



Exposing the True Costs of War and Militarism Since 1985

VETERANS FOR PEACE

Organized Locally. Recognized Nationally.

Our vision for VFP's future

SPRING 2013

Patrick McCann

Dear veterans and winter soldiers,

I'm humbled and honored to be VFP's new national president. Here is my vision for where we need to go as an organization.

Prior to listing our programs, I encourage people to build community, unity, and solidarity within our organization and in the movement. We are all working hard for a vision of world peace. Let's value each other's contributions, try to stay positive, and endeavor to listen to, learn from, and be

fond of our comrades. Let's also try to find the creativity to engage more members actively in our organization. There are many ways to contribute!

- **Develop a greater focus towards organizing** - growing our organization of veterans. Let's organize, not just mobilize. Organizing builds organizations (chapters, regions, fund-raising, staff, etc.). We must be more than 'darlings of the peace movement', and stop chasing the politicians so much. Let's organize

more locally, and share what we do in our communities. In Maryland, we twice defeated Lockheed-Martin's (America's largest defense contractor and Montgomery County, MD's largest private employer) requests for \$450,000, then \$900,000, for a tax exemption for their luxury training hotel. It was a widespread coalition of community leaders, including progressive politicians.

McCann continued on page 4

Parting Thoughts from the Outgoing President

Leah Bolger

I am so very proud to have served as the President of VFP for the past year, and I thank you for all the support and encouragement you have shown me during my tenure.

I believe we accomplished a lot even though we were going through a period of transition as Mike Reid was hired and learning his job as our Executive Director. We chartered five new chapters including our first student chapter and our first foreign chapter; we made our voting procedures much more democratic and inclusive; and our budget is now solidly in the black.

Although I am pleased with these accomplishments, they have more to do with the development of the organi-

zation, rather than the accomplishment of our mission—and this is where I would like to see us focus now. It is my belief that we need to start thinking in a different way about the future of VFP. In the past the board and the staff have always focused on building the organization (adding new members, creating new chapters, getting people to donate and pay their dues). It seems to me that the missing piece is real substantive program planning. This creates

a sort of "chicken and egg" situation. Rather than thinking that we just need more people to join us, having successful campaigns and programs would draw in new members, who would pay their dues, and form new chapters. The national staff and board have not created many systematic, coordinated opportunities for the membership to tap into. Until the creation of the working groups program, a member-at-large re-

Bolger continued on page 4

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Executive Director's Message

Mike Reid

I am happy to report to you that 2012 has been another outstanding year for Veterans For Peace. We have dramatically increased services delivered in the field while maintaining control over administrative costs. The primary management team of Virginia Druhe, Doug Zachary, Shelly Rockett, Casey Stinemetz and Chrissy Brooks has excelled in streamlining the efficiency of the organization without sacrificing the heart of what Veteran For Peace is known for.

Our major strategic accomplishments include

- Holding our administrative and



fundraising ratio at 23% in 2011 and 2012.

- Successfully keeping Veterans For Peace's membership numbers stable.

Our activity highlights include

- Holding more than 100 actions around the country exposing the true costs of war.
- Hiring our first Chapter Coordinator whose major charge is to make sure all VFP chapters are healthy and viable.
- Facilitating interviews of many of our members by major media outlets.

- Having more than 50 VFP Chapters and affiliates participate in our first Nationally Coordinated action.

- Holding the 27th Annual Convention in Miami, Florida where we recognized and learned from the accomplishments, achievements, and struggles of the people of Latin America and the Caribbean.

As always, an entire network of people deserve our thanks, from our active Board of Directors, to our very engaged chapters, to countless individuals that bring their creative energy to support our efforts.

We plan to increase the momentum the organization built in 2012 over the next year, providing more outreach to veterans, particularly recent Iraq and Afghanistan veterans and continuing our grand mission of abolishing war. Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to a successful 2013.

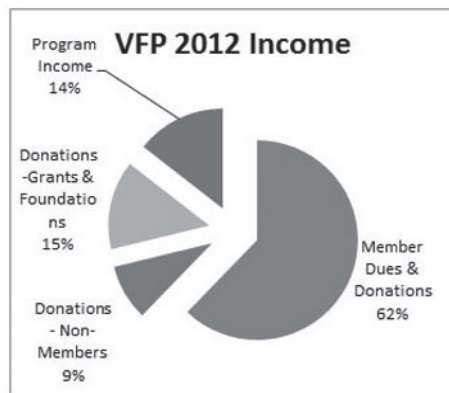


BOARD OF DIRECTORS

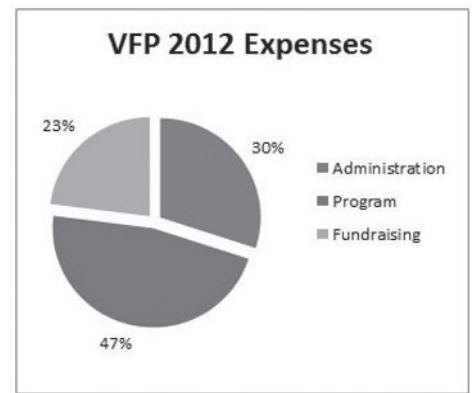
- Patrick McCann, President
- Matt Southworth, Vice-President
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- Adrienne Kinne, Secretary
- Leah Bolger
- Gerry Condon
- Ken Dalton
- Mark Foreman
- John Heuer
- Tarak Kauf
- Michael McPhearson
- Doug Rawlings

STAFF

- Mike Reid, Executive Director
- Chrissy Brooks
- Virginia Druhe
- Shelly Rockett
- Casey Stinemetz
- Doug Zachary



Income Total = \$448,860



Expenses Total = \$388,900

- Income shows the exceeding generosity of VFP members.
- The balance of Program, Administration and Fundraising numbers reflect that so much of our program work is carried out by members in the chapters
- The fundraising number reflects an experiment with having a part-time consultant for one year. That expense will not be repeated in 2013.
- The income beyond expense last year has been used to replenish the reserve fund that was drawn down during the last 3 years.

Tools For Building Member Involvement

Virginia Druhe & Casey Stinemetz

Online training

This Spring VFP is continuing to offer online training to support chapters in building member involvement. The sessions are being offered bi-weekly to introduce the one-on-one conversation process. This is a tool that community organizations have used for years to build strong relationships among members as the basis for action. The webinars are being held on alternate Mondays and last little more than an hour.

The one-on-one is a specific kind of conversation designed especially for involving new members, but can also be used to strengthen the capacity of existing members to work together toward common goals. It can even be used in talking with people who express interest in VFP to help them realize what they can gain from being part of VFP.

We hope that several members from every chapter will be able to participate and initiate the process in their chapter. If you want to attend and can never be available on Monday, please let us know so we can arrange alternate times.

Check the weekly email blasts to register or call the office. 314-725-6005

Monday, March 4 6pm Eastern

Monday, March 18 6pm Eastern

Monday, April 1 9pm Eastern



You asked for it, We listened...

During our Leadership Training series, many of you expressed a need for effective tools for membership recruitment and retention. National office, under the direction of the Board of Directors, has created a calendar for 2013 in response to this feedback.

Consistent and coordinated action increases visibility and interest. There's power in numbers! Keeping a national calendar provides an opportunity to show our numbers by demonstrating unified acts of peace. As a grassroots organization, the core of Veterans For Peace is the dedication and hard work of our local chapters. Your participation increases the visibility and impact, both locally and nationally.

To keep in touch, a monthly e-mail will be sent to chapter contacts from the chapter coordinator with to provide suggestions for local action in the upcoming months along with supporting materials. National office is also available to provide technical support in planning actions. Please contact Casey if you have any questions.

2013 VFP National Calendar

March 19, 2013

Anniversary of Iraq War:
Healing the Wounds of War

April 2013

15 Global Day of Action on Military Spending (GDAMS)
20-25 George W. Bush Library Dedication
Dallas, TX

May 27, 2013

Memorial Day:
Memorials to the Fallen

June 2013

Bradley Manning Trial Starts in Fort Meade, MD

July 4th, 2013

Independence Day:
Peace is Patriotic

August 8th-11th, 2013

VFP 28th Convention:
Power to the Peaceful

September 21, 2013

UN International Day of Peace:
Sustainable Peace for a Sustainable Future

October 2013

Story Telling Month:
Why I Joined Veterans For Peace

November 2013

11 Armistice Day: 11 Bells For Peace
20-24 School of America's Watch
Ft. Benning, GA

December 2013

Town Hall Meeting:
A Year End Review

- **Broaden our demographic base**, including veterans of color, women veterans, and younger veterans, and learn how to retain them. Recognize the importance of group culture (it brings people into, or drives people from, an organization). Let's take advantage of this historic first of having three Iraq-era veterans on the board, including Vice President Matt Southworth (DC), and Recording Secretary Adrienne Kinne (VT).
- **Focus on the following key tasks:**
 - * **Chapter-build** – help people maintain/grow their chapter. Help folks in fund-raising, outreach, publicity, etc.
 - * **Region-build** (especially in the south) – draw on the strength of regions to help local chapters, and individuals not in chapters. Build up to the Northern California regional in Ukiah on the weekend of March 1 – 3. Can other regions follow their example before the convention?
 - * **Fund-raise** – This is a critical growth component. House parties, membership renewals, automatic and regular credit card donations (even \$5/mo.), tithing to VFP in our wills, etc.
 - * **Identify/activate the next level of leadership** – Developing a coterie of writers for publicity (press releases, etc.) is an example. Chapter phone banking around key events, fund-raising, and membership is another, as is signing up members for committees and projects (Veterans Peace Action teams, Latin America working group, Bradley Manning defense work, etc.)
 - * **Broaden our demographic base** – race, gender, class, and generation. Time to pass the torch!
 - * **Increase work with the 'anti-war' military movement** - IVAW, MFSO, VVAW, etc.
 - * **Invest in the organization** - staff

ally had nowhere to dial in to the work of VFP. Throughout our 27-year history the chapters have developed their own programs and plans and operated as their own autonomous units. We have become what someone recently described as a “network” rather than an “organization.” I think that coordinating our efforts through specific programs and campaigns will go a long ways towards increasing the volume of our collective voice. We need to find way for our membership to engage in our work—not just through their local



chapter, but also through the working groups program and nationally coordinated actions.

