on April 4, bringing community members and chapter members together at The Evergreen State College and at the First United Methodist Church in Olympia.

The chapter's two veterans' advocates continued to provide assistance at Sidewalk, a local homeless outreach program in Thurston County. After completing final preparations to launch the Veteran Mobile Outreach Center, a donated motorhome that will travel to outlying Thurston communities to serve veterans unable to access centralized services, the first deployment took place June 8 at the Emanuel Lutheran Church in Yelm, Washington. On Memorial Day,



Chapter 104 President Gary May (front and center), a Vietnam veteran, was overwhelmed by the warmth he received from this Vietnamese tour group when he was in D.C. over Memorial Day weekend for VFP's "Stop Endless War" actions.



Chapter 109's Veteran Mobile Outreach Center is now up and running, providing outreach to homeless vets in places like Yelm, Washington, where this photo was taken in mid June.

Chapter 109, Olympia, continued...

members set up the motorhome at Heritage Park in Olympia and talked with the public about the project and the VFP mission.

In May, Chapter 109 joined the Washington Coalition to Stop the New Nuclear Arms Race organized by Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility. The chapter also passed a resolution in support of the People's Congress of Resistance, which will gather in Washington, D.C., in September.

Plans are in the works to establish a veterans' farm to prevent veteran suicide through peer support, education, constructive and positive engagement, and sustainable and healing farming activities.

—Mark Fleming

#129 - Pueblo, CO

Glen D. Burke, a Charter Member of VFP Chapter 129 (the Howard Zinn Chapter), passed away on Feb. 14, 2017, at the age of 90. A WWII-era U.S. Navy veteran, Glen was active in his local Sierra Club, Human Rights Commission, Community Soup Kitchen, and Democratic Party. As a small business owner of a TV and electronics sales and repair shop, Glen had a wide circle of friends. A trumpeter in several bands in his younger years, he continued to jam

at community music events into his later years. "Ain't Gonna Practice War No More" was one of Glen's favorite songs.

—Crystal Carkhuff

#134 - Tacoma, WA

In January, we tabled at two MLK events. In April, two new people found us and attended our regular chapter meeting—one may become a member. In May, three of our members had the privilege of talking with Michael McPhearson during his visit to the NW; some may be participating in a conference call about the proposed Moby Dick project. Tacoma members participated with the Olympia chapter in a Memorial Day exhibit of a donated RV that will be visiting homeless veterans to offer support on VA care and other issues. In June, members tabled at a three-day street fair in a nearby suburb. More tabling opportunities this summer include a two-day ethnic fest, in a large city park, in July, and a large county fair for four days in September.

—Dave Dittimore

#157 - NC Triangle

The members of Eisenhower Chapter 157 were stunned by the unexpected death of John Heuer, our chapter's founder, historian, mentor, and friend who served on VFP's national Board for

many years. We are working to establish an annual event that will honor his legacy and carry forward his work to end all war.

In October, Chapter 157 again participated at the North Carolina State Fair's Peace Booth, which draws thousands of visitors each year. Chapter vice president Babs Freeman reported that a record number of signatures were collected this year on a petition calling for the establishment of Veterans Courts to help provide better health care for wounded veterans.

In November, thousands of visitors to our State Capitol were greeted by the sight of our VFP flags flying for 10 days above our installation of the Swords to Plowshares Belltower and "Letters to the Vietnam Wall" traveling exhibit, installed again this year by creator Roger Ehrlich. For the past three years, the Chapter has erected the Belltower in this prominent location, the terminus for Raleigh's annual Veterans Day (Armistice Day) parade, in which we marched. Many passersby were moved to add their heartrending stories to the Belltower's memorial shingles.

And in December, Doug Ryder represented Chapter 157 at Standing Rock as part of VFP's contingent of defenders of the indigenous water protectors. *Mni Wiconi!*

—Doug Ryder

#162 - East Bay, CA

Daniel Borgstrom recently wrote an Open Letter to Amy Goodman of *Democracy Now!*, asking her to please be more accurate in her reporting on Syria. She too often follows our government's point of view without checking facts that prove otherwise. Response to this letter from readers was quite positive.

