



# Exposing the True Costs of War and Militarism Since 1985

# VETERANS FOR PEACE

Organized locally. Recognized internationally.

SPRING 2015

## 30 YEARS! A VFP MINI-HISTORY

As VFP approaches its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we have selected at least one compelling event to represent each of the past 29 years as a mini-history. Many alternative listings could surely be compiled.

### July 8, 1985

VFP founded and incorporated in Maine by Gerry Amelotte, US Army, Vietnam; Rev. Willard Bicket, US Army Chaplain Corps, WW II; Jerry Genesis, USMC, 1956-62; Judy Genesis, Associate; Ken Perkins, US Navy, Korea; Doug Rawlings, US Army, Vietnam, who were disturbed by the militancy of the United States and its violent intervention in the affairs of other nations.

### 1986

VFP members in Boston stand a 30-day vigil at the Boston Common calling for an end to U.S. sponsored violence in Central America.

### 1987

A 17 member VFP Fact-Finding Delegation travels to Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua and publishes a 38-page report that is distributed to members of the U.S. Congress.

### 1988

*Soldiers of Peace*, a 28-minute video focusing exclusively on VFP's response to current U.S. policies in



VFP's first newsletter, Winter '85-'86

Central America is released. Title song written by Graham Nash. Narration by VFP member Kris Kristofferson.

### 1989

VFP leadership joins veterans from Great Britain, Canada, France, Poland, the Channel Islands, the Soviet Union, and members of the German resistance, to participate in 50th anniversary ceremonies held in

London, England, acknowledging the beginning of WWII in Europe.

### 1990

Six VFP chapters participate in organizing/sponsoring a U.S. speaking tour for a member of the Israeli organization *Yesh Gvul* ("there is a limit" or "enough is enough") consisting of combat veterans who refused to serve in the war in Lebanon.

### 1991

Chapters and members organize University Teach-Ins, Town Meetings, Panel Discussions, and Congressional postcard/call-in campaigns nationally to debate the Gulf War. These and other projects related to that conflict, virtually consume our entire year

### 1992

VFP Delegation goes to Cuba to meet with veterans of Cuba's war in Angola. While not showing support for Castro's government,

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# FROM THE PRESIDENT

Barry Ladendorf

As your newly elected President, I can assure you that this coming year promises new and exciting things for VFP. As we lead up to what is a much anticipated convention in sunny San Diego, there is much that each of us can do to help VFP further its mission of waging peace at home and abroad. As your President, I will do everything I can in this regard. Let me briefly share with you the three areas I will be focusing on to grow, strengthen, and further the influence of VFP.

## **Financial Stability and Growth**

This year marks the 30th Anniversary of Veterans For Peace. To continue VFP's efforts, it is imperative that VFP has a stable and growing financial base to further its mission. According to our Treasurer's and Executive Director's reports, we increased our revenue and currently maintain a better financial situation than we had at the end of 2013. Let us encourage each other to work diligently to continue that trend. To do so we must be innovative and creative in our fundraising efforts. The Board is in the process of developing a bold, new fundraising theme around the celebration of our 30 years of waging peace. Stay tuned. Soon, there will be more exciting news about this effort and ways you can become involved.

## **Increasing Membership**

Recently, our membership has declined. Why is this happening? The peace movement in general, and veterans organizations in particular, are not maintaining or gaining members. What can we do to reverse this trend?

Under the leadership of Board member, Tarak Kauff, our Membership Committee is aggressively pursuing ways to attract new members, especially among the post 9/11 veterans. I am proud to say we now have three post 9/11 veterans on the Board of Directors: sitting Board member, Mike Prysner; and new members Kourtney Mitchell (who was also elected to the Executive Committee and serves as the Recording Secretary), and Jason Cardenas, who also is currently the vice-president of San Diego Chapter 91. As we begin the year with the new Board of Directors, we will continue to be active in growing the membership. At the convention in San Diego, we will continue our outreach to our younger veterans and will again try to provide financial assistance to help our veterans attend this year's convention.



## **Spreading the Message of VFP**

Veterans for Peace has a message all are meant to hear. We need to spread that message far and wide. To do so we must avail ourselves of all forms of media, including ever-increasing forms of social media to reach veterans, members of the public, and our own membership.

To complement these ways to spread the message, the Board is creating a strategy for enlisting the expertise of new Advisory Board members who will bring fresh insight to ways to move the march of peace forward. We also hope to reach out to each of you with conference calls and webinars. Both can be new and exciting ways to help educate members and the public on the real issues of war and peace at home and abroad.

I look forward to working with each of you.

## **NEWSLETTER STAFF**

Chuck Rossi, Editor  
Contributing Editors:  
Will Shapira  
W.D. Ehrhart

## **VFP CONTINUES TO THRIVE BECAUSE —**



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

**You can easily do this, too.**

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

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Michael McPhearson**



VFP Board for 2015 meeting in Los Angeles in January.

This is an extraordinary year. It is the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end World War II, and of possibly the most horrendous twin acts in history; the bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima; the only nuclear bombs ever used in war. This year is simultaneously the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of U.S. official involvement in Vietnam and the fortieth anniversary of the U.S. withdrawal. While these are historic events that we must mark and use to educate the people of the U.S. about the horrors and full cost of war, for me possibly the most important anniversary is the 30<sup>th</sup> year of Veterans For Peace.

In 1985, five veterans and an associate banded together to proclaim a vision of a world without war, pledging that “after having dutifully served our nation, do hereby affirm our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace.” This was and is a radical vision and pledge. It was a kind of blossoming of an emerging veteran’s consciousness springing from the Vietnam War experience that war is not

only horrible, but immoral and must be abolished. Abolished not only because of its depravity, but because from an amoral pragmatic view, unless we abandon war, humanity will destroy itself.

Not long ago, people could ignore wars in other lands or wage wars on people thousands of miles away. Once spectators could watch the deadliest of battles from hillsides with a reasonable expectation of safety. Today through global communication and transportation, people around the world are connected and more easily impacted by what happens thousands of miles away. Humanities’ most dangerous weapons can be detonated on one continent but the fallout can kill people thousands of miles away, and hundreds of years into the future.

Right now humanity faces low intensity wars around the globe. The U.S., as the world’s only nation that can project global power, is in the process of ramping up for more war around the world. The U.S. government is confronting Russia, North Korea

and Iran. Direct U.S. military operations are taking place in Syria and Iraq with U.S. troops on the ground in Afghanistan and Special Operations Forces in an unknown number of countries. War-mongers are once again beating their drums calling for further U.S. intervention against ISIL with troops on the ground. It is clear that our voice as veterans calling for the abolition of war and advancing peace is needed more than ever before. Fortunately the founders of Veterans For Peace laid a solid foundation for a new generation of veterans. Veterans For Peace is poised to meet the challenge. With our members spanning seventy-five years of U.S. war making from WWII to the current global conflicts and spreading to other nations, no other veterans organization has the will or expertise to talk about the cost of war and urgent need for real peace more than VFP.

The next decade will perhaps be the most trying of times for war and peace. However the tipping point for peace could easily be around the corner. There is an international discomfort and a yearning for a new vision of global community. Peace is possible. As veterans for peace we know this. We know that there is a better way and we are leading the way to envision and build the peace we seek.





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they do denounce the U.S.-led embargo of Cuba.

### 1993

VFP launches Children of War Rescue Project. First, four wounded Bosnian children are treated in Maine and Maryland. One month later, three wounded Serbian children are accepted by hospitals in ME, NY and IL. VFP members participate in the Operation Angel Ambulance Rescue Convoy to East Mostar, Bosnia.

### 1994

ABC-TV's *Good Morning America* airs interview with Jerry Genesio taped in Mostar, Bosnia, during rescue mission. Mostar rescue mission captures widespread media attention including *Boston Globe*, *Boston Herald*, *Baltimore Sun*, *Manchester Union Leader*, and many others.