Other points:

1. VFP needs to become more of a leader in the peace and justice community. While our endorsement and support is highly sought after by other groups, we need to be the group that is leading the way...asking other groups to support our plans and programs.
-
- compensation, staff and leadership training.
- * **Focus on key projects** instead of trying to do everything (e.g. Bradley Manning, SOAW)
- Letting it go here, so as not to go on too long. We are open to your suggestions.
- Peace and blessings



2. Keeping point #1 in mind, however, we don't need to reinvent the wheel every time a new issue or cause arises. VFP should be working in concert with other national organizations, sharing ideas and resources, building coalition and coordination—real organizing.
3. We need to advertise! There are millions of veterans out there, and I have to believe that there are a huge number of them who would support our statement of purpose and join VFP...if they only knew about us! Particularly if we want to engage younger veterans, we need to advertise in Facebook and expand our use of social media.
4. We are not going to accomplish our mission via the “perfect demonstration” or even a series of perfect actions. We have to continue to work in a coordinated, systematic, and strategic way both inside and outside the system.

So, although this is my last message to you as the president of VFP, I will continue to be working as a member of the Board, setting priorities, developing plans and coordinating our efforts—but more important, I'll still be working side-by-side with you in the “trenches” towards accomplishing our ultimate goal of abolishing war as an instrument of national policy.

In peace and solidarity



NEWSLETTER STAFF

Chuck Rossi: Editor

Contributing Editors:

John Grant

Will Shapiro

Editor-At-Large:

W.D. Erhart

Dan Ellis: Layout

CHAPTER 1 - PORTLAND, ME

Richard Clement



Members and friends of Chapter 1 at the fundraiser Hike 'n Bike honoring Tom Sturtevant.

In November the film *The Welcome* was shown at the University of Southern Maine. Also in November, our chapter and friends gathered in Portland to hold vigil as the "glorifying all things military" (Veterans Day Parade) passed us by.

We are in the planning stages for protesting yet another visit to our state by the "Blue Angels". We are also in the planning stages for our annual PTSD symposium to be held in May. Paula Caplan, PhD, author of *When Johnny and Jane Come Marching Home How All of Us Can Help Veterans*, won the 2011 American Publishers Award for Professional and Scholarly Excellence in the Psychology category, will be our featured keynote presenter.

Most importantly to our chapter we honored our namesake Tom Sturtevant with a fundraising bike ride that was dear to his heart. Tom's family was present as we ended the ride with an official dedication ceremony.

¡Presenté!

CHAPTER 4 - COLVILLE, WA

Eleanor Mattice, Associate Member

Our small group continues to maintain a Veterans For Peace sign in Colville that denotes the total American casualties for the Iraq-Afganistan war, sadly watching the numbers climb to over 7000 not forgetting the hundreds of thousands of people from Iraq and Afganistan and other countries. This sadness is the driver to dare to hope

for more from ourselves.

We are here and ready to help promote peace and understanding. One of our members was just accepted into the Rotary which brings the opportunity to do just that with other organizations in our community. We meet the 1st Wednesday of the month at 6:00 pm at 547 North Main. Keep up the good work.

CHAPTER 19 - PALM SPRINGS, CA

Tom Swann

The Jon Castro Chapter sponsored a rally *Peace or Profit? Violence as Commodity*. About 50 people attended the rally. We had great speakers and superb music. The memorial wreath was very nice. Two local television stations did an interview but did not put the interviews on their newscast. Indio city council member Sam Torres was one of the speakers and the only elected official to attend the rally. The sponsors were Marie Ball, Lew Stewart, Will Paige, Darel Propst and Dorothy Bailey. Move To Amend received cash donations.

The chapter held a rally at Francis Stevens Park in Palm Springs in the honor of the Civil Rights Leader Martin Luther King Jr. The event called for peace and the end to the wars of invasion by the United States.

CHAPTER 21 - NORTHERN NJ

Ken Dalton

On December 1, 2012, VFP 21 held it's Annual Dinner/Fundraiser at Rita and Joe's Restaurant in Jersey City. Besides raising money for the chap-



Jarvis Crawford of the Coachella Valley Martin Luther King Committee addressing the participants at the Martin Luther King Day rally.

ter and getting our members to have an afternoon of fun together, we also had a food drive where several boxes of nonperishable foods were collected and donated to the New Jersey Community Food Bank for the benefit of the victims of "Super Storm Sandy". This event was made possible by the hard work of our associate members Nancy Nygard and Peg Fallon.

Veteran and associate members attended the 85th Birthday Celebration of Ramsey Clark, the former Attorney General of the United States and long time peace and justice advocate, at the Riverside Church in New York City on January 12th. This gala celebration was well attended by dignitaries and activists from around the country and the world including ambassadors from Cuba and Iran and delegates from Venezuela and Nicaragua. At the closing of this Event, Ramsey Clark got up to speak and mentioned the destructive force of one of our Trident II submarines, which has the capacity to turn a targeted location into a 50-mile wide crater! The U.S. has eight of these submarines deployed at any given minute in the Pacific Ocean and each sub has one hundred and forty four of these war heads. During the ceremony, Veterans For Peace, was recognized. VFP attendees were Chapter President Ken Dalton, Chapter Secretary Michael Kramer, Joe Hirsch, Sara Flounders and Joann Dalton.

Finally, Azad Bahan (Faraz) of VFP 21, Chairman of the VFP Iran Working Group and co-founder of the Campaign in Solidarity With the Iranian People's Green Movement was the guest speaker at Marc' Coffee House in Highland Park on January 19, 2013. This event is sponsored by the Central Jersey Coalition Against Endless War and was well supported by VFP 21 veteran and associate members. Faraz was well received by all those in attendance.

CHAPTER 27 - MINNEAPOLIS, MN

Larry Johnson

Chapter 27 continues its effort, led by Steve McKeown, to get August 27 declared a national holiday to honor the

day the Kellogg-Briand Pact was signed in 1928. This is, of course, mainly to gain a platform to let everyone know the deliberately hidden truth that warfare has been officially illegal since that day in 1928. We have also established a regular 4 times a year meeting time with Minnesota Representative Keith Ellison, to discuss with him what issues we believe to be important for all of us. 22 of us sat with him recently, and Rep. Ellison just released a strong statement questioning the use of drones. Also, because the Congressman is co-chair of the Progressive Caucus in the House, we would welcome thoughts from other chapters.

Finally, we have just begun working with Dr. Ron Glasser (*365 Days*, and more recently *Broken Bodies, Shattered Minds*) and our State Humanities Commission, to create a series to explore with the general public, the full and true costs of war.

CHAPTER 31 - PHILADELPHIA

Chuck Rossi

After Thanksgiving, the chapter held its first retreat and long-term planning session in several years. We developed ideas for more closely working within the inner-city and near suburban school systems in education about the history of America's wars and in counter-recruitment. We also developed plans to revivify our film series on the theme of *Coming Home* with films on transition to civilian life after World War II and the wars in Vietnam and Iraq/Afghanistan. Better use of communication and media relations was also emphasized to counter the military's increasingly effective use of secrecy and public relations to characterize its operations to the public.

On Veterans/Armistice Day, members of the chapter attended the annual event at Graterford Prison organized by Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 466 founded by Comer Glass friend of the chapter. Mike Felker and John Grant, along with members of the Southern New Jersey Veterans for



Pastor Giselle Coutinho, left, and Father Jeff Putthoff, executive director of Hopeworks in Camden, plant a cross in the name of murdered veteran Georgina Jedrzejewski.

Peace, attended the ceremony in Camden, one of the nation's most dangerous cities, for Georgina Jedrzejewski, a homeless veteran and member of that troubled city's Bridge of Peace Church, who was brutally murdered early this year. A cross bearing her name was added to the spot in front of Camden's City Hall where 66 other crosses stand, representing the number of murder victims in the city since January 1.

We recently received an update from James Lewes whose project of cataloguing and digitizing full text of all extant copies of independent GI newspapers published during the Vietnam War is being sponsored by the chapter. *The GI Press Project* as it is known is nearing completion, and it is hoped that the material will be made available on the Internet sometime this year. If you are interested in knowing more about the project, get in touch with me at charossi@comcast.net.

CHAPTER 34 - NEW YORK CITY

Bob Keilbach

Members are involved in weekly Peace Vigils, Bradley Manning support, Immigrant Rights, and counter-recruitment events. We marched in an antiwar contingent in the NYC Veterans Day Parade, joined by other Peace & Justice groups, distributing thousands of flyers concerning War & the Economy, Bradley Manning, and Agent Orange to very receptive onlookers.