Fred Norman and Gregory Ross read poems at a Memorial Day Vigil at the Crosses of Lafayette.

Maurice Martin visited five high schools to speak about counter recruitment. He has also spoken several times about our deported vets.



A number of our members continue to participate in First Friday visibility actions at the monthly Oakland Street Fair.

Gene Bernardi continues her efforts against the militarization of the Berkeley Police Force.

We arranged a public speaking engagement in Oakland, on the morning of June 25, with Donald Pageler, a survivor of the USS Liberty, which was attacked in international waters by Israel in 1967, killing 34 U.S. Sailors and injuring 170 more. This historical event was kept secret from the American public.

VFP license plate frames are available from Chapter 162 for \$10. To order yours, contact Cathe Norman, 7986 Driftwood Way, Pleasanton, CA 94588.

—Cathe Norman

On June 20, Chapter 168 co-sponsored and tabled at the Annual Mighty Kindness Fair. Thanks to Harold, Patrick, and Steven for always stepping up to the plate when needed! We have resurrected the Second Sunday vigils from 2-4 pm at the corner of Bardstown Road and Douglass Loop. (Mitch McConnell lives off Douglass, and we know where—a little fun fact!) In March, we participated in phone-banking again at the NPR fundraiser. It's a good way to help a good cause while getting our organization some air time. In February, Carol and Harold spoke to students of member Russell Vendenbrouke's class at the University of Louisville. The students were attentive and asked great questions.

Thanks to member Dave Wiley, Chapter 168 now has a new website:

<https://veteransforpeace168.wordpress.com/>. We welcome your suggestions for making it more informative and useful.

Carol Trainer looks forward to soon publishing *As Always, Norb: World War II Letter Collection of Norbert A. Rawert and Family*, a book she has been working on for 14 years, which chronicles the everyday lives during wartime of a family in Schnitzelburg, Louisville, and the Army as seen from the son who left.

—Carol Rawert Trainer



JOYCE DONOHUE

Chapter 90 President Jack Gilroy was the subject of much media attention after VFP was denied the right to march in the Binghamton, NY, Memorial Day parade.

Turning Adversity into Advantage: Memorial Day in Broome County

By Jack Gilroy

On May 29, 2017, VFP Chapter 90 was asked not to march in the Binghamton, New York, Memorial Day parade as we have done in years past. The reason given: We were not all “combat” vets and the organizers of the event were com-

bat veterans. We were told we had an “agenda,” and the Memorial Day parade would accept no flags or other symbols representing an “agenda.”

The regional daily *Press & Sun-Bulletin* jumped on the issue and made it a front-page story. In a matter of days, television interviews on three Binghamton stations gave us excellent coverage. Our chapter called for a press conference down the street from the start of the parade. Several channels came to the sidewalk in front of Binghamton High School and interviewed our VFP members. When the parade started, we peacefully watched various groups pass, including local and state politicians, Patriot Riders (motorcycle enforcer group), other veterans, and assorted candy throwing local business and political types.

We waited until the last group passed, and then Larry

Evans, Vice President of Chapter 90, stepped forward with the stars and stripes, and Jack Gilroy, President of Chapter 90, raised high our Veterans For Peace flag, as about 50 people joined us, most not members of Veterans For Peace. We became part of the parade and walked the length to the reviewing stand.

Some of our members were threatened by the organizers on the grounds of the Broome County Courthouse, where politicians evoked God and country. Jim Trainor, former U.S. Army Special Forces with two tours in the Middle East, was physically threatened by a group leader of the parade organizers. A woman veteran (11 years in Air Force) was verbally abused as she walked with her ten-year-old daughter.

By reaching out to the press, we managed to leverage the conflict into some very good coverage for the cause of peace and VFP Chapter 90, Broome County, New York.