### 1995

VFP accepts invitation to become the first military veterans' organization to become a member of the International Peace Bureau based in Geneva, Switzerland.

### 1996

A dozen VFP delegates visit El Salvador as part of ongoing cooperation with the Salvadoran Association of War Wounded and Disabled.

### 1997

VFP National Headquarters moves to Washington, D.C. to cooperate more with other NGOs and to coordinate programs more effectively.

### 1998

VFP members, along with members of other groups, while denouncing Saddam Hussein, bring \$4 million in medical aid to Iraq where more than 500,000 children have died solely as a result of the economic sanctions.

### 1999

Sandy Kelson organizes a project which collects 5000 dolls to represent the Iraqi children dying each month. In one action, the dolls are laid at the doorstep of Madeline Albright's home.

### 2000

VFP Korean war veteran Woody Powell visits Kokan-ri massacre site in Korea, and makes an apology to the massacre's sole survivor. VFP also participates in delegations to El Salvador, Cuba, and Colombia, examining early implications of Plan Colombia.

### 2001

A VFP delegation to the Chiapas region of Mexico uncovers accounts of widespread crimes (including murder, rape, and torture) by the Mexican government against the indigenous peoples of the area.

The National Office moves to St. Louis, Missouri, arriving two days before 9/11.

### 2002

Publicity generated by ads in the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* after the bombing of Afghanistan stimulate membership growth. By year's end, membership grows from approximately 500 paid members to nearly 2000.

### 2003

The U.S. Navy relinquishes its claim on Vieques due, in part, to VFP efforts over the last three years. A delegation was sent to celebrate and to pressure the government to clean up the site and turn it back to the inhabitants of the island.

### 2004

Several new VFP chapters emerge, the total number of chapters reaches 111 and the organization now has members in every U.S. state. The total number of paid members exceeds 4400.

### 2005

The Iraq Veterans Against the Iraq War (IVAW) becomes an official organization with the help of VFP. Frank Corcoran devotes most of his time to nurturing the fledgling group.

### 2006

VFP members stand with and supported several Iraq War veterans choosing not to return to Iraq because they no longer believe in the rightness of the War: Rick Clousing, Agustin Aguao, Susan Swift and Darrell Anderson.

### 2007

March 20 – VFP launches Gulf Convoy troop outreach, stopping at five different military bases to give information to troops about the war, cost of war, and copies of the movie, *The Ground Truth*. The tour ends with a week of rebuilding a home in the lower ninth ward that was almost demolished by Hurricane Katrina.

### 2008

March 9, - In 2003, the Asheville, NC Chapter of Veterans For Peace voted to help two orphanages in Laghman and Jalalabad, Afghanistan. They raised over \$20,000 to help provide kitchen equipment, washing machines, and much needed daily supplies to the orphans. Many of these students are able to continue their education thanks to this effort. The project receives an additional \$17,000 through other members of Veterans For Peace that will be used to provide a badly needed new roof.

### 2009

January 2 - VFP Kicks off *Stop Torture* event featuring the former U.S. Army Chaplain at Guantanamo Bay, Captain James "Yusof" Yee and Ethiopian torture survivor and current Executive Director of Torture Abolition & Survivors Support Coalition, Demissie Abebe.

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# CHAPTERS GROW NATIONALLY, INTERNATIONALLY



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

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

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

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

## Casey Stinemetz

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

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

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

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



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### 2010

Over the past four years VFP Iraq Water Project has funded placement of more than 80 water treatment devices---ultraviolet and reverse osmosis---in various Iraqi schools, clinics, and other institutions (Abu Ghraib Prison, even).

### 2011

October - members across the country participant in the Occupy movement; in Oakland, CA, Scott Olsen is wearing a VFP shirt when wounded

by a tear gas canister fired into crowd by police; Veterans Peace Team launched

### 2012

Leah Bolger became the first woman president of VFP; opposition to drone warfare and calling attention to military sexual trauma remain consistent strains in VFP's work.

### 2013

June - members accompany Pvt. Bradley Manning in court martial for releasing Iraq War documents to Wikileaks

### 2014

August - October - VFP joins nationwide movement opposing police killings and militarization of police after death of Mike Brown in Ferguson, MO.



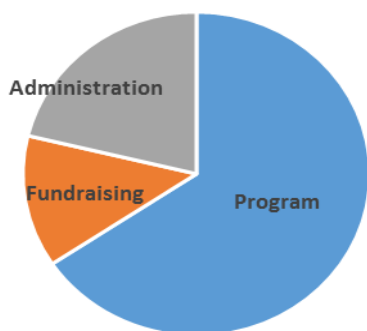
# 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

## Income



	\$	%
Dues	141,285	33
Member gifts	172,466	39
Other gifts	43,924	10
Grants	62,750	14
Program Income	18,302	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>438,727</b>	<b>100</b>

## Expenses



	\$	%
Program	352,197	66
Fundraising	70,765	13
Administration	113,778	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>536,740</b>	<b>100</b>

## 2014 IN REVIEW

- *Close Guantanamo* billboard in North Carolina – our work has pushed the Obama Administration to do more to keep his word on closing Gitmo. A record number of people were processed and moved out of the facility.
- All year Veterans For Peace has warned Congress not to stand in the way of U.S. and Iran diplomatic talks.
- Military veterans and families GI Coffee House tour raised awareness about the cost of war and the urgent need to change U.S. foreign policy.
- Commemorated the 2003 Iraq War invasion to counter the narrative that the war is over.
- Responded to the 2014 Fort Hood shooting with a veterans' peace message.
- Launched the Vietnam Full Disclosure Campaign to counter Pentagon revision and white washing of the U.S. war Viet Nam.
- Continued opposition to bloated Pentagon budget.
- Spoke out against deployment of U.S. troops near Ukraine.
- Provided an anti-war and peace veterans' perspective to the Veterans Administration crisis.
- Provided an anti-war and peace veterans' perspective for Memorial Day.
- Worked with Iraq Veterans Against the War and Military Families Speak Out to resist U.S. intervention in Iraq and Syria: press conference, lobbying.
- Veterans For Peace members delivered letter to Israeli ambassador to stop the slaughter of Palestinians in Gaza.
- Participated in the Zero Troops Left Behind Campaign with Peace Action and Military Families Speak Out calling for all troops to be brought home of Afghanistan. We highlighted that the troop withdrawal from Afghanistan is incomplete and the war continues to rage on under a different name.
- Launched the Veterans For Peace Advisory Board with prominent names and stellar activists.
- Continued our Reclaim Armistice Day efforts.
- Highlighted the 100 year anniversary of the start of WWI and the Christmas Truce.
- Continued year-round support of SOA Watch and significant presence at November demonstration at Fort Benning, GA.



## WHAT SERVICE MEANS TO ME IN A TIME OF WAR

Kourtney Mitchell

I consider myself one of the fortunate military veterans. My National Guard infantry unit's planned deployment to Afghanistan was canceled, and I was able to breathe a huge sigh of relief. From that moment on I knew I had a duty to dedicate myself to ending war. When Doug Zachary asked me to join Veterans For Peace, I realized I finally had my chance, and I enthusiastically agreed. I still had some doubts, however. I had never heard of VFP. What could I expect? All of my doubts were cast aside when I attended the national convention in Asheville, NC. I thought 'Wow, this is an organization I can see myself as a member of for a long time.'

When I was asked to run for an open seat on the national board of directors, I immediately began thinking of all the ways I could use my skills to contribute to the movement. I agreed because I believe it is imperative that young veterans take an active role in opposing militarism. Our future is at stake; young people in my generation face many uncertainties due to current and threatened wars, global climate change, and increased repression here at home. We cannot afford to be complacent any longer.