We participated in the October 7th

Action on the 11th Anniversary of Invasion of Afghanistan, at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in NYC; 25 were arrested for overstaying the park permit while reading the names of casualties of U.S. wars. We participated in Hurricane Sandy cleanup operations in the Rockaways, and had a Holiday Party at Catholic Worker's Maryhouse, with 60 attendees from our peace & justice community, great music and a birthday cake for Bradley Manning.

Recent Chapter meetings include a presentation and discussion of the dire situation in Haiti, the UN proposal to ban uranium weapons, and a Pizza Night on a cold January evening, where we set priorities for 2013.

On January 28, we held a *Blueprint for Accountability - Drone Warfare*, with Medea Benjamin, at Culture Project.

CHAPTER 41 - CAPE COD, MA

Duke Ellis

Just before the holidays, our chapter lost a long-time and dedicated member, George Earley. George served in the 70th Infantry Division on the front lines driving German forces through France and into Germany and in the Army of Occupation after the war. He had a long career as a Social Worker, most of it working with veterans at VA hospitals. He was an active member of the chapter until becoming ill a couple of years ago.

Veterans Day was a success as we marched in the main Cape Cod event and were the largest veterans contingent there. Later in November we co-sponsored with the local chapter of Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) an event at which Larry Minear spoke about his studies of the impact of combat on veterans of the Iraq and Afghan wars.

The chapter is partnering with the Cape Cod Chapter of Womens International League for Peace and Freedom to plan a public showing of the film *The Invisible War* which exposes the inadequate response to military sexual violence.

Another project that is picking up speed is our participation in a local NamVets-sponsored Center for Healing for vets suffering from PTSD and other combat injuries. The goal is for the center to open before the end of 2013 with a variety of outpatient-type services for vets and their families.

Exposing the true costs of war by focusing on the Hidden Wounds and by actively advocating for better services for vets has been a great way to get our message out beyond the choir.

Finally, our eighteenth annual Poetry for Peace Contest has just taken off with major press coverage announcing the contest and highlighting one of our multiple winners and the impact of participation on her life and her goals.

CHAPTER 49 - INDIANAPOLIS, IN

Larry Miller

Veterans For Peace, Chapter 49 has been developing a focus on peaceful resolutions of conflict in order to mobilize popular support. For example, in addressing the threats to bomb Iran, in September of 2012, our Chapter initiated an Iran Action Plan titled *Take A Stand for Peace with Iran*. The underlying message was to request federal legislators and the President to support a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in the Middle East. This action was conducted through local networks and nationally through the VFP Iran Working Group and the VFP chapters around the country. For the public's input we contacted peace and justice groups in Indiana, requesting they send out to their Members this message, and contact their Legislators and President Obama, asking they support the establishment of a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in the Middle East. Other countries in the Middle East, to include Iran, want this Treaty.

For the United States and Israel to be a part of this Treaty would be an indication to the world they are truly for peace in the Middle East and not war, as a solution to the nuclear war threats in the Middle East. The link sent out by Chapter 49 was <http://www.vfp49.org/PeaceWithIran.html>

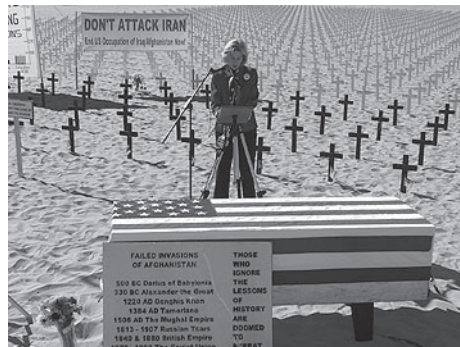
CHAPTER 54 - SANTA BARBARA, CA

Mary Johnston

Arlington West was set up on November 11 in honor of Veterans/Armistice Day. Several politicians were invited and came to help read the names of the servicemembers and civilians killed in the invasion of Afghanistan, including Rep. Lois Capps, County Supervisor Janet Wolf, Mayor Helene Schneider, and Councilmember Cathy Murillo. Chapter president Dan Seidenberg and VP Mary Johnston attended the ceremony at the Veterans Memorial Building as well. They came in their military attire and saluted the Veterans for Peace wreath.

The week before Veterans/Armistice Day, a special teen-age memorial was set-up at Santa Barbara High School. Tombstones with the names of the more than 400 teen-age servicemembers killed in Iraq and Afghanistan were set up on the quad, a grassy area where students go for their lunch break. Students were encouraged to put names on the tombstones and to help read the names of the killed in action as well. School administration was present and were very supportive of the effort.

Additionally at Santa Barbara High School, VFP members and their Quaker friends met with the administration to protest the number of visits made by military recruiters. A proposal was made to limit the number of visits to two per year, similar to the policy at the San Diego School District. School officials approved the change as proposed, and the next step is to go before the school board to ask that the policy be instituted for the entire school district.



Rep. Lois Capps speaking at the Arlington West exhibition at the Veterans/Armistice Day remembrance.

Dan Seidenberg and Mary Johnston spoke to a class of freshmen on the topic of war. Dan spoke of his experiences in Vietnam, and donated a copy of his book *Vietnam Ambush*. Mary encouraged the students to volunteer at Arlington West and to consider careers in social justice.

CHAPTER 55 - SANTA FE, NM

Bob Stearns

Members from Chapter 55 in Santa Fe NM joined some 450 supporters for the Nuke Free Now weekend in August calling for an end to nuclear weaponry across the globe. In Los Alamos, the birthplace of the bomb, demonstrators stood silently at the launching of 3,000 lanterns. Via a phone connection, they heard the bell ringing at Hiroshima, Japan, in a ceremony urging abolition of nuclear arms. The chapter provided the sound system and handled the finances for the events. Six civil resisters ("The LANL-6") were arrested and will be tried in Los Alamos Municipal Court on January 9th. Chapter 55 co-sponsored a fund-raiser for the LANL-6 on January 6 that raised \$2700 for legal expenses.

CHAPTER 61 - ST. LOUIS, MO

Don Connors

We recently lost a most valued member and president of the chapter, Tom Tendler. Tom pioneered a very successful monthly movie showing at a local restaurant and bar. He was at the forefront handing out leaflets during the Fourth of July celebrations and whatever other occasions to interface with the public he could find. Tom is mourned and missed.

The chapter is now the primary support for the twice-yearly Stand Downs for homeless veterans. Membership has grown as a result, and shows promise of growing further as we are exposed to more veterans in service to other veterans. Accordingly, we have moved the meeting to a local church that provides us with more space and free coffee.

We continue involvement with the

St. Louis Veterans Drug Court and co-sponsor, with the local newspaper (*The Post Dispatch*) the Employment Connection and local businesses, a Computer Clinic. The clinic features veterans helping veterans, and others, develop computer skills to prepare them for the modern job market. Check the website at: www.vetcourtcomputer-clinic.org.

At our last meeting, we hosted a presentation by VFP member Dr. Robert Rosser, who introduced us to the Iraq Student Project and Ahmed Al-Dulaimi, an Iraqi student attending Fontbonne College (www.iraqistudentproject.org) The program is designed to help war-displaced Iraqi youth get college degrees unavailable in their own country.

CHAPTER 67 - LONG BEACH, CA

Horace Coleman

Past chapter president Jack Finley had an inspiration after seeing a memorial to teenagers killed in action in Iraq and Afghanistan: Finley wanted to display a version of Arlington West that memorialized teens KIA in the Global War on Terrorism. And, to show young people the cost of war for 400 teenage warriors.

Each white wooden cross bears a laminated picture and obituary of an individual. The portable memorial was first displayed at California State University Long Beach. It's been displayed on Memorial Day in Long Beach, CA where local groups such as Occupy Long Beach sponsored a city block on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The display got coverage from LA TV stations and the local newspaper, the Long Beach Press-Telegram.

Richard Madera, current chapter president, supervised the chapter's participation in a sand castle building competition at a local beach. Instead of a castle, chapter members and volunteers erected a large peace symbol. The chapter also participated in the MLK parade. It will display the Teen Memorial at The Veterans Memorial Pier later this month and also makes the display available to local organizations that want to use it.

CHAPTER 69, SAN FRANCISCO

Nadya Williams

The very first chapter of "Veterans for Peace" may have been started in San Francisco! In 1962, poet and publisher Lawrence Ferlinghetti, a WWII veteran, gathered a half dozen vets to march in the annual SF Veterans' Day Parade under the banner of Veterans for Peace. The group did not go national or continue for more than a few years, until Viet Nam Veterans Against the War took to the national stage. Ferlinghetti, who owns the legendary City Lights Book Store, will be honored at a special event at the SF Chapter 69's monthly meeting in March.

The annual VFP Spring Tour to Viet Nam (April 18-May 2), coordinated in the U.S. by Chapter 69, has 13 veterans, their spouses and non-vet activists, each bringing \$1,000 for aid to victims of America's war. The "star" of the tour is Myra MacPherson, author of a seminal book on PTSD in Viet Nam vets. She has been a strong supporter of Chuck Hagel for Secretary of Defense (Google her for New York Times OpEds.)

Our chapter continues with a 3rd annual Northern California regional meeting March 1-3, to be attended by VFP's Executive Director Mike Reid, and new president, Patrick McCann for extensive internal discussion, as well as a large public speaking event.

Other actions include: partnering with CodePink at demos against Guantanamo and Beal Air Force Base (drones), supporting IVAW actions, initiating "Sankofa" – a Black History/Black Veterans event Feb. 10, Vets' and St. Patrick's parades, and many others.