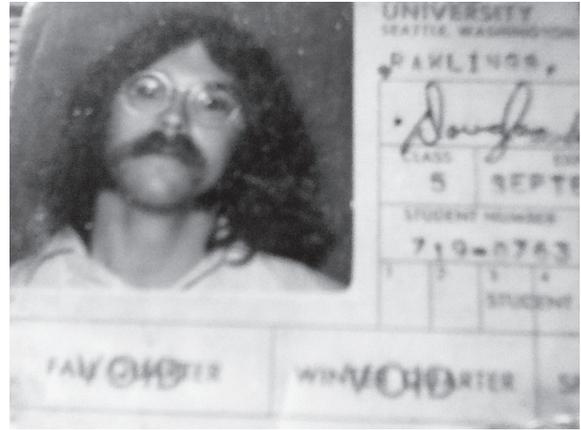
JOYCE DONOHUE

Chapter 90 member Phil Stanton (left) poses with an 11-year Air Force veteran and her daughter, who came to the parade with handmade signs in support of VFP.

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



Ellen Barfield and Larry Egbert (couple on right) cross the line at the Nevada Test Site (the Army's nuclear test site) in March, 1988.



Long ago ID photo of Doug Rawlings, "out of Nam for a year and way out of focus still."

Ellen Barfield

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND
VFP MEMBER SINCE 1988

My late husband, Larry Egbert, had protested war and militarism since the mid-1960s, when he refused to deploy to Viet Nam and resigned from the Navy medical corps. My peace career was just starting then, seven years after leaving the Army with a vague desire to take action on social problems. We both joined VFP in 1988, after we heard it existed from someone at the yearly August peace camp at the Pantex nuclear weapons plant near Amarillo, Texas.

Andy Berman

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
VFP MEMBER SINCE AROUND 1995

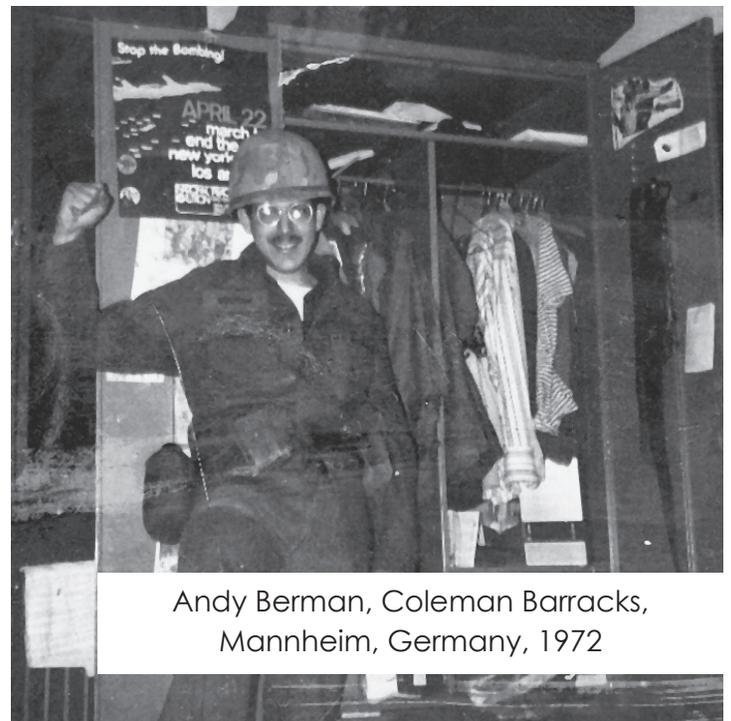
There really wasn't a single "Eureka" moment that led me to antiwar work and VFP. For me, it was a process over time. Even before I was a vet, I went to the NYC 5th Avenue Peace Parade in 1966, and when I saw a banner saying "Veterans for Peace in Vietnam" (a previous incarnation of VFP), I marched in their contingent. At that same parade, I saw a group of "Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade." Both really made an impression on me, as that was my first encounter with veterans who were speaking out for peace, and it probably sowed the seed that led me to VFP years later.