The national board has welcomed me and has included me in every aspect of the work, and I am eter-



nally grateful. I plan to serve this wonderful organization for the rest of my life. That is the kind of service I want to offer - not serving the war profiteers, but serving the people. I offer my skills to the peace and justice movement and with your support we will finally realize the peaceful world community.



## VFP HAS A NEW OFFICE

Virginia Druhe



In 2003, when Veterans For Peace needed to be rescued from a flooded office, member Joe Connolly stepped forward to offer a 2-unit apartment building that he owned next door to his own office. That building has

been our home at a subsidized rent for eleven years. We want to publicly recognize Joe's generosity over these years.

Unfortunately, the time came for those buildings to be sold, and we have found a new home 10

blocks north of the St. Louis Arch. We are in two adjoining retail spaces built in 1901. They have been lovingly cared for and are full of quirks and character. The move during the holidays went as well as such a venture can. We are settled and up to speed. Visitors are welcome!

Phone number is the same, but please note our new address:

**1404 N Broadway  
St. Louis, MO 63102**





# LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Virginia Druhe



In the last year, VFP has become more consistent in tracking major federal legislation affecting our mission. The Legislative Action page in the Our Work section of the web site has a variety of tools and suggestions on working with Congress.

Based on our Mission Statement, Veterans For Peace has three main legislative priorities:

- End current & prevent future wars
- Reduce and redistribute military spending
- Heal the wounds of war in U.S. veterans and overseas

This year there are several issues we will be following closely. One is defending a diplomatic solution with Iran and opposing further sanctions that would make negotiations difficult or impossible.

Another will be to oppose efforts to increase U.S. military response to existing conflicts in the Middle East and Ukraine. This could come in the form of an Authorization for the Use of Military Force in response to ISIL, retaining a larger number of troops in Afghanistan, or sending weapons to the government of Ukraine.

A final major concern before this Congress, as always, will be the military budget. President Obama's proposed budget increases Pentagon spending by 7% over the current year! It includes funding the Pentagon has not requested and weapons systems they say they do not want.

VFP will work to limit military spending and defend programs

for veterans and human needs at home. We especially will look for opportunities to cut the Pentagon's 1033 Program that passes military hardware to local police forces.

**So please stay tuned to your email and social media! We will send timely information as the issues make their way through the process.**

And finally, let me remind you again, of the value of developing a relationship with staff in your representative's office. One VFP member had a 30-minute phone meeting with a Congressman's foreign policy staff member who was extremely forthcoming and promised that she would hand these notes to her staff partner who oversees military issues. Another chapter has collected petitions, passed resolutions and informed our elected officials that VFP stands for peace.

History tells us that small events at times have important consequences.



## CHAPTER REPORTS

### THE GOLDEN RULE

Skip Oliver

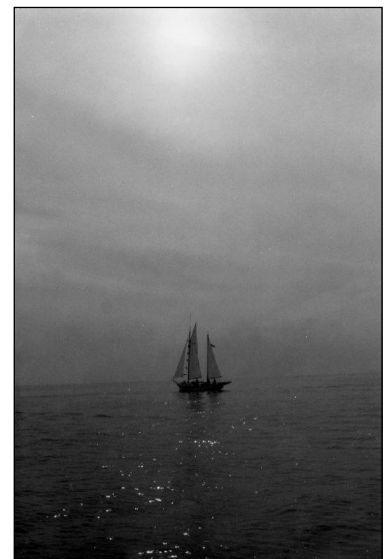
The restoration of the first peace ship is nearing completion. The *Golden Rule*, a VFP National Project, will be dedicated on **June 20th, 2015**, in Eureka, California. All VFP members are invited to attend.

The re-born *Golden Rule* will again ride the waves as a living museum, floating classroom, and powerful symbol of resistance to militarism. It will educate future generations on the risks of nuclear technology, the importance of

the ocean environment, and above all, the power of peace-making. Much more information is available on our web site [vfgoldenruleproject.org](http://vfgoldenruleproject.org)

Our earlier call for VFP members to join us as crew is going well - but we could use more. Get in touch if you are interested. It will be the experience of a lifetime.

The Golden Rule Committee is hugely grateful for VFP's support, and for the tireless efforts of our restoration team, led by Chuck DeWitt.



The Golden Rule at sea, 1958



## CHAPTER 1 - PORTLAND, ME

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### Richard & Rita Clement

The chapter once again tabled at the Common Ground Country Fair in Unity, Maine. The annual 3-day fair draws a crowd of 50 to 60 thousand people, with many coming through the Social/Political Action tent where we are located. We shared a part of our space with the BDS campaign. VFP Poet Laureate Doug Rawlings held court in the Speakers Tent with readings/discussions of his provocative prose.

Member Clarence Smith was first honored as Maine Hospice Volunteer of the Year and then went on to be named the National Hospice Volunteer of the Year for 2014. Smitty devotes much time comforting veterans in the latter stages of their lives.

Member Bruce Gagnon traveled to Ferguson, MO to witness and support the black community and the Ferguson Movement. A letter was written from the Chapter and sent to the VFP National Board stating our complete support of "Peace at Home, Peace Abroad."

A Peace Walk was undertaken from Rangeley to North Berwick, Maine. Much positive energy and support was forthcoming all along the route.

## CHAPTER 7 - LOS ANGELES, CA

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### Ed Ellis

The Los Angeles chapter of VFP has been maintaining our memorial on Santa Monica beach, next to the pier. We've recently added new pictures to our 4' X 12' wall of wounded US military, Iraqi and Afghani civilians.

We hosted a peace group from San Pedro, with 60 children. They helped up put up the memorial, and were given classes on site by the accompanying adults and veterans.

We were honored this past week by the City of Santa Monica. The mayor of Santa Monica, Kevin McKeown and his wife Genise came to the memorial, and presented us with a plaque that commended us for our work towards peace and that Santa Monica was grateful to be associated with this project and was in full support of our mission.

We are grateful also to have our memorial in a place that has such visibility, and support from the community. This commendation happened on the day of our 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Arlington West Santa Monica. One of our goals this year is to use the memorial to educate children about the realities of war and to teach them the skills of non-violent resolution of conflicts. Helping us put up the memorial on a Sunday morning has a sobering effect on young people, who can see the senselessness of war.



Members of Chapter 7 with the Mayor of Santa Monica

## CHAPTER 9 - BOSTON, MA

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### Pat Scanlon

The Smedley Butler Brigade with their lawyer friends are now in federal court fighting for their Saint Patrick's Day Peace Parade (the only "Peace" Parade in the country). The Smedleys have sued the City in regards to the city's not responding to the Parade's request for a permit.

The Smedleys are making changes in leadership. After five years as the Coordinator of the Smedleys, Pat Scanlon will make room for younger veterans. Other Executive Members who are also stepping down are Bruce MacDonald, Vice Coordinator, and Lara Hoke, Secretary, and Jesse Perrier, member-at-large. Dan Perkins had to resign earlier due to an illness.

This year the Executive Committee will consist of Eric Wasileski (Iraqi Freedom vet) as the new Coordinator, Grady Deaton (Iraq vet) as the new Secretary, and Michael Sullivan and Travis Weiner (both Iraq vets) as members-at-large. Bob Funke will be the new coordinator and Jeff Brummer will return as

Treasurer. Other new Executive Committee at-large-members include Ray Ajemian, John Ratliff, and Al Johnson. This fabulous group of dedicated members will continue to build on the proud historical legacy of the "Smedleys."

Consider coming to Boston for the St. Patrick's Peace Parade. [smedleyvfp.org](http://smedleyvfp.org) for more information.

## CHAPTER 10 - ALBANY, NY

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### John Amidon

The Tom Paine Chapter held its annual awards dinner in October 2014, honoring peace activists in our community. It was a lovely evening with a strong community gathering. We had a lively contingent in the Albany Veterans Day Parade. Members of our chapter joined with Grannies For Peace and Women Against War in a Christmas demonstration against violent video games and walked through the Colonie Center shopping mall until we were escorted out by security.