CHAPTER 71 - SONOMA COUNTY, CA

Bill Simon

Chapter activities for the past Summer and Fall include the following. On Aug 15 we kicked off the 2012-2013 school year for our Sonoma County Full Picture counter-recruiting project: www.thefullpicture.info We made presentations at Sonoma County high schools and Santa Rosa Junior Col-

lege regarding the hidden costs of war. On July 14 we joined the Occupy Bohemian Grove protest event. We also are active with the Occupy Santa Rosa movement. On July 22 we joined numerous organizations at the largest annual Sonoma County progressive gathering: The Petaluma Progressive Festival

Members are frequently published in the Santa Rosa Press Democrat discussing issues of war, peace, and military recruitment. Teresa Warmke participated in the online meeting with VFP National regarding expanding membership.

On May 27 VFP Chapter 71 participated in the Earth Day Festival in Healdsburg. We participate in three parades each year: April 22 The Apple Blossom Festival Parade, May 19 Santa Rosa Rose Parade, and on Veterans Day we participate in the Petaluma Veterans Day Parade.

We held a Veterans/Armistice Day Celebration at a wonderful vegetarian restaurant in Santa Rosa: Gaia's Garden. One couldn't ask for better food or a more warm and friendly atmosphere. Several of our members are avid motorcycle riders, so we are in the process of establishing the first (that we know of) VFP Bikers Club. Unfortunately, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors has decided to contract out the management of all Veterans Halls. Consequently, VFP Chapter 71 may be looking for a new meeting place as an upcoming chapter activity.

CHAPTER 72 - PORTLAND, OR

Marion Ward

The Peace Park Committee is working with the landscape design class at a local community college where students are competing for best design to reinvigorate the Park. Chapter members continue to work on basic maintenance of the Park.

Members tabled at the NW Teachers for Social Justice Conference in October which was attended by approximately 800 teachers. We hosted a dinner before Col. Ann Wright's talk

in Portland, and raised money for the Gaza's Ark project.

S. Brian Willson was feted in Concord, CA at the 25th anniversary of his being struck by a munitions train while attempting to stop arms shipments to Latin America. He received two awards: the Progressive Democrats of Santa Monica's Teddi Winograd Courage Award demonstrating activism in pursuit of peace and justice outside of the Democratic Party; and the Artist Film Festival 2012 award for a lifetime achievement in advocating for peace.

Mike Hastie was arrested at the Vietnam Memorial in New York City in October and returned to New York in January for sentencing. Dan Shea produces a monthly veterans' TV program available to residents in Portland and surrounding areas. His interview with World War II veteran and VFP member Will Poole and VFP President Leah Bolger is here: <http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/15624229>.

Dan Shea has been the VFP liaison supporting the Veterans Transition Corps, a group of Post 9-11 veterans loosely associated with IVAW-Oregon and *Boots to Roots*. The Corps provides veterans with permaculture-based education, employment, and therapy. The VA responded to a letter written by VFP President, Chris Knight, regarding unused housing vouchers. They requested a meeting, which was attended by Chris Knight and Marion Ward to discuss improvements that are intended to make full use of the program.

CHAPTER 87 - SACRAMENTO, CA

John C. Reiger

Our chapter had a strong presence in Sacramento's Veterans Day Parade. The Peace-mobile led the way with Claire popping through the roof waving our banner and waving to the appreciative crowd. Our anti-war chanting did ruffle some feathers but most folks smiled and waved. After the parade about half of our group headed off to join, and support, local grocery workers on strike. The union members won that strike a few days later.



The Chapter 87 Peace-mobile at the Sacramento Veterans Day Parade.

Some of our members have been standing with Code Pink and other peaceniks at monthly anti-drone actions at a nearby Air Force base. One VFP member was among a recent group of arrestees (but charges were never filed against him).

We continue our weekly and monthly Peace Vigils, our support of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement (anti-Soda Stream picketing), our monthly serving lunch to homeless folks, and other anti-war and/or pro-peace events that come along. Recently we (and our VFP banners/flags) were a very visible part of the yearly Martin Luther King March, a seven-mile march through Sacramento. Our Letter to Obama urging him to start his new term by downsizing the military and using the money for civilian needs was published in a weekly Sacramento newspaper.

CHAPTER 91 - SAN DIEGO

Gil Field

This quarter has been a busy one for Chapter #91 here in San Diego.

Veterans Day saw us set up our *Hometown Arlington West Memorial* honoring our 280 fallen brothers and sisters from Los Angeles, Riverside, Orange, and San Diego counties who were killed in either Iraq or Afghanistan.



Chapter 91 at the San Diego Veterans Day Parade.

The next day we walked in the Veterans Day Parade in downtown San Diego and received an amazing outpouring of affection and positive comments from the 30,000 spectators.

December 8th found us at the annual Peace-On-Earth Bazaar, doing outreach and making a few bucks selling peace related Christmas gifts with 30 other active peace groups here in San Diego.

January 20th found us marching in the annual Martin Luther King Parade in San Diego, where we again received strong positive spectator feedback and support.

Our weekly Anti-Drone demonstrations outside the gate of General Atomics here in San Diego continue each Thursday, and we will be hosting a *National Anti-Drone Days of Action* here from April 4-7, 2013 to draw nation-wide attention to the increasing unregulated use of drones in war and here in the United States.

We continue to be thrilled by the chartering of both the Veterans For Peace UK and San Diego City College Veterans For Peace, both of which were due to the encouragement and work by members connected to our chapter.

We are excited by our new website and Facebook page, set up by two of our younger members, who have added so much vigor and modern outreach to our slowly aging chapter.

Lastly, our Compassion Campaign to provide sleeping bag sets to the ever growing number of homeless in downtown San Diego begins its third season, and we recently gave out our 1500th sleeping bag set, having obtained over \$37,000 in public donations since the campaign began in December 2010.

CHAPTER 92 - SEATTLE WA

Michelle J. Kinnucan

The chapter didn't submit reports for the newsletter in 2012, so this report will recap the past year. We started the year by marching in the snow and cold in Seattle's 30th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Our last action of the

year was in December; we went from our monthly membership meeting to Benaroya Hall where we handed out *If Americans Knew* "O Little Town of Bethlehem" cards to passersby and people attending Handel's *Messiah*. This came just weeks after Israel's US-backed attack on the Gaza Strip, which killed or wounded over 1000 Palestinians.

In between these actions, chapter members supported Bradley Manning, marched in the LGBT Pride parade, partnered with Occupy Seattle on two occasions; distributed hundreds of copies of the chapter's *It Didn't Work for Ali* leaflet at Colin Powell's Seattle appearance, and engaged the general public on Tax Day, Memorial Day, the anniversary of the Israeli attack on the USS Liberty, Independence Day, Seafair Fleet Week, Hiroshima Day, and 9-11/Patriot Day. VFP 92 members staffed counter-recruiting tables inside three Seattle public high schools and attended the Washington state school board members conference.

One of the year's highlights was the Auburn Veterans Day parade. We were initially told we couldn't march, but we took a strong First Amendment stand. Eight members filed personal declarations in the lawsuit we brought with the help of the ACLU. Our case garnered significant media attention. We went to court, we won, and we marched. I've never seen us look better as a group than we did as we marched in Auburn. Parade spectators were especially friendly; many of them made a special point of thanking us and welcoming us, knowing that the City of Auburn had let us march only after a federal judge ordered them to do so less than 24 hours before the parade's start.

On a sadder note, Emily Ungerecht Horswill, WWII Army veteran and long-time member died in November at the age of 91.

VFP 92 thanks our two outgoing Board of Directors members, Bill Duroe and Phil Heft. Appreciation is due also to our continuing Board members, Cliff Wells and Will Alleckson. And we welcome our new Director-at-Large, Mike Kearney, our new Vice-President, Keith

Orchard, our new Secretary, Walt Williams and our new President Dan Gilman.

CHAPTER 97 - KANSAS

Michael Shea

We find ourselves dismayed, disgusted and furious about the Newtown shootings as the continuation of violence in the USA. So we are meeting and thinking about ways to counteract this horror.

We have settled on a plan to print individualized signs (mostly bumper stickers) that we hope will at least encourage some engagement or conversation. And, we hope, some action to try to demilitarize the country.

CHAPTER 98 - TAOS, NM

Carrie Leven

The Taos chapter continues its work to inform the public about the high Cost of War in precious resources, treasure, and lives lost and altered. Member Carrie Leven writes online memorials for fallen brothers and sisters for the *I Got the News Today* IGTNT series at Daily Kos blog.

In our effort to forge news ways to Peace in 2013, the Taos chapter supports Veterans Yoga classes, free for veterans. Yoga, breathing, and meditation have been proven to calm the mind and lessen the symptoms of PTSD like insomnia. The Taos chapter sponsors Veterans Yoga classes as a way to inner peace and more peaceful interactions.

We hold a Peace meditation at the weekly Saturday afternoon meeting. Taos Veterans for Peace and Metta Theatre continue to sponsor and re-



At the screening of The Invisible War.

cord "Veterans Speak" events in Taos to allow all veterans a space to tell their stories.

On Memorial Day weekend last May the Taos Chapter 98, Code Pink, and Harwood Museum of Art sponsored a screening of the Oscar-nominated film, *The Invisible War*. The documentary by Kirby Dick investigates the epidemic of sexual assault in the military, and victims efforts to get Department of Defense and law-makers to bring an end to the lack of prosecution for offenders.