After leaving the Army in 1973, I studied Engineering at the University of Illinois, where I met many Palestinians. We worked together in Arab-Jewish peace activities on and off campus. Prior to joining VFP, I was an antiwar activist in New York and Chicago, working in local groups opposing the war in Viet Nam, and in solidarity with the popular struggles against the dictatorships in Nicaragua and El Salvador. In the mid-1990s, a Chicago neighbor, Joe Powers, a WWII vet, invited me to a meeting of the Chicago VFP chapter, which I immediately joined.

Doug Rawlings

PORTLAND, ME
VFP MEMBER SINCE 1985 (FOUNDING)

After getting out of the army in 1970, I wandered up to Boston and eventually joined the Socialist Workers Party. I then went out to Seattle to study English literature, and back to Boston to get my masters in teaching. I eventually ended up in Maine. In the mid 1980s, I attended a presentation given by Judy and Jerry Genesio about their work in Nicaragua with the Witnesses for Peace program. At the end of the talk, Jerry asked if there were any veterans in the audience who would like to form a peace group. Aha! The genesis of VFP begins.



Andy Berman, Coleman Barracks, Mannheim, Germany, 1972

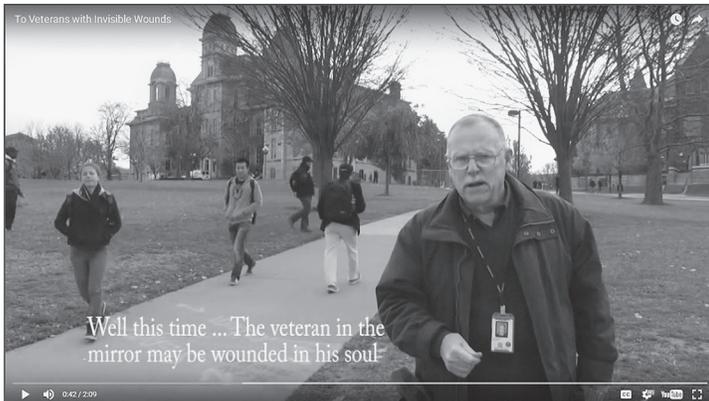
Roland Van Deusen

VFP MEMBER SINCE 1991
CLAYTON, NY

During my Viet Nam-era Navy active duty, I felt whatever sacrifice was asked of me would be worth it, if my beloved country could be at peace again. The sense of betrayal Desert Storm and wars after that brought to me drove me to Veterans For Peace to seek sanity in waging peace.

My best chance to do so was by proving peace is patriotic through VFP's humanitarian work. Then—VFP President Elliott Adams quoted me directly in his testimony to Congress on VFP's worldwide efforts to seek justice for veterans and victims of war, from the Iraqi Water Project, to advocating for veteran health coverage for depleted uranium. The 2011 VFP National Convention gave eight VFP members, including me, Certificates of Appreciation for our VFP work. I could not have done any of this without the help, support, and encouragement of my fellow VFP members.

A 2012 heart attack served notice that my days of volunteer driving for the DAV, or getting arrested at the White House, needed to wisely wind down. Fortunately, my YouTube video,