The Chapter is sponsoring SHUT DOWN CREECH and John Amidon is working with VFP National, CODEPINK, Voices for Creative Nonviolence, and the Nevada Desert Experience to help transform flying killer robots into peace life-affirming technology and put an end to the drone assassination program. Please join us on March 4-6 in Las Vegas and Indian Springs to SHUT DOWN CREECH.

PLEASE WATCH AND SHARE this short VFP video at [youtube.com/watch?v=SG3dR-5viYY](http://youtube.com/watch?v=SG3dR-5viYY)

## CHAPTER 14 - GAINESVILLE, FL

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### Doug Bernal

The Chapter believes that peace begins at home, so we have spent the last few months trying to make our home a better place.

October was a month of planning and outreach, with us co-sponsoring a trip to our home town for the co-founder of CodePink, Medea Benjamin, and preparing for our 28<sup>th</sup> annual Winter Solstice concert.

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In November, Medea Benjamin was warmly received by the activist community in Gainesville. She spoke about her book, *Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control*, and presented her talk, *Empowering Women in the Peace Movement*.

December 20<sup>th</sup> was our 28<sup>th</sup> annual Winter Solstice Concert. We raised \$13,000 for the chapter. It was a wonderful night, with great musicians, bright young winners reading their poems from our Peace Poetry Contest, and supporters from the community coming together for a night of goodwill and love.

January was a prodigious month. The Chapter participated in Gainesville's annual Martin Luther King Day march to promote peace and celebrate Dr. King's legacy. The Chapter also demonstrated in support of a veteran, Mr. Jeff Woods, whose service dog was not allowed in The Clock Restaurant, protesting alongside others on January 22nd.



Chapter 14 marching in the MLK Parade

-military platitudes. We were the largest veteran's organization present. We also participated in a *Black Lives Matter* rally and march devoted to the killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO. Our chapter was a co-sponsor of the Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> International Human Rights Day dinner and forum on *Capitalism vs. Human Rights*. The Chapter has definitely made its presence known in the Rochester area since its revival in the past year.

Several of our members joined other VFP members in the Climate March in NYC and the annual SOAW rally and vigil at Ft. Benning, GA, which also included a demonstration at the nearby Stewart Detention Center. A chapter member was a panel member at a forum held on campus.

The Chapter is making plans to reach out to post-9/11 veterans at local community colleges and universities.

selves as a VFP member, and to start their own "allies" list and keep these allies informed of our actions and events.

A large focus of our effort, and a major part of our outreach, is our initiative to de-militarize the Chicago Public School system where 10,000 children are being taught the military model of conflict resolution by violence. We will soon release a crowd-funding program to educate the Chicago area on the myths of the military model. It's a Chicago program with national implications and we're gearing it as such.

See our web site [ChicagoVFP.org](http://ChicagoVFP.org) and our two Facebook pages – DeMilitarizeCPS and ChicagoVFP. We also Tweet at DeMilitarizeCPS.

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## CHAPTER 27 - MINNEAPOLIS, MN

### Mary McNellis

The second annual DRONE NOT DRONE concert was held again this year at the Cedar Cultural Center in Minneapolis on the 30 and 31 of January. This benefit for Doctors Without Borders showcased local musicians who donated time to the twenty-eight hour nonstop drone-music event. The Chapter passed out anti-drone information inside the theater next to a quilt stitched together with tender patches remembering innocent children killed in drone strikes overseas. In coordination with Women Against Military Madness, the Chapter held an anti-drone/anti-torture rally.

We had a strong presence on Martin Luther King Day for BLACK LIVES MATTER. Nearly a dozen members marched in solidarity alongside over two thousand others from Minneapolis to the Capitol in St. Paul.

Chapter President Dave Logsdon and VFP member Stephen McKeweown talked with students from a peace studies class at Augsburg College. We also have regular bi-monthly visits to this school's student activity center to raise student awareness about the true cost of war.

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## CHAPTER 23 - ROCHESTER, NY

### Lew Montenaggi

The Chapter has continued its participation in many Rochester area events. We had a contingent at the anti-drone rally at Hancock Air Base in Syracuse on Oct. 5<sup>th</sup> where we met up with several Syracuse VFP members.

On Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>, seven of us, wearing our VFP shirts, appeared at a Veteran's Day observance held in a Rochester suburb at which many local politicians spoke giving the usual pro

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## CHAPTER 26 - CHICAGO, IL

### Arny Stieber

The key word for the Chicago Chapter is "outreach." Under the motto of *Peace at Home, Peace Abroad* we are working to join groups that traditionally are not considered "peace" (as in anti-war) groups. From *Black Lives Matter* and *Muslim Lives Matter* to hospitals and universities and ethnic groups and women's groups that have programs to address violence – we are making inroads. We're encouraging members to join a group, to identify them-

## CHAPTER 34 - NEW YORK, NY

### Bob Keilbach

The Chapter has a new intern Synnoeve Moe who recently volunteered 40 hours of time to learn about what we do at VFP. She helped with our new book redistribution program, which circulates anti-war books at neighborhood free little libraries.

Members of the Kaufman/Pahlos Chapter participate in numerous peace and social justice actions, and educational events. Bill Gilson and Tom Fasy spoke at various venues. John Kim spoke about *Ending the Korean War: from Armistice to Peace*. We conduct a weekly Peace Vigil. *War Crimes Times* will now be published and distributed by Chapter members.

Recent Meeting speakers: Tausif Khan of *No Separate Justice Campaign* addressed harassment and incarceration of Muslims in the US; Lee Gerardi discussed Homeless Veterans; Chris Mooney's Video regarding Vietnam War Veterans; Tarak Kauff about recent experiences in Ferguson, and the *Peace at Home, Peace Abroad* Program; Christopher Rothwell, of Sans-Culottes Theater Company, encouraged veterans' participation in production of *Marat/Sade*.

Recent events: **People's Climate March**, large VFP Contingent included blimp and twenty-one VFP flags; NYC **Armistice/Veterans Day Parade** contingent of over 60 Veterans and friends; High school Counter-Recruitment; Monthly Vigil at Metropolitan Correctional Center; Holiday Party with over 60 attendees. Over 300 attendees at Christmas Truce 100th Anniversary Commemoration & Concert at Cooper Union, with folksinger John McCutcheon.

## CHAPTER 50 - N. MICHIGAN

### Dave Lannen

Chapter President and Vietnam veteran Tim Keenan recently returned to Vietnam after 47 years. Tim was joined by his son Jake and a documentary film crew

Memories of the war remain vivid with Tim after serving as a combat infantryman with the fourth Division in Vietnam. This time Tim had a new mission in Vietnam; first to meet, speak with, and make peace with his former enemy, members of the North Vietnamese Army. Second, to return to the scene of a horrific battle, Hill 1338, near Dakto, in the Central Highlands and climb it once again.



Tim Keenan with a former NVA soldier

Though the NVA Soldiers were initially skeptical about Tim's presence, they quickly warmed up to Tim and the team. One old NVA Soldier left him with this statement of solace, "Soldiers on both sides of the war have regrets about the killings, but we did what we had to do. You should share this with your fellow U.S. Soldiers."

It was indeed a healing journey for Tim. See documentary trailer here: [youtube.com/watch?v=SqbwIhKPtX0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SqbwIhKPtX0)

## CHAPTER 54 - SANTA BARBARA, CA

### Elizabeth Colon

After 10 years of talking to American and foreign visitors at Arlington West since 2003, it seemed as if America had lost interest or connection with the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. We took a year off. Last fall we heard the war drums beating again and decided to do something. We felt that Americans might respond to a graphic display of the costs of wars. We have set up four times. Response from the American public and foreign visitors has been positive beyond expectations.