The chapter continues its long-time fundraiser of selling Veterans for Peace belt buckles, and now has several beautiful p-cord belts made by Iraq Veteran Dom Rosas <http://www.vets4peacetaos.org/store.html>

CHAPTER 104 - EVANSVILLE, IN

Lynn Kinkade

Chapter 104 marched in the annual West Side Nut Club Fall Festival parade, passing out information about the Veterans For Peace along the parade route, and utilizing the new parade float (designed and constructed by member Dave Helfrich) that provided seating for up to 10 members and allowing room for the VFP banners. Anecdotally, one member learned from a mother who accepted one of the flyers that her young son who had talked incessantly about wanting to become a soldier, decided after reading the VFP information that that career path no longer interested him.

On November 10, we produced a staged reading of Steve Tesich's moving and provocative play *The Speed of Darkness*. The play concerns two Vietnam veterans, one homeless and one a successful businessman, who meet 20 years after their service and confront a scandalous act in which they both participated, driven by their despair and anger over their involvement in the war. The performance space at the D'Alto Studio of Performing Arts was donated for the veterans' use, and the reading provoked strong reactions in those attending.



Joining the Labor Day Parade in Petersburg, IN, members of Chapter 104 break in the newly-designed parade vehicle created by member Dave Helfrich (driving).

On Veterans Day, our chapter presented the 10th annual reading of the names of those members of the military killed in action in Iraq and Afghanistan at the local Four Freedoms Monument. As our involvement continues, the time it takes to read all the names increases, this year taking more than five hours to read the names of those whose lives were taken in both wars.

On December 8, VFP sponsored another Lennon Night, to celebrate the life of the murdered Beatle in an evening of song, poetry and speeches that reflected the sentiment expressed in John Lennon's song *Imagine*.

CHAPTER 105 - BALTIMORE, MD

Jim Baldrige

The Phil Berrigan Memorial Chapter once again celebrated the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. in Baltimore's 13th annual Martin Luther King Day Parade. Chapter 105 has had an official contingent in the parade for the past 11 years. VFP members Dr. Larry Egbert, Dave Schott and Virginia Rodino, with her brother and two Peace Pups,



Dave Helfrich and Lynn Kinkade participate in the 10th annual reading of the names of all military personnel killed in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the Four Freedoms Monument in Evansville, IN

marched behind and alongside Jim Baldrige's truck, which was decorated with VFP and VVAW flags, *How is the War Economy Working for You?* posters, Army, Navy, Marine and Air Force service flags, and the Maryland State flag and the American flag. Dr. Egbert carried a sign that said **VETERAN AGAINST TORTURE**. Allies and friends from the War Resisters League and Abolish the Maryland Death Penalty coalition marched with us as well. The thousands of spectators, mostly African American, were very supportive during the procession along Martin Luther King Blvd. To the front and behind us were razz-ma-tazz marching bands and troupes with young women, men on drums, and a float charging Marylanders to abolish hunger.

Baltimore VFP members continue to participate in vigils and hearings for Private Bradley Manning at Ft. Meade. Reactions from active duty Army are mixed. Some profess not to know anything about the case; others are hostile. But true to our own experiences from our time in the service, there are those who support what we do because they know we are right. From waves to honks, military salutes and smiles, Bradley Manning is not alone, in the Army and out.

Jim Baldrige spoke on Armistice Day to a gathering in a rural Quaker Meeting. Some in attendance were also veterans, of Korea and Vietnam service and each era as well. Ellen Barfield provided some of the Armistice Day background for the presentation, including the tidbit that the last American to die in combat in WWI was from Baltimore and is buried here. We hope to recruit to our chapter from this Armistice Day gathering.

CHAPTER 110 - FOUNTAIN VALLEY, CA

Sam Coleman

Chapter 110 holds a monthly Arlington West display in Huntington Beach (AKA Surf City), CA. It's in Orange County, about 30 miles north of Camp Pendleton (a Marine Corps base). Active duty and discharged Marines often stop by to take pictures of the Marine



Chapter 105 at Baltimore's Martin Luther King Parade.

Corps flag (one of the service flags flown at the memorial in addition to the American flag) with crosses as a backdrop or to personalize crosses dedicated to unit members or friends. Civilians often stop by to chat, ask questions or take pictures.

Orange County is one of the most conservative and Republican counties in the nation but Arlington West is well received at the beach. Chapter president Keith Gawith is energetic and outgoing. Chapter members make speeches in the area, hold a yard sale to raise funds, financially support other peace groups, attend regional conferences and participate in MLK, Veterans Day, and Fourth of July parades.

CHAPTER 112-VENTURA COUNTY, CA

Michael Cervantes

Our high school scholarship project continues in several high schools, although this year the number of scholarships has been noticeably cut back. Past president, Michael Cervantes, restarted a six-high-school circuit VFP tabling program in front of the career centers at lunch time. Informed enlistment is the purpose. Only an on-campus presence can ensure counseling to today's youth about the military choice.

On Sunday January, 20, 2013, chapter members attended a memorial service for John Piester, former Vietnam War Brown Water Navy veteran and VVAW member. He was the strong power behind wife Cindy Piester's award winning work for peace in our county. Chapter member, Cindy Piester, is the contact for Maverick Media Productions. She has several vimeo internet interviews on the world wide web.

An evening for Bradley Manning was sponsored by chapter 112 on January 26, at the Unitarian Universalist Church, Ventura. A film about the case was shown and a lively discussion followed.

Chapter 112 continues to table its VFP presence throughout the county like at events for Martin Luther King Jr. Day when Oxnard townsfolk march from the plaza to the downtown civic center. We can both march and table at the final gathering point where scheduled activities are planned.

Michael Cervantes continues to assist at the two Southern California ongoing Arlington West exhibitions (Santa Barbara and Santa Monica). Public contact at these two venues remains a preeminent organizational projection to the outer world.

We'd like member, Michael Cervantes, to have credit for last issue's newsletter book review article, *Generations, A History of America's Future*. His name was omitted as contributor.

This month, we are expecting some student contact with a student peace club organization at the local California State University (Channel Islands). This may include campus tabling and presentations with our student contacts.

CHAPTER 115, RED WING, MN

Emma Onawa

The theme of last year's Peacestock was Religion and War/Peace. Highlights included: Duane Kamrath, a veteran and retired minister gave a presentation on *Wisdom About War and Violence*, a youth non-violence tool with religious/non-religious voices. He led small group discussions of selected readings.

Josh Ruebner, Director of the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation, gave a primer on Israel's creation and the 64-year-old conflict. The UN partition, without Palestinian consent, promised much, but caused ethnic cleansing and displacement of millions.

Ostensibly fair, US policy is highly biased towards Israeli.

Leah Bolger VFP President counseled that members must unite with others, particularly on depleted uranium, PTSD, health care, education.

Local Iraqi activist Sami Rasouli discussed how Iraqi trips provide hope, such as Songs of Hope, an international children's group, US/Muslim peacemakers, Minneapolis/Bagdad friendship. Iraqi people opened their homes: "Our home is the best hotel in town".

Father Roy Bourgeois, a Maryknoll priest, peace activist, founder of the School of the Americas Watch, spoke of growing up in segregated LA, his Vietnam service, Maryknoll work, and travels throughout Latin America for Liberation Theology and to Vietnam. He stressed that ordinary Vietnamese had no anger towards American people. Father Bourgeois left us with the words "When we follow our connection to the divine we are free and when we don't, we are tormented. Silence is the voice of complicity – but the truth cannot be silenced."

David Swanson, peace activist, author, and founder of Rootsaction.org. He discussed the long history of anti-war activity in Minnesota. The 1927/28 Kellogg-Briand Pact (energized by Frank Kellogg, Minnesota republican) outlawed war and nations from waging war. War is legalized murder against darker skinned "enemies", with outrage over troops urinating on bodies, instead of the murders. "We are many, they are few, realize and remember our strength".

CHAPTER 134 - TACOMA, WA

John Bartley, webmaster

We helped banner "Freedom Bridge," an overpass near Ft. Lewis in nearby Lakewood, for March Forward's *Our Lives Our Rights Campaign*. The banner read, "We Don't Have To Go To Afghanistan". Many of our members participated in the Veterans Day March in Auburn, WA after a court judgment was obtained that allowed VFP to be

in the parade. This is one of the largest Veterans Day parades in the West.

We assisted the GI rights coffee shop *Coffee Strong* in relocating. The new address is more suited to a refined mission, which will focus more on Veterans Benefits Assistance, counseling, and GI rights, and less on providing coffee.

Members of our chapter visited U.S. Representative Adam Smith, the ranking member of the Armed Services Committee. We discussed US militarism and the drone warfare policy. Members presented Rep. Smith with a copy of Medea Benjamin's book, *Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control*. Rep. Smith was also presented with dog-tags of a fallen soldier, which left him visibly moved.

We set up a Library display case at the Puyallup City Library featuring the painting *Priorities Versus Consumption* by M.K. Johnson.

We also tabled at Tacoma's Dickens Festival on December 8th and got involved in the local *Getting the Money Out of Politics* events, and *Back Pack 5* trials. This is a lawsuit charging the City of Tacoma with unfair harassment of protestors exercising their right to assembly at the Port of Tacoma. We are monitoring this closely, and will participate in vigils during the trial.

Members of our chapter created a display housing transparent tubes so that beans could be used to represent the costs of war at tabling events.

We continue to hold regularly scheduled peace vigils and a PTSD support group, which holds regular weekly ses-



Chapter 134 protests the movie *Zero Dark Thirty*.

sions held at the *Coffee Strong* coffee shop.