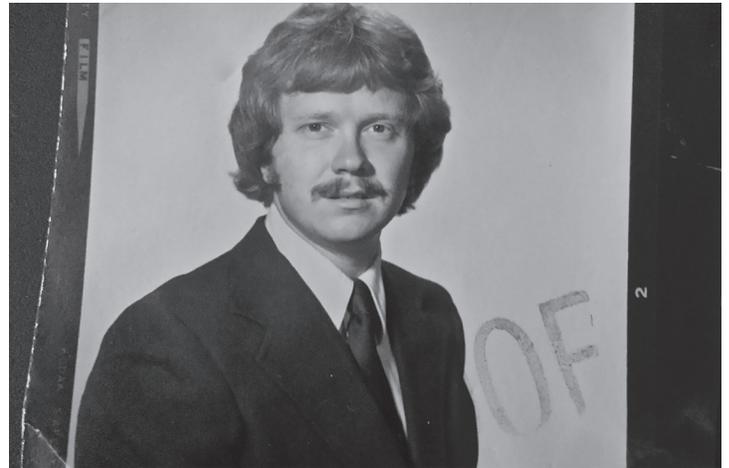
**Roland Van Deusen's video is available at <https://youtu.be/nNV-hEsdXY>
He grants permission to any fellow member of VFP who wants to use the video gratis to help motivate troubled veterans to seek help, as long as they don't edit it without contacting him first [at vandeusenn@aol.com].**

To Veterans with Invisible Wounds, carries on for me. It's been used by the VA National Center for PTSD, the Army's most deployed division, the VA's nationwide suicide prevention program, the leading professional mental health journal, and twenty others.

In February 2016, some compassionate NCOs in the 2nd Battalion, 7th Regiment, First U.S. Marine Corps Division, which has had 28 suicides since 2008, sent the video to their "alums." I received about 100 Facebook "friend" requests almost overnight. As a retired counselor, I've followed these survivors online and by phone since then, forwarding preventive info and learning a lot about veteran suicide, the other casualties of our endless, winless, wars. Veterans, both young and old, emotionally suffer from today's wars and echoes of

past wars.

Last July I asked an Army soldier at nearby Fort Drum for advice on this project. His exact response: "Twelve of my soldiers took their own lives." A physician friend, retired military with PTSD himself, responded by saying we've got to screen everybody. Today we have a workable outline for universal military discharge mental health screening that I can forward to any VFP member who'd like to advocate for this cause. At age 72, I need a lot of help, from VFP and elsewhere, to see this happen.



Jim Wolgemuth of yesteryear.

Jim Wolgemuth

VFP MEMBER SINCE 2007
NASHVILLE, TN

I got out of the Navy in 1972. Went to Indiana University of Pennsylvania and joined the vets club. It was good, but not as oriented towards peace as I had hoped. My father got me to join the VFW, and I went to a couple of those meetings, but was not welcomed by the WWII vets, and that was okay. I found VVAW, and joined—and still belong, but there are no local chapters. Then I found VFP in Asheville, North Carolina, and joined, but family and work commitments limited my participation. That changed when I moved to Nashville, and Chapter 89 members were the only like-minded people I could find. VFP involvement opened doors to other organizations, participation, and activism. *We are Veterans For Peace.*

Tell 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.

HOWARD ZINN

Failure to Quit

...continued from page 10

many professional historians. And in the 1970s and 1980s, it was accused by some scholars...of hurting the proper historical education of young people by its insistence on 'relevance.' As part of the attack, a demand grew for more emphasis on facts, on dates, on the sheer accumulation of historical information." (p. 40)

Our problem is the numbers of people all over the world who have obeyed the dictates of the leaders of their government and have gone to war, and millions have been killed because of this obedience.

The Problem is Civil Obedience

"There was a warrant out for my arrest in the Fall of 1970, because I had been part of an anti-war demonstration at the Boston Army Base and was appealing my conviction and was supposed to show up in court. But I was also scheduled to engage in a debate on civil disobedience.... To skip the debate in order to dutifully obey the court order seemed absurd to me in the light of my argument for civil disobedience.... As I emerged from my class, two detectives... escorted me to court...." (p. 43) "[Civil disobedience] is not our problem. Our problem is civil obedience. Our problem is the numbers of people all over the world who have obeyed the dictates of the leaders of their government and have gone to war, and millions have been killed because of this obedience." (p. 45) "People in all countries need the spirit of disobedience to the state, which is not a metaphysical thing but a thing of force and wealth. And we need a kind of

declaration of interdependence among peoples in all countries of the world who are striving for the same thing." (p. 52)