Issues addressed include:

- The costs of wars to U.S. taxpayers.
- Profits and names of war profi-

teers.

- 13-million war refugees (worldwide).
- Iraq and Afghan civilian deaths.
- Mid-East countries destabilized.
- WMD found and Democracies Established (both Zero)
- US troops killed and cost of care for vets.
- Problems facing returning vets.

Our focus is within the VFP Statement of Purpose ("Toward increasing public awareness of the costs of war" and "To seek justice for veterans and victims of war.").

The second edition of *Vietnam Ambush* by Chapter President Daniel Seidenberg, Jr. has been released. Available at [ameristarbooks.net](http://ameristarbooks.net)

## CHAPTER 57 - VERMONT

### Adrienne Knapp

The Will Miller Green Mountain Veterans For Peace has been organizing around two main issues: drones and the militarization of the police. Both efforts have involved petition drives, legislative outreach, public education events, and demonstrations. Our recent work to oppose drones has involved organizing statewide screenings and discussions about the *Wounds of Waziristan* and *Unmanned* with the Vermont Peace and Justice Center. We are currently wrapping up a petition drive regarding police militarization and DOD Program 1033 and have been reaching out to the public, police, and state legislature to end the flow of military-grade equipment to law enforcement agencies in Vermont.

Members have also been developing a program highlighting the environmental impacts of war and militarism – and have conducted workshops at SolarFest in 2013 and 2014 and a climate change convergence in 2014.

Other areas of chapter activity include hosting a monthly call-in public access program, truth-in-recruiting, and cost of war speaking events. Members also participate in local parades and demonstrations and support regional and national mobilizations – to include

the demonstrations to oppose drones at Hancock AFB, vigils at the Viet Nam War Memorial, the climate convergence in NYC, and others.

Our chapter website is at: <http://wmgmvpf.wix.com/vermont>

## CHAPTER 62 - NEW HAMPSHIRE

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### Will Thomas

The A. J. Muste Chapter in 2014 supported VFP's mission statement with activities such as tabling in Manchester's three public high schools with its truth-in-recruiting campaign. Providing materials for students, teachers, and parents, our aim was to inform and educate people about issues that military recruiters often omit.

The Chapter continues to participate in the Armistice Day and Memorial Day parades in NH's largest city. Many VFP members believe such parades exude excessive nationalism and reflect a kind of blind patriotism that glorifies militarism and war. We may create a banner that has a quote from one of the men who helped raise the flag on Iwo Jima in World War II. His name was Rene Gagnon of Manchester who later in life was asked about that photo and the war itself. He said: "Do not glorify war. There is no glory in it."

For over 10 years, we have hosted a Manchester public access TV program called *Veterans Speak Out*. It is a weekly half-hour show that is taped and re-broadcast four times.

We stand in solidarity with people struggling for justice at home while continuing to expand VFP and our mission to end war abroad!

## CHAPTER 63 - ALBUQUERQUE, NM

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### Sally Alice Thompson

Our Chapter is mourning the passing of three of our beloved members: Jack Pickering, Bob Flanagan, and Robby Robertson (PRESENTE).

Three of our members participated in the October Get the MOP (Money Out of Politics) walk from Albuquerque to Santa Fe walking in the foot-

steps of Granny D, believing that an important step to peace is reducing or eliminating the political power of the military contractors. I celebrated my 91st birthday while on the walk. Quite a number of other peace activists joined in for all or part of the walk,

A number of our members participated in the Martin Luther King breakfast and parade.

Will Covert will be attending the Creech event in Nevada, and we will have a local event. A planning meeting which is open to all peace and justice groups will be held Feb. 26.

The New Mexico Legislature is in session. One of our members spent a day in Santa Fe advocating for a Peace Office bill that has been introduced. Four of our members plan to join the Santa Fe Chapter Veterans' Day, February 25. We will ride a bus that will also carry members of other veterans' groups.

## CHAPTER 66 - AUSTIN, TX

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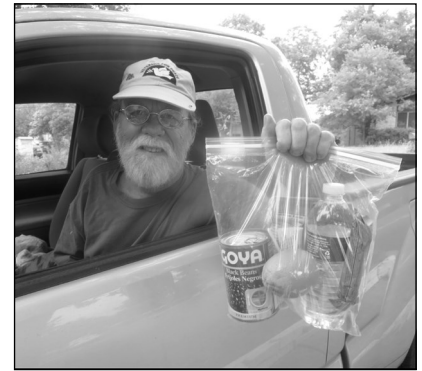
### Alan Pogue

The Neil Bischoff Chapter remains active. Thomas Hiekkala continues to put together meals in a bag for the homeless since so many of the homeless are veterans. He sets up a distribution points so individuals can purchase the "meals in a bag" for distribution. Thad Crouch has been working within his church to make stopping war a pro-life stand. He has been in monthly conversation with the Catholic Peace Fellowship about expanding their David's Heart ministry to vets and troops with moral injury and heart-felt grief.

I spoke on a panel in San Antonio on the Central American wars of the 1980s. There was a packed house at the BlueStar Art Gallery. I was invited to speak to five high school classes to discuss the movie *American Sniper*. I explained that the war in Iraq has a very long history and did not start in 2003.

Gary Mesker of Chapter 118 in Salt Lake City called for help with a homeless vet who was incarcerated southeast of San Antonio. I

was able to connect the vet's mother with a San Antonio Congressman who intervened.



Thomas Hiekkala with a meal in a bag for the homeless

## CHAPTER 71 - SONOMA VALLEY, CA

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### Bill Simon

One of the most exciting outcomes of our VFP Nor Cal Regional Conference (May 2014) was our agreement to work in close collaboration with the Sonoma County Peace & Justice Center. We continue to focus upon projects prioritized at our Regional Conference, primarily the VFP Full Disclosure Project and the Freedom from Militarization Project, which addresses our militarized culture and law enforcement.

The Chapter is partnering with Sonoma State University, The Peace & Justice Center, and the SSU Sociology Club to hold a one-day Full Disclosure Teach-in for students, staff, and the community. Social Justice Week is hosted by the SSU Sociology Club. VFP will be presenting on March 25<sup>th</sup> and the theme for the day is *International Justice*.

We will have panel discussions with Q&A scheduled in the morning and afternoon. Panels will include veterans of the American War in Vietnam, Iraq/Afghanistan veterans, and veterans of the Peace Movement.

We also will have poetry readings and story telling, two movies, special presentations on PTSD, moral injury, and the costs of war. In addition, we hope to book a keynote speaker for the evening conclusion.



## CHAPTER 72 - PORTLAND, OR

### Marian Ward

The Chapter hosted a Valentine's Day brunch and book talk with UMass, Amherst history professor and author Chris Appy, to celebrate the release of his new book, *American Reckoning*.

"Beating Heart Awards" for truth telling about war and its consequences were presented at the brunch to: Angie Hines, co-host of "Veteran's Voice" on KBOO Radio which amplifies the voices of military veterans dedicated to peaceful endeavors; Mike Hastie, Army Medic Vietnam, for his long-time practice of speaking truth to power through his photography, poetry, and outspoken activism; Daniel Shea, *Veterans For Peace Forum* community television show host, for



airing concerns of veterans for peace and other peace and social justice activists; Emily Green, investigative reporter for *Street Roots*, for writing incisive stories affecting military veterans; and Christian G. Appy for dedication in researching and writing honest accounts of the American War in Vietnam.

Former Chapter President, Chris Knight, co-leads the Portland Metro Chapter of *Soldier Songs and Voices* which offers free weekly workshops designed to help veterans build and explore self-expression through songwriting. Participants are encouraged to share their songs during workshop sessions and at occasional informal performances.