We supported the *Zero Dark Thirty* movie protest in Seattle. One of our members dressed in an orange jumpsuit. This event coincided with the 11th anniversary of Guantanamo. Our website continues to challenge the promotion of torture. We also participated at an interfaith MLK Jr. event in Tacoma, where we maintained an information table.

More information is at <http://www.vf-ptacoma.com>

CHAPTER 149 - MEMPHIS, TN

George Grider

Beginning in the summer of 2011, the Memphis Chapter accepted an invitation to meet with our U.S. Representative Steve Cohen, along with county prosecutors and public defenders, to discuss forming a Veterans Court. VFP members Barney Barnhart and George Grider attended the monthly meetings, and helped design the court's rules and format.

About one hundred veteran courts are now operating across the U.S. (Last fall the Veteran Court program was featured on CBS's *Sixty Minutes*.) Until now, none had been operating in the State of Tennessee. These specialty courts are founded on the growing public sympathy toward veterans who come home with PTSD, and the illegal and often harmful habit of self-medicating.

We were fortunate to have a contact with Judge Robert Russell in Buffalo, New York. Judge Russell began the first such court in 2008, and was happy to share his experience. Led by General Sessions Court Judge William Anderson, the Shelby County Veterans Court requires defendants to undergo

a 1-year program of making their VA appointments and staying clean. The vet defendants must also remain out of jail. Upon completion of the program, the veteran has his or her record expunged.

Key to the Veterans Court program is contact with a veteran mentor. Barney and George serve as co-coordinators for the mentor program. We're now operating with about 25 mentors, overseeing approximately the same number of veteran defendants. Mentors are key to helping the veterans stay in the program. In the program's first six months, we've had only a single expulsion.

It should be no surprise that Veterans for Peace receives little exposure in this effort. Folks in the criminal justice system, along with veterans who run afoul of the law, still have a way to go before understanding what we do. We fear that our status as "peaceniks" might run contrary to our prestigious status as "vets." (Think of the recent practice of veterans met on the street being thanked for their service.) Comments on this perennially puzzling topic are appreciated.

CHAPTER 152 - LEHIGH VALLEY, PA

Phil Reiss

Many thanks to Louise Legun moving on to do for Berks County Chapter 165 what she did for Chapter 152 the Tom Paine Chapter for six years. Her dedication to the cause for peace as promoted by Veterans For Peace ideals and principles will always be an inspiration to fellow charter members of Tom Paine Chapter. Louise carried the ball for us and will not easily be replaced. Two World War II members who recently passed away are Tom Lloyd and Craig Moore. Now our most senior members are: Don Burns and John Zachmann - both Korean War veterans.

Thanks also to the Unitarian-Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley (Bethlehem) for the generous contribution of \$290.00 to our chapter's treasury. We are about to establish a new time for meetings and election of chap-

ter officers. For information call either Phil Reiss at (610) 282-8077 or Vince Stravino at (610) 216-8103.

CHAPTER 157 - NC TRIANGLE

John Heuer

In November the Eisenhower Chapter teamed up with Chapter 99 (Western NC) to participate in the annual Lake Junaluska Peace Conference *Love in Action—The Transformative Power of Nonviolence* which closed with a riveting presentation by South African Methodist Minister Alan Storey, featured in the current edition of *War Crimes Times*.

In December we welcomed new members to our regular meeting, as well as the New South Network of War Resisters representative Coleman Smith. Coleman and his colleague Clare Hanrahan have created a powerful presentation *War On Earth! Environmental Impact: Atomic Appalachia and the Militarized Southeast* featured in "MIC 50" the book of documents produced for the Military-Industrial Complex at 50 conference held in Charlottesville, VA, edited by David Swanson.

In January we celebrated the passage by the Raleigh City Council of a strong *Bring the War Dollars Home—Restore Our Communities* resolution with NC Peace Action and AFSC of the Carolinas. The City Council called on Congress and the President to:

...bring our war dollars home, and use those and other savings in military spending to meet vital human needs, promote job creation, rebuild our infrastructure, aid municipal and state governments, and develop a new economy based upon renewable, sustainable energy.

VFP is also partnering with NC Peace Action, AFSC, Witness for Peace and WILPF on a 4 month *Peaceful Means* documentary film series beginning in February. On February 9 VFP will be marching with the annual HKonJ Rally (Historic Thousands on Jones Street) as one of 140 statewide partners with the NC NAACP call for justice.

Speaking of partnerships, WWII



Marine combat vet Sam Winstead got a strong endorsement from Rotary International President Sakuji Tanaka, for Sam's 2013 Ride for Peace. Winstead, 87, blazed the 350 mile bicycle trail from Raleigh to Washington DC last spring. The 2nd annual Ride for Peace will launch from the NC Capitol in Raleigh on April 28, and land at Lafayette Park on May 4th. All riders and supporters are welcome.

WWII Air Force veteran and honorary chapter member Joseph Eger passed away in January at the age of 92, just one week after completing his book *Music and Revolution—From Beethoven to Einstein to the 99%*. Eger was the founder of the Symphony for United Nations.

CHAPTER 160 - VIETNAM

Chuck Searcy

Members of the *Hoa Binh* chapter, have been active in events and activities involving Vietnamese colleagues as well as American and international delegations. Chapter President Suel Jones held a fund-raising event during his trip home to Alaska and auctioned Buddha statues carved at Marble Mountain in Danang. The auction raised \$3500, which will be used to purchase cows and water buffaloes for Agent Orange victims in A Luoi, west of Hue.

In December, Mike Cull and Vice President Chuck Searcy attended a program commemorating the 1972 *Dien Bien Phu* of the Air campaign, when the Vietnamese defended Hanoi against the 12-day Christmas bombing. Guest of honor was Tom Hayden who was interviewed by Mme. Ton Nu



Suel Jones, Chapter 160 president, being recognized for our donation to the Danang Agent Orange Victims Association.

Thi Ninh, past member of the National Assembly and former ambassador to Belgium.

In January, a 15-member delegation of U.S. anti-war activists including former Attorney General Ramsey Clark joined an international delegation to commemorate the signing of the Paris Peace Accords. Mme. Nguyen Thi Binh, former Vice President of Vietnam and signatory to the Accords, hosted the group.

In January Suel Jones and Treasurer Chuck Palazzo joined a televised fund-raising event for Agent Orange victims in Danang. The event raised more than \$100,000 from local Vietnamese. The Chapter donated \$500 this year, which is in addition to the \$4800 to the Danang chapter of the Vietnam Association of Victims of Agent Orange as part of last year's VFP tour of Vietnam.

In January Chapter member David Thomas came from Boston to open a print-making exhibition featuring his works and the work of three other American artists. Many of David's prints, on display at a downtown Hanoi gallery, depicted his experiences as a soldier in Vietnam. David has made more than 50 trips to Vietnam, teaching and displaying his art.

VFP members joined a Soldier's Heart delegation for film screenings at the Hanoi Cinematheque, several documentaries that focused on PTSD and the healing that occurs when American veterans return to Vietnam. Discussion afterward included how veterans and peace activists should respond to the planned *50th Anniversary Commemoration* of the start of the Vietnam War, which will be funded by U.S. taxpayers. Consensus was that we should reopen the debate about Vietnam and deal with some of the truths that have been ignored or denied. Nick Turse's book *Kill Anything that Moves* can be a starting point for that long-overdue, public discussion.

The second annual VFP Tour of Vietnam is set for April 17 to May 02, with a 12-person delegation already signed up to travel from Hanoi to Hue and Quang Tri Province, the former DMZ,

then to Danang, Nha Trang, and Saigon. The group will see the humanitarian work being done by VFP members, other individuals and organizations, and visit Agent Orange families and victims of bombs and mines who are still dealing with the consequences of a war that ended nearly four decades ago.

CHAPTER 161 - IOWA CITY, IA

Paul Deaton

The death of member Samuel Becker was a key event for Chapter 161 this winter. Local obituaries omitted the fact the Becker served in the Pacific Theater during World War II, choosing to focus on his work at the University of Iowa, where the communications building is named after him. He was a frequent participant in the chapter's school outreach program, where he discussed service in New Guinea, the Philippines and in the Army of Occupation of Japan. His reflections about service in Japan after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of particular interest. He will be missed.

In December, we held the election of officers for 2013. The following were elected to key positions: Paul Deaton—President; John Jadryev—Vice President; and John Ivens—Secretary.

From Jan. 22 through 24, VFP President Leah Bolger visited the Iowa chapters. Chapter 161's founder, Ed Flaherty coordinated a series of public and private events, with a focus on public education about drone warfare. Events included three public lectures and a demonstration near the home of the Iowa National Guard F-16 Fighter Wing in Des Moines, which is being phased out to make room for a drone operations unit.



December Meeting of Chapter 161.



P O E T R Y

PTSD Remedies

For Tarak Kauff

First off, drop the “P”
There’s nothing “post”
about a mirror that threatens
to slit your wrist

But keep the “D”
I’ll take “disorder” - sweet chaos -
any time over this close order drill
that haunts my early morning hours

Then let the healing begin:

(1) Ask yourself: “Who am I?”

(2) Ask your lover: “Who are you?”

(3) Remain still. Wait for he or she
to whisper: “Who are we?”

Now the ache
has permission to leave

and the sunrise
can ease you into
another day

Doug Rawlings

Like It Is

Will ripples of time
erase war’s horrors
we try to forget?

Corrupt absolute power
sent myths down the
chain of command

Did VC harm our families?
Could they have invaded Hawaii?
Thought of that lately?