The Supreme Court is not Supreme

"Freedom and justice are local things, at hand, immediate. They are determined by power and money, whose authority over our daily lives is much less ambiguous than decisions of the Supreme Court." (p. 54)

The Bill of Rights

"We clearly cannot expect the Bill of Rights to be defended by government officials. So it will have to be defended by the people." (p. 59) "The guarantees of the Bill of Rights have little meaning so long as we have a class society with enormous differences of wealth and income." (p. 65)

There's a lot of work to be done in speaking up.... That is a job that all of us have to be engaged in day by day. That's the job of democracy.

Second Thoughts on the First Amendment

"There's a lot of work to be done in speaking up. We need to create that excitement about the issues of the time, excitement about the war, excitement about the misallocation, the waste of the country's wealth on the military. We have to create excitement about homelessness and poverty and the class system in this country. We need information. People have to know things. People have to spread the information. That is a job that all of us have to be engaged in day by day. That's the job of democracy." (p. 88)

How Free is Higher Education?

"[E]ducation has always inspired fear among those who want to keep the existing distributions of power and

wealth as they are." (p. 89) "It seems to me that the existence of free expression in higher education must mean the opportunity for many points of view, many political biases, to be presented to students. This requires a true pluralism of readings, ideas, viewpoints...." (p. 92)

I've come to the conclusion that war, by its nature, being the indiscriminate and mass killing of large numbers of people, cannot be justified for any cause....

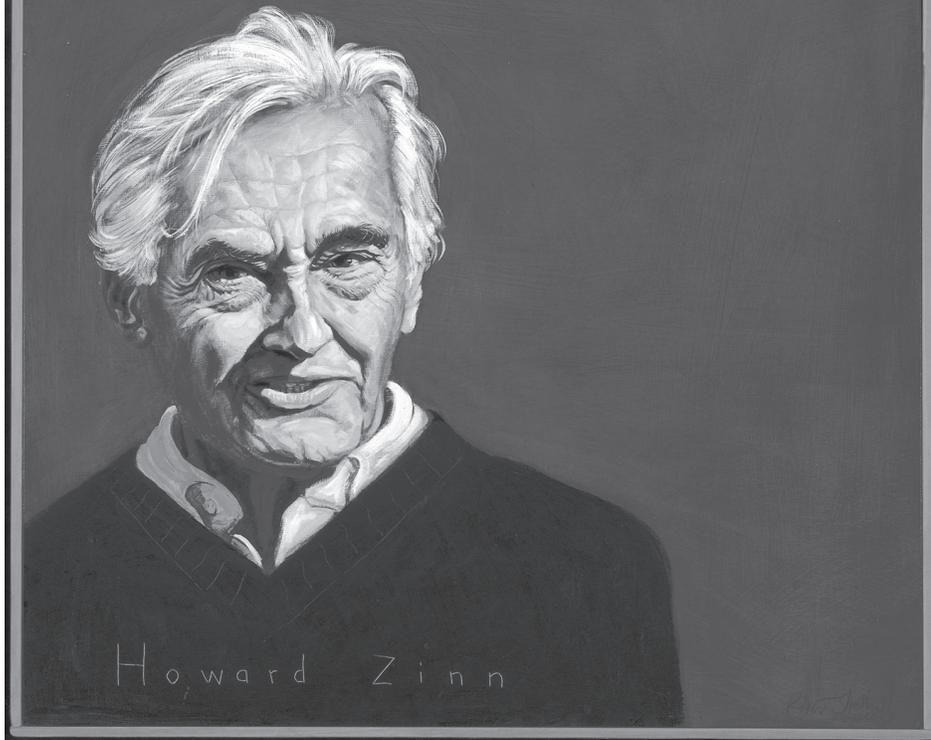
Just and Unjust Wars

"Einstein was horrified by World War I.... He went to this conference in Geneva. He thought they were discussing disarmament.... Instead he found these representatives of various countries discussing what kinds of weapons would be suitable and what kinds of weapons prohibited....he called a press conference and said, 'One does not make wars less likely by formulating rules of warfare. War cannot be humanized. It can only be abolished.'" (p. 100) "The moral appeal of war is based on people's forgetting of history and on the ability of the mass media and the administration to obliterate history." (p. 109) "What