## CHAPTER 75 - PHOENIX, AZ

### Richard Smith

The Winter Soldier Chapter greeted professor and retired Army Colonel Andrew J. Bacevich in October when he came to speak at Arizona State University (ASU). Chapter members Charlie Osburn and Richard A. Smith were among the 20 participants invited to a brown bag lunch with Professor Bacevich before his speech. Both Charlie and I felt privileged to have been in the audience and to have our questions answered by Professor Bacevich. He is truly a great man and patriot.

On November 11, after a one-year absence, the Chapter returned to the annual Phoenix Veterans Day Parade. Judging from the reception we received from the 45,000 spectators along the two-mile parade route, our return was overwhelmingly a triumphant one.

Since our last report, we have added several new members. These individuals will be a valuable asset as we pursue our objectives for the coming year. In addition, we expect our relationship with ASU's Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict and ASU Professor Mark Von Hagen to continue to flourish with their support. We are fortunate to be associated with such a great and caring university.

## CHAPTER 89 - NASHVILLE, TN

### Joey King

Middle Tennessee VFP member Hector Black (WWII) is busy preparing for the Fifth Annual Deanna Nipp-Kientz Peace Awards in Putnam County to be held in March. Deanna was a member of the local Friends Meeting and a prime mover in starting and sustaining the Peace Awards until her death in 2013. Student entries in both Visual Arts and Essay/Poetry are solicited from the approximately 3000 high school students. Entries are judged by Cookeville area writers, teachers, and artists. Winning students receive a cash award and certificate. Visual Arts entries are

displayed and the winning essay read at the Awards Ceremony. The awards have obtained cash sponsorship from several community churches and VFP.

Hector continues to do tabling at Cookeville H.S. once a month alongside military recruiters. He is assisted by other VFP members and a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer.

Six VFP members marched in the Armistice Day Parade in Nashville, receiving only loud applause and smiles from those lining the route.

Joey King and Harvey Bennett led a discussion/presentation on the Christmas Truce to a World History class at McGavock High School in December.

Joey King had an article discussing veteran suicide in *Come Home America* and *Peace in These Times*.

## CHAPTER 91 - SAN DIEGO, CA

### Gil Field

The Hugh Thompson Memorial chapter has been busily working with the national board in the planning for the 2015 National VFP Convention, *Peace and Reconciliation in the Pacific* to be held in San Diego from August 5-9, 2015. We are thrilled to be hosting the convention on this 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Veterans For Peace, and are doing everything we can to make this year's convention, in our beautiful city, one of the best ever.

Our chapter has been honored to now have two chapter members, Barry Ladendorf (new national president) and Jason Cardenas (member) on the new national board. The chapter walked smartly in the San Diego Veterans Day parade on November 11<sup>th</sup>, while setting up our Hometown Arlington West Memorial. The memorial features the nearly 300 fallen service members from Iraq and Afghanistan from Southern California on headstones similar to those in the Arlington National Cemetery, and is very powerful due to its local emphasis.

We look forward to honoring our chapter namesake, Hugh Thompson, the helicopter pilot who stopped the

(Continued on page 14)

My Lai massacre, as we observe the 47<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the My Lai tragedy on March 16<sup>th</sup>.

San Diego promises you cool, dry, summer weather, lots to do and see, and we encourage you to start planning your trip now to attend the 30<sup>th</sup> annual VFP convention here from August 5<sup>th</sup> thru 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

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## CHAPTER 92 - SEATTLE, WA

**Keith Orchard**

Chapter member and sponsor, Dan Gilman reported that the Peace and Friendship Center in Ba Long, Viet Nam was completed. The Chapter made a contribution to the building of the Ba Long Center in Quang Tri Province. Peace Trees Viet Nam is the organizational sponsor. Peace Trees has been working in Quang Tri Province since 1995 to rid the land of dangerous unexploded bombs and mines.

On Oct. 12 the Chapter sponsored the Dennis Kucinich Peace Forums at the University of Washington and Bellevue Community College, presented by the Coalition for Peace Now.

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## CHAPTER 93 - YPSILANTI, MI

**Lynn Gilbert**

The Utah Phillips/ David Singer Chapter awarded a \$500 Peace Scholarship to William T. Turner of Wayne State University in January. Mr. Turner is involved with the WSU Peace Studies Program and pursuing a pre-law degree. Michigan students/residents who are enrolled in a Michigan college and studying issues of peace and/or conflict resolution are eligible.

In December, the Chapter awarded a cash prize for the best essay on "Martin Luther King, Jr., as anti-war activist" following a contest for Ann Arbor public and private high school students.

The Chapter sponsored and arranged for a well-received showing of the film *Joyeux Noel* to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the spontaneous Christmas truce on the Western Front during World War I. Over 60 attended and many took part in the after-film discussion.

The Chapter is planning a special John Lennon Peace Concert in October to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Lennon's birth. This is a well-attended annual event to raise funds for peace scholarships.

Chapter President Bob Krzewinski went to the annual SOA Watch at Fort Benning, GA; he reported that VFP as usual lead the march of protestors up to the base gates.

The Chapter had highs and lows

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## CHAPTER 99 - ASHEVILLE, NC

**Lyle Petersen**

this year. Our big high was being able to host the national VFP convention in July, by all accounts a very successful and well-attended one. The big low was the death of our past president Ronald Harayda after a long struggle with cancer. Ronald was an activist for over 30 years and a member of the chapter almost from its beginning 12 years ago. He was visionary and ambitious and will be sorely missed.

We continue to hold our weekly visit on Pack Square in downtown Asheville and our members have participated in SOA Watch, the local Martin Luther King Day march, and Moral Mondays. We plan to hold a uniquely VFP commemoration on Memorial Day at the Veterans Memorial in Asheville and will be involved with other groups in the International Day of Peace in September. We do a monthly street cleanup, which earns us a sign on each end of the street.

We hope to hold a get-together with workshops and films similar to the convention but on a smaller scale to capitalize on the enthusiasm built up by the convention. The chapter has grown in numbers and in ambition and we expect to be a visible presence in western North Carolina for years in the future

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## CHAPTER 102 - MILWAUKEE, WI

**Bill Christofferson**

Our members wholeheartedly support the board's decision to become more inclusive in our efforts to fulfill our Mission Statement by

using the lens of *Peace at Home/Peace Abroad*. In the wake of so many people of color being killed by police, including in Milwaukee, our chapter has decided to join forces with Mothers For Justice United, and encourage our members to join the Million Moms March in Washington DC on May 9. We also are reaching out locally to work together and join coalitions with other peace, justice and environmental groups.

Our chapter agreed to donate \$200 to the Golden Rule project and we're looking forward to seeing the Golden Rule sail into San Diego's harbor during our national convention in August.

We're also glad that VFP has decided to become Project RENEW's fiscal sponsor and take them on as one of VFP's national projects. We are working on a new website, and once it's up we plan to place a billboard for VFP on a busy street in Milwaukee to direct people to the site and build membership. We plan to have a presence and table with VFP literature at street festivals in Milwaukee this summer.

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## CHAPTER 104 - EVANSVILLE, IN

**Caroline Nellis**

Armistice Day once again saw our members gathered at the riverfront Four Freedoms Monument in Evansville. Instead of reading the names of the year's war dead as done in the past, the 2014 event was an open mic for poems and essays concerning peace. Rain and wind arrived, but that did not deter our members.

On December 8, we held our annual Lennon Night fundraiser, which was our most successful ever. This music extravaganza, organized by Larry Miller and featuring volunteer local bands playing music related to John Lennon or peace issues, raised \$1,239. Of that amount, we earmarked \$1,000 toward the Iraqi Water Project.

Our holiday gathering and election of new officers took place December 18. Chapter co-founder Gary May, who had also served as our chair since the chapter began, decided to step down from that position. Dave

Helfrich, cleverly disguised as Santa Claus, presented Gary a plaque from the members, honoring Gary's more than a decade of dedicated leadership and service to the chapter. At the members' request, Gary generously agreed to remain on our Executive Committee, thereby continuing to provide his expertise to our organization.