Recall rock song message
“We won’t be fooled again”?
Who really believes that?

Past mistakes are rarely
Heeded. Merchants of death can rest assured.

Phil Reiss

What I’ve Lost in a Desert I’ve Never Been to

Red pours in through dust in the air and I watch him brush sand from his eyes. It’s morning. The kettle’s screeching in the kitchen like a bomb in the distance, getting louder, getting closer. The bombs are falling past the horizon-line, the broken line, whiteseared between ember-earth and pink-petal sky—the world in his eye.

My reflection’s a tiny man sitting in the center, arms crossed, laughing as sand plumes in the air. BOOMBOOMBOOM! Dirt falls from a cloud. Thud, go the big pieces. He tells me he laughed when the bursting began.

Red dots the linoleum, or rain drops.

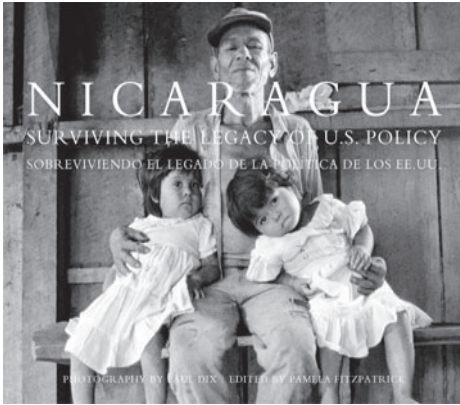
“What was it like, war?”

“What’d you do with my brother?”

And he still sits there, a smile trembling on his face.

— ***Joseph Wade***

BOOK REVIEWS



Nicaragua: Surviving the Legacy of U.S. Policy

Photography by Paul Dix; Edited by Pamela Fitzpatrick

Nicaragua Photo Testimony, Eugene, Oregon

This large (9.5 x 12”), beautifully produced, intensely moving book is a record of the personal experiences of 30 Nicaraguans who lived through the cruel 1980s war, the *Contra War* in which the United States acting as a state sponsor of terrorism trained, armed, advised, and funded the counter-revolutionary *Contras* against the Sandinista Junta of National Reconstruction. The English-Spanish, book is also a record of reunion and reconciliation. Veterans for Peace member Paul Dix and Pamela Fitzpatrick first went to Nicaragua in 1985 as members of Witness for Peace, an interfaith group opposed to U.S. support of the *Contra War*. From that time until 1990 when the Sandinista candidate, in the face of a total U.S. embargo of trade and a troubled economy, lost the presidential election to a U.S.-backed candidate. During those years Paul Dix had taken photographs of the victims of *Contra* violence. Beginning in 2002, Paul and Pamela returned to Nicaragua to attempt to find some of those often unidentified victims and to record their stories in photographs and in their own words.

Through the help and generosity of the Nicaraguan people, they were able to interview and photograph many

of the persons whose struggle Paul's photographs had documented during the brutal war. In the moving authors' preface, they state the purpose of their work as realized in the book as follows:

We hope the photographs and stories in this book will help citizens of the U.S. and the world learn from the chapter of history that unfolded in Nicaragua in the 1980s. We also hope that it will inspire people to break the silence—to challenge military, trade, and aid policies that continue to inflict violence and poverty on many people in Nicaragua and around the globe—and to commit to the hard work of dialogue and non-violent conflict resolution.

There are two parts of the book: Part 1 *Surviving the Legacy* consists of more than 100 beautifully presented black-and-white photographs of a person taken during the war and then later during the authors' return in the 2000s, along with short quotations from the person; Part 2 *Testimonies* consists of question-and-answer testimonies of 19 of those shown in Part 1.

For example in Part 1, Rosita Davis Zenón, age 28 in 1987, is a smiling, lovely, dark-skinned woman in a hammock in Orinoco; in 2005 a 46-year-old Rosita sits in a similar but opposite angle in a chair but with a troubled look of a too-soon old woman. In her testimony in Part 2, the older Rosita speaks:

They (the U.S.) didn't send down their soldiers, but they sent down the arms and the money. "Nicaragua, you can stay there and fight against your own self."

Coni Pérez Pérez, age 6 in 1988, swings playfully in a hammock; in 2002, a 20-year-old Coni is shown in profile a serious, purposeful young woman. The older Coni speaks:

It is terrible to think that in a country like the U.S., for example, the young

people who live there don't know anything about what their own country does in other countries.

Marconi Valdiva Zamora, age 8 in 1988, sits stoically on a bed, his right hand on his right leg, his left hand holding the stump of his left leg amputated above the knee; in 2005, 26-year-old Marconi equally stoically works in a *maquiladora* ironing pants. The older Marconi speaks:

They (in the U.S.) produce many things that are for war, so who will they sell them to if the whole world is at peace?

I hope this conveys something of the beauty and the pathos of this stunning book, which is dedicated simply to the *pueblo de Nicaragua*. The combined stories and photographs reach the soul quickly. The abiding image for me is of 22-month-old Luz Mabel Lumbí Rizo whose home in La Unión was attacked by *Contra* forces on December 8, 1986, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, an attack that left her father and infant brother dead. The photograph shows little Luz in profile, dirty faced, eyes closed, mouth slightly open, her tiny left hand gripping the offered finger of an unseen adult, and the ugly scar from the amputation of her right arm.

Paul Dix and Pamela Fitzpatrick deserve our thanks for bringing back the images and the words of those who were victims of this mostly forgotten little proxy war. We have moved on, far away to bigger wars, but this book will not let us forget what we have wrought.

You can buy the book through the website nicaraguaphototestimony.org or by mail at Nicaragua Photo Testimony, P.O. Box 948, Eugene, OR 97440. It costs \$34.95 plus \$5.00 U.S. shipping and handling. All profits from the sale of the book go to community organizing projects in Nicaragua.

Chuck Rossi



Guatemalans Resist Invasion of North American Mines

Helen Jaccard and Gerry Condon

In November we traveled to Guatemala to study Spanish and learn about the indigenous Maya people. Guatemala is a beautiful country of mountains and valleys and 22 volcanoes. Traditional Mayan culture exists there side by side with modernity.

The legacy of the 36-year war waged by the Guatemalan military against its indigenous people is everywhere. A peace agreement was signed in 1996, but many people we met told us the war continues – through discrimination, poverty, lack of voice in government, and now the systematic destruction of their communities by gold and silver mining, hydroelectric dams, cement plants, and oil exploration.

However, resistance is strong. In Huehuetenango near Chiapas, Mexico, a grassroots movement of up to 14,000 mostly poor people have kept up a 3-year nonviolent protest of construction of a hydroelectric dam on the Mesté River.

The huge Marlin Gold Mine, near the town of San Miguel Ixtahuacán high in the mountains of the department of San Marcos, is operated by Montana Exploradora, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Canadian company Goldcorp. It is both an open pit and tunneling mine. In December, accompanied by community organizer Aniseto López, we visited people affected by the Marlin Mine in the department of San Marcos. According to Amnesty International, in February 2011, protesters in northwestern Guatemala's San Marcos region were attacked after speaking out against the mine.

In San Marcos, a group called FREDEMI *Frente de Defensa Miguelense, San Miguel Ixtahuacán* (Front for the Defense of San Miguel Ixtahuacán) has been resisting the mining activities since 2007. In February 2010, FREDEMI organized a protest in which 700 people blocked the entrance to the mine for 13 days.

Solomon, who worked for Goldcorp for two years said, "They arrived in 1996 to explore and in 2003 started to settle in with machines – now people are starting to realize how serious the situation is. There are four problems – water, cracks in the houses, explosives rocking the land, and the earth."

Later that month, we visited a proposed mining project, El Tambor, about an hour's bus ride from Guatemala City in an area called La Puya, where hundreds of local residents have maintained a nonviolent occupation since March 2012.



Women of FREDEMI meet with Helen Jaccard and Gerry Condon of Veterans For Peace.

Only days before we arrived, nearly 2000 police attacked the La Puya occupiers with tear gas and batons. In the morning, 20 people from the community lay down in front of the police and discreetly made phone calls – soon the church bells in the nearby town rang the alarm. By the afternoon 1500 people had come to support the occupiers.

Jorge Lopez told us "The police captured four of us in order to scare the others, but they weren't scared, they were even more brave, so they started calling people for help. We are here to defend our water, our life, and our territory."

The Marlin mine is building a well close to a spring, which the community bought in 1987. The people are afraid that they will soon have no water. Cris-tana Pérez said, "We tried to talk to the manager where they are building the

mechanical well, but security people come instead and said that if we continue to fight them, they will prosecute us. The manager is saying that the well is built in consultation with the local community – it is not."

The mines also contaminate the water. The Marlin mine has a tailing pond containing the acidic mixture of cyanide, arsenic, heavy and radioactive metals, explosives, and other chemicals – normal for a mine using cyanide to extract gold. On September 23, 2010 at night, this contaminated water was discharged into the Quivichil River, which runs into Mexico.

Crisanta Pérez told us, "On Nov 29, 2012 we went to look at the spring and found pipes from the mine discharging into the river that goes through the community – it is now a contaminated river."

Both FREDEMI and Solomon told us about a lot of skin problems and hair loss. According to Solomon, "In 2008-09 various people have had skin problems – two of them died. Their bodies were covered with painful rashes, and then they died." Animals have also been affected.

When mining companies start their propaganda campaign near a mining site, they cause divisions – in families and in communities. Aniseto López told us, "In the community, they are always in conflict – the environment is so thick with conflict that you can breathe it – conflict between those that support and those that are against the mine."