The moral appeal of war is based on people's forgetting of history and on the ability of the mass media and the administration to obliterate history.

war does, even if it starts with an injustice, is multiply the injustice. If it starts on the basis of violence, it multiplies the violence. If it starts on the basis of

The rule of law does not do away with the unequal distribution of wealth and power, but reinforces that inequality with the authority of law. It allocates wealth and poverty... in such complicated and indirect ways as to leave the victim bewildered.



Painting by Robert Shetterly, from the series, *Americans Who Tell the Truth*.

defending yourself against brutality, then you end up becoming a brute.” (p. 112)
“Just causes can lead you to think that everything you then do is just. I’ve come to the conclusion that war, by its nature, being the indiscriminate and mass killing of large numbers of people, cannot be justified for any cause....” (p. 113)

Terrorism Over Tripoli

“[T]errorism is the deliberate killing of innocent people to make a political point.... We live in a world in which we are asked to make a moral choice between one kind of terrorism and another. The government, the press, the politicians, are trying to convince us that Ronald Reagan’s terrorism is morally superior to Muammar Khadafi’s terror-

ism.” (p. 117)

Columbus, the Indians, and Human Progress

“We who insist on looking critically at the Columbus story, and indeed on everything in our traditional histories, are often accused of insisting on Political Correctness, to the detriment of free speech. I find this odd. It is the guardians of the old stories, the orthodox histories, who refuse to widen the spectrum of ideas.... They, who claim to believe in ‘free markets,’ do not believe in the free marketplace of ideas.... They worry that if new ideas enter the marketplace, that people may begin to rethink the social arrangements that have given us so much suffering, so much violence,

so much war these last five hundred years of ‘civilization.’” (p. 143)

Je Ne Suis Pas un Marxiste

“Perhaps the most precious heritage of Marx’s thought is internationalism, his hostility to the national state, his insistence that ordinary people have no nation they must obey and give their lives for in war, that we are all linked to one another across the globe as human beings.” (p. 149)

The Perils of Plato

“Plato was the apostle of civil obedience.... Plato, the Western world’s star intellectual ... has the state say to Socrates: ‘What complaint have you against us and the state, that you are trying to destroy us? Are we not, first of all, your parents?’ ... The state as parents? Now we understand those words: The Motherland, or the Fatherland, or the Founding Fathers, or Uncle Sam. It’s not some little junta of military men and politicians who are sending you to die in some muddy field in Asia or Central America; it’s your mother, your father, or your father’s favorite brother. How can you say no?” (p. 155)

Failure to Quit

“The age of apathy? I thought so too when ... I went south to teach in Atlanta, Georgia.... It was 1956. The atmosphere on the tree-lined, fragrant campus was sedate, quiet, careful, and only close attention to what was said and left unsaid revealed deep resentment just below the surface. By 1960, these same quiet students were sitting in, demonstrating, picketing, going to jail. I learned that it was a serious mistake to interpret lack of action as lack of thought, lack of feeling. Rather, it was the absence of opportunities, openings, examples to emulate, groups to join—but when those appeared, the silence changed to uproar.” (p. 158)

And there you have it. Get this book. And thank you, Howard Zinn. *Howard Zinn, Presente!*

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HIGHLIGHTS:

Friday -- Morning Plenary with **Paul Chappell** /

VFP's First Annual **Power to Peace Festival** at the Vic Theatre

Saturday -- VFP Banquet Keynote **Col. Lawrence Wilkerson**

Sunday -- VFP-led March through **Downtown Chicago** /
Jackson Browne Concert at Copernicus Center

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