## CHAPTER 105 - BALTIMORE, MD

### Ellen Barfield

Chapter coordinator Ellen Barfield organized a VFP-sponsored action decrying massive Pentagon oil use and environmental destruction on the UN's International Day for Preventing Exploitation of the Environment in War, 6 Nov, part of a week-long effort by the Beyond Extreme Energy coalition demanding the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in DC stop rubber-stamping fracking and explosive fuel pipelines.

On November 9, Ellen gave a talk *Reclaiming Armistice Day* for the Baltimore Ethical Society. A few members got to the School of the Americas Watch gathering at Ft Benning, GA, in late November to protest training of Latin American counterinsurgency troops, joining the drenched VFP Sunday march to the gate, and protesting immigrant detention at the Lumpkin, GA, Stewart Detention Center.

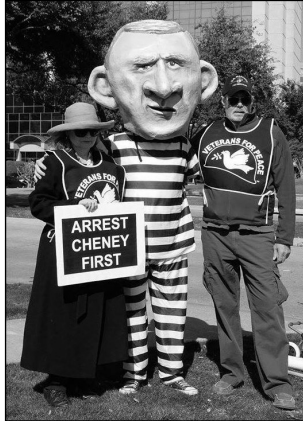
VFP and Civilian Soldier Alliance delivered Maryland Senators petitions gathered at the VA Hospital to demand defunding war and re-funding care for veterans. Homeless, suicidal and long-untreated veterans young and old told their stories.

On December 14, thirty chapter members and colleagues saw the film *Joyeux Noel* and discussed soldier resistance, to commemorate the WW1 1914 Christmas Truce. For the 12th year the chapter entered a VFP- and IVAW-flag-bedecked and quote-covered truck with chapter member and peace colleague marchers in the Baltimore Martin Luther King Jr. Parade in January.

## CHAPTER 106 - DALLAS, TX

### Leslie Harris

The Chapter has continued to organize and co-sponsor events in North Texas, including a *War Is Not the Answer* press conference, National Day of Resistance Against Police Brutality march & rally; Poetry of Resistance evening with Remi Kanazi, and the *Bush ACCOUNTABIL-ATHON*, where we protested W at three



While VIPs posed for photos with GW Bush inside the InterContinental Hotel in DFW, VFP 106 members posed with Bobblehead Bush in front of the hotel.

events in one week. We joined CODEPINK for *Boycott RE/MAX - No Open House on Stolen Land*, and greeted AIPAC members as they entered and exited hotels, museums, and theaters during their 3-day national convention in Dallas. We hosted a concert for David Rovics, and marched in the Dallas Veterans Day Parade. VFP members Tom Madden and Leslie Harris spoke at *The People's Climate March - DFW*.

We've partnered with the North Texas Light Brigade to display messages including: Let Gaza Live; Free Palestine; End Endless War; Stop AIPAC; Black Lives Matter; End Texas Executions; and, Stop State Killing. We spelled out, *Change the Mascot* at the Cowboys vs. R\*dsk\*ns game and *Prosecute Torture* in front of the Bush Library.

Chapter members attended the VFP National Convention in North Carolina as well as *Ferguson October*, and four members will travel to *Shut Down Creech* in March.

## CHAPTER 109 - OLYMPIA, WA

### Mark Fleming

Two members of the Rachel Corrie Chapter traveled in 2014 to support victims of American militarism. April Adams, who also serves on the national board, joined other Veterans For Peace in Ferguson, Missouri during August to protest the killing of Michael Brown and the increasing militarization of local police forces. Larry Kersher went to South Korea in November to stand with residents of Jeju Island who are resisting expansion of an American military base.

The Chapter continues to support Coffee Strong, the anti-war, pro-GI resource center adjacent to Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Lakewood, Washington. As part of that support, chapter members Dennis Mills and Mark Fleming assist veterans filing VA claims and navigating the claims and appeal processes.

The chapter media team produced monthly public-access television programs addressing issues of war, peace, and social justice. Recent productions addressed military sexual trauma and presented remarks by Dahr Jamail at Coffee Strong. Chapter members are a regular presence at weekly peace vigils in Olympia and farther south in Centralia.

Located in one of the nation's most militarized regions, the Chapter looks forward in 2015 to opposing the Navy's proposal to conduct routine electromagnetic warfare games on the Pacific Northwest.

## CHAPTER 115 - RED WING, MN

### Emma Onawa

Chapter 115 announces Peacestock 2015, Saturday July 11, Red Wing, Minnesota. James Hansen, climate scientist retired from the Goddard Institute for Space Studies and author of *Storms of My Grandchildren*, keynotes the 2015 theme of *The War on the Climate*. Other speakers TBA - peacestockvfp.org.

(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

The Chapter is sponsoring the annual Kellogg-Briand essay contest at the Red Wing High School. It's named for the Kellogg Briand Pact of Paris, which condemned "recourse to war for the solution of international disputes," and arose from the work of Minnesotan Frank B. Kellogg, U.S. Secretary of State, and Aristide Briand, France's foreign minister, who proposed the treaty outlawing war. Students will be asked to answer: *How Can We Become a More Peaceful People?* for a \$500 scholarship. [foplease.com/encyclopedia/history/kellogg-briand-pact.html](http://foplease.com/encyclopedia/history/kellogg-briand-pact.html).

The Chapter is also considering inviting peace activist Paul Chappell to conduct *waging peace* workshops at local high schools. Chappell, whose father suffered from PTSD and who's a veteran himself, created a curriculum to train participants in the art of waging peace. He's the NAPF Peace Leadership Director and has written several books, including, *The Art of Waging Peace: A Strategic Approach to Improving Our Lives and the World*. <http://paulkchappell.com/>

## CHAPTER 118 - SALT LAKE, UT

### Aaron Davis



Co-founder Aaron Davis (L) handing over the chapter charter to Gary Mesker with Col. Ann Wright

Last summer, the Nikko Schoch Chapter welcomed VFP Activist Col. Ann Wright to Salt Lake City. She spoke at many venues including Weber State, Salt Lake Community College, University of Utah, and the downtown library. The events were planned by the Peace Advocacy Coalition, Wasatch Coalition for Peace and Justice with Chapter contact Gary Mesker providing transportation to and from

the airport, and to the speaking venues.

The Chapter had its annual dinner celebrating 10 years of activism in conjunction with Ann's activities. Chapter contact Gary Mesker was presented with the Activist of the Year Award by Chapter Co-founder Aaron Davis who retired and moved to Arizona.

## CHAPTER 121 - POTSDAM, NY

### Dale Pondysh

I am the sole remnant of our group but am having a group meeting for anyone that attends on 2/21/2015 to rejuvenate our group with new and different blood. I hope I will find some positive folks that are willing to put their best foot forward toward our common cause, World Peace. Other than that, we have been on a leave of absence, but not dead.

## CHAPTER 129 - PUEBLO, CO

### Charles Butler

Before Christmas two members of the Howard Zinn Chapter died, both Navy veterans: Doug Gale, WW II, and Richard Trinkline, Vietnam. Presente!!

Many Chapter members were sad when they learned of the cancellation of Christmas Dinner Party because not enough members signed up to pay \$20 per meal the restaurant required. Associate member Linda Sena turned sadness into joy when she agreed to get the food and cook the meal. Linda rounded up help and her husband John Ribal allowed the use of his large meeting room and to pay for the food. 45 attended the free meal.

A few days after the Christmas Party, VFP sponsored a public showing of Christmas Film *Joyeux Noel* followed by discussion.