The Marlin mine bosses have an arrogant attitude toward the Mayan people whose land they are destroying. They force entire villages to leave their land and pay very little for the land they buy, according to FREDEMI. The mining explosions rock the area. Together with tunneling and the constant traffic of heavy trucks, more than 100 homes have been severely damaged. People

Guatemalans continued on page 18

Guatemalans continued from page 17

are pressured to sell their land. Diodora Hernandez refused to sell her land to the company and in 2010 two mine employees came and shot her in the eye. "I won't sell my land – never. If I sold, where would I put my animals?" In another incident, she went to a meeting and a man threatened to kill her with a machete.

Communities Fighting for Their Survival

There are seven communities within 700 meters of the proposed mine. The Environmental Impact Study proposes removing these communities. The people have been living here for 300 or 400 years. Deodora Oliva who lives near the mine told us: "See that hill there?" She points to a hill about 100 yards from the camp. "I live on the other side of that hill and they're going to disappear that hill. I'm afraid that my village is going to disappear eventually, because the hill is right in front of my village."

Milton Carrera told us, "We told the government they have to kill us. The government has to kill us in order to go inside. A lot of people decided, if they have to die, they will, to save the land for the next generation. Please tell your government that we're humans, not animals and should have our rights respected."

Being killed for this struggle is no idle concern. On October 4, 2012 at least seven people were killed and more than 30 injured by soldiers of the Guatemalan army near Tonicapán, about 90 miles west of Guatemala City. A colonel and eight soldiers have been arrested and President Otto Perez Molina, former general, who was trained at the School of the Americas, has said that he will no longer deploy the army to protests.

Throughout the long history of the exploitation of Central America, the only challenges were implemented during the 10-year period in Guatemala known as the *October Revolution* (1944-1954) when resource extraction by foreign companies was banned.

Part of the "development" strategy designed by the United States and implemented as part of the counterrevolution throughout Guatemala's 36-year internal conflict (1960-1996), strengthened the private business sector and promoted foreign investment, thus laying the groundwork for the all-out exploitation occurring today.



Diodora Hernandez in her pasture, telling us about the struggle to keep her land and animals

With the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), Central American countries are essentially concessioned off for 50 years, rendering governments powerless, without the right to supervise or regulate foreign companies. Under Chapter 10 of CAFTA related to foreign investment, it is difficult for a state to take legal action against a multinational company, while investor companies can sue the state for loss or potential profit caused by changes in regulation, law, or policy.

The Mining Law in Guatemala, implemented by the government of President Alvaro Arzu (1995-1999), dictates that 99% of revenues be repatriated by multinational companies, leaving royalties in Guatemala of only 1%, a policy that aims to attract foreign investment.

La Lucha Continua: No a la Minería

The imperial war against Guatemala and its indigenous people has not ended. U.S. and Canadian mining corporations, aided by unfair trade agreements and collaborators in the Guatemalan government, are systematically destroying Mayan communities, while taking 99% of profits back to North America.

The resistance of Mayan and other Guatemalan communities also contin-

ues. It is no longer an armed resistance, but it is strong, deep, and broad. Rural communities, such as at La Puya, are employing nonviolent strategies, while the government prefers to portray their resistance as violent and to meet it with violence.

Toronto-based Rights Action and Oakland-based NISGUA provide regular updates on conditions and even provide nonviolent "accompaniment" for community organizers whose lives are at risk. Guatemala Human Rights Commission (GHRC-USA) based in Washington, D.C. has been working since 1982 to support asylum seekers and to defend the rights of women and indigenous people in Guatemala.

There is deep-rooted resistance in Mayan communities who wish to live free and healthy lives. In the beautiful countryside, we often saw signs reading "No a la minería. Guatemala no se vende." *No to the mines.* Guatemala is not for sale. Perhaps that was our best Spanish lesson of all.

Many members of Veterans For Peace have taken bold actions in solidarity with the peoples of Central America, and we will continue to do so. We look forward to returning to Guatemala. In the meantime, there are many mining companies to visit in North America.



Direct Costs of US Wars and Occupations In Iraq and Afghanistan As of February, 2013

Total: \$1.423 Trillion

Iraq: \$811.3 Billion

Afghanistan: \$612 Billion

Source: costofwar.com/en

Agent Orange Campaign Update

The Agent Orange Campaign continues to develop. In 2011, Congressman Bob Filner introduced a bill for us—the Victims of Agent Orange Relief Act. Without much effort, the bill garnered 16 co-sponsors, but with the House in the hands of Orcs, we could not get any hearings, much less markup sessions in the committees. So, like a record number of bills during the 112th Congress, it just sat there. Bob Filner decided not to run for reelection to the House, but ran for mayor of San Diego and won. Similarly, the bill died at the end of the 112th Congress.

Fortunately, Congresswoman Barbara Lee agreed to reintroduce the bill for us in the 113th Congress, probably during February, at which time it will be given a new number. We also expect to introduce a mirror bill in the Senate. The bill will have the same five provisions as the last one, namely: 1) Clean up the mess in Vietnam; 2) Provide major assistance to the Vietnamese public health system to help the Vietnamese victims of AO; 3) Create two regional health centers to assist the descendants of US Vietnam War veterans whose health has been damaged by AO; 4) Research the health of the Vietnamese American community to determine how AO has affected individuals, and provide appropriate assistance to them; and, 5) Extend the existing Vietnam Veterans Longitudinal Readjustment Study to include health issues.

Once the bill has been reintroduced, we ask that everyone in VFP to inform their own congressional delegation, House and Senate of its existence and ask them to co-sponsor. For more information, go to www.vn-agentorange.org.

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The GI Press Project: Preserving the GI Peace Movement

In 1994, I traveled to Swarthmore College to use its collection of GI alternative newspapers published during the years of the war in Vietnam for my PhD dissertation. Ten years later, I was hired by Displaced Films as the senior researcher for the *Sir! No Sir!* project. In gathering material for the film, I returned to Swarthmore and found that the collection of GI papers had deteriorated significantly. Knowing time was not on the side of these rare and important artifacts, in December 2009 I distributed a little pamphlet announcing the founding of the GI Press Project.

The mission statement of the project was to preserve through digitization all materials produced by active duty GIs and veterans between 1966 and 1976.

I was able to begin working on the project in February 2010 after Veterans For Peace Chapter 31 agreed to serve as a conduit for tax deductible donations. In the past three years the project has digitized 1900 individual issues

from more than 275 titles; 200 pamphlets and project reports; 100 posters; and 15 petitions.

This represents the largest repository of GI movement materials in the United States and by June with the addition of materials in the collections of the Historical Society of Wisconsin and Northwestern University, the project will have preserved 95% of the material produced by the movement.

All that remains to be done is to access an uncatalogued collection in Amsterdam that includes between 80 and 90 meters of GI movement materials. Once these are included, the GI Press Project will be made available for free in its entirety online with materials downloadable at the size they were originally published.

James Lewes, PhD

(For more information about Dr. Lewes' GI Press Project, email me at charossi@comcast.net. Editor)



F O R T L E W I S F R E E P R E S S

The Fort Lewis Free Press is published by active-duty GIs stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington, sharing the views expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States of America. It is dedicated to peace, justice, and freedom to all, including those being held without their consent on active duty in the United States Armed Forces.

Volume 1 No. 1 Free to Servicemen Donations 25¢ August 1970

Lewis 6 Refuse Vietnam Duty

On Friday, June 26, 1970, three Fort Lewis GIs, SP4 Carl Dix, PFC Paul Forrest and PVT Manuel Perez were confined in the Fort Lewis stockade for refusing an order to report to the Overseas Replacement Station for shipment to Vietnam. On Saturday, June 27th, PVT James Allen was also confined in the stockade and two other GIs, PFC Lawrence Galgano and PFC Jeff Griffith were confined in their barracks for refusing the same order. Dix and Allen are still in the stockade (pre-trial confinement). Forrest and Perez have been released. All six are now awaiting trial by General Court-martial. During the months of December, 1969, and January and March, 1970, these men had filed their first applications for conscientious objector discharges from the service. Some of these men, because they felt that their applications were improperly processed by officials at Ft. Lewis, prepared themselves for denial of discharge by Headquarters, Department of the Army (Pentagon). They petitioned Major General Willard Pearson, Ft. Lewis commander, for the right to submit second applications in the event that their initial applications should be disapproved. This right was granted; but, as anticipated, their initial applications were disapproved. The Pentagon claims that the applications did not represent the true beliefs of the men.

The six then submitted second applications, but military officials at Ft. Lewis claimed that the second applications were "substantially the same" as the first, and disapproved them at post level. Within a few days the men were ordered to report for shipment to Vietnam.

The six have engaged in a long struggle to get their objections recognized and to be legally discharged. They are personally known to many members of the community, have spoken at local churches and coffeehouses, and have been individually interviewed and covered by local newspapers. They are

"Justice" for Presidio 27 at Last

Perhaps there is a small fragment of military justice, but "it's a long time comin'". Such has been the case of 27 GIs charged with mutiny arising out of a 1968 incident at the Presidio of San Francisco stockade. Surprising as it may seem, these convictions have been overturned by a military court, the US Court of Military Review. (Perhaps the mutiny, but upheld their conviction on the lesser charges. Because they had already been in jail over the maximum time allowable under the lesser charges (failure to obey an order) the men were released. Better late than never, justice is creeping into the military establishment. (Must be a frightening experience for some of the brass.) Attorney Terrence

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