Armistice Day was observed outside in below zero weather by 20 in front of the Veterans of All Wars Memorial. The ceremony concluded with a procession to the nearby

Park Peace Garden arriving at 11:00 AM to watch and hear the Park Bell's 11 rings and hopefully hear downtown Church bells sounds.

At the February meeting, Doug Holdread led discussion on Fort Carson and Pinon Canyon Army Training expansion. Letters are being written opposing increased spending

## CHAPTER 135 - NW FLORIDA

### Bill Sloan & Scott Satterwhite

and closing of training center.

In November, Scott Satterwhite and Bill Sloan made their ninth expedition to the School of the Americas Watch (SOAW) Vigil at Fort Benning in Columbus, Georgia, leading a group of five people from Pensacola. We staged a play *Columbus Circus*, a satire ridiculing the 2012 trial of Nashua Chantal, who was found guilty of trespassing onto Fort Benning and sentenced to 5 years probation. Chantal and two prisoners of conscience from Wisconsin who had served time performed in the play and spoke afterward. The chairs for the audience were all taken, and students were lying in the aisles and looking in the door.

We staged a dramatic reading of the play in Pensacola before the SOAW date and expect the play to be performed again in Pensacola and by another VFP chapter. The play is copyrighted by William M. Sloan, but nonprofit groups can perform the play without charge. Get in touch with Bill Sloan for script and video of

## CHAPTER 154 - RED RIVER VALLEY

### David Givers

the play ([wmsloan35@gmail.com](mailto:wmsloan35@gmail.com)).

The Red River Chapter, merry band of street activists distributes 2,000 brochures, to spectators of all ages, of *How's the War Economy Working for You?* during the annual homecoming parades of each of the three universities in Fargo and Moorhead. We table at events as opportunities arise. Keystone XL pipeline demonstrations are another commitment we keep.



## CHAPTER 156 - ROGUE VALLEY, OR

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### James Woods

In early November, the Chapter proudly sponsored a public event *Hands in the Rice Paddy* by Mike Boehm of Madison Quakers Inc. Mike's stunning slide presentation highlighted a series of peace and reconciliation projects he heads in his many trips to Vietnam. Mike can be contacted at [tinhkhe@yahoo.com](mailto:tinhkhe@yahoo.com).

Armistice Day activities. At the regular Sunday service at Newman UMC in Grants Pass on November 9 prayers for peace were offered (with emphasis on the suffering of innocent civilians), veterans were asked to stand to be recognized, and a poem was read *The Green Fields of France* by Eric Bogel. Then, on Tuesday, November 11 a short service was held with prayers, ringing of the church bell, and followed by a soup lunch. Entertainment included videos of Bogel's *No Man's Land* and the classic *And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda*. (Look for these on YouTube).

We showed the film *Joyeux Noël* on December 16 at the Medford public library to the public who were overwhelmed. We provided volunteer labor for a *Stand Down* in September at a VA facility in White City and a *Stand Up*, also for homeless veterans on February 6 in Grants Pass.

## CHAPTER 157 - NC TRIANGLE

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### John Heuer & Roger Ehrlich

Doug Ryder was elected president of the Eisenhower Chapter during our November Armistice Day meeting at the NC Capitol with the Swords to Plowshares Memorial Bell Tower, designed by Roger Ehrlich.

WW II vet Sam Winstead will represent North Carolina veterans during the February 14 *Historic Thousands on Jones Street* (HKonJ) March and Rally in Raleigh. The HKonJ March was launched by the NC NAACP Conference President Rev. Dr. William J. Barber Jr. in 2007, and saw 80,000 people march on the NC Capitol for Peace and Justice in 2014.

89 year-old Sam will also lead his 4<sup>th</sup> annual Ride for Peace, a 350

mile, 8 day bicycle ride from Raleigh to Arlington Cemetery, May 9—May 16 in a call for a Peace Economy. FILMS for World Peace Producer/Director Ahmed Selim has teamed up with Sam to recruit young people to join the ride, and provide tent cities on their campuses as the riders traverse through central Virginia on their way to Washington DC.



Sam Winstead on his 2014 Ride for Peace

To join or support the ride, check out [ncveteransforpeace.org](http://ncveteransforpeace.org), or contact John, [heu93@aol.com](mailto:heu93@aol.com); 919-444-3823

## CHAPTER 160 - VIETNAM

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### Chuck Searcy, Suel Jones

The Chapter is proud to announce the completion of a house for a family with six children affected by Agent Orange in Kanh Vinh, a village about 40 kms west of Nha Tranh. Michael Moore made a bequest of \$3500 upon his father's death to our chapter. The funds were used to construct the house. This is the first contribution by the Chapter in the Rag Lai minority area.

Our chapter received \$49,700 through two private donors. From these funds \$10,000 went to Project RENEW to create an Agent Orange project in Quang Tri Province. The rest of the funds have been set aside while we research other possible projects in other provinces.

Our annual Spring Tour is scheduled from April 17 to May 3 this year. So far we have 14 people who have signed up and still hoping for more. Please contact Nadya Williams ([nadyanomad@gmail.com](mailto:nadyanomad@gmail.com)) if you are interested in

making the tour of a lifetime. The tour will visit Hanoi, Hue, Dong Ha, A Loui, Da Nang, Nha Tranh, and HCMC this year. The tour is our only fund raising event so we encourage all chapters that wish to take part to please raise funds and donate to the cause. Last tour we raised \$21,000 that was distributed among five NGOs helping Agent Orange and UXO victims.

## CHAPTER 161 - IOWA CITY, IA

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### John Jadryev

The chapter hosted its annual Armistice Day observance with a public gathering in front of Iowa's original capitol building on the campus of the University of Iowa. At our request local nearby churches rang their church bells at 11 AM as did we in solemn observance. Veterans and friends came from over 100 miles away to attend. Afterward we hosted everyone to a pizza lunch at the meeting hall of the Unitarian Society. Pizzas were donated by local vendors. About 80 attended.

In December, the chapter partnered with the Iowa City, Iowa independent movie house, FilmScene, in the showing of *Joyeux Noel* to a sold out house on Christmas Day.

In January we participated in the Martin Luther King Day observances in Iowa City. Member Diana Henry was recognized for her contributions to the community.

Officers for the year 2015 were elected at our January meeting: President: John Jadryev; Co-Vice

Presidents: Paul Appell and Jim Bradley; Treasurer: Ross Porch; Secretary: John Ivens

## CHAPTER 162—EAST BAY, CA

### Cathe Norman

Chapter 162 participates in *First Friday*, a street fair in downtown Oakland on the first Friday of each month; we have been doing this for almost a year. We gave out free copies of *War Crimes Times* and currently hand out materials about Veterans For Peace and alternatives to joining the military. We have been joined recently by Grandmothers for Peace; they also hand out anti-war materials.

This past fall our chapter worked with librarians at the Oakland Library to give them our views on the *California Reads* book project, which featured *What it's Like to Go War* by Karl Merlantes. We prefer a stronger antiwar/peace message.

Some of our members have recently been involved in assisting needy veterans with obtaining VA assistance and help with other needs. Our chapter supported and helped to sponsor the August 6 demonstration at the Lawrence Livermore Laboratories in Livermore against the development of nuclear weapons. Members from our chapter and the Sacramento chapter and Father Louie Vitale joined more than 150 others to demonstrate. Four VFP members and 26 others were arrested for Civil Disobedience, charges still pending.

## CHAPTER 168—LOUISVILLE, KY

### Carol Trainer

The Chapter continues to hold monthly vigils in remembrance of the wars, troops, and Obama Administration policies in Afghanistan, Yemen, and the Middle East.

We participated in Bioneer Day at Bellarmine University and marched in the Louisville Veterans Day Parade 2014. In December, we viewed and discussed the docudrama *Big Nam* by local director Joe Gray. It is available on Amazon.

In January we donated \$250 to the RX: Homeless Veterans Coalition of

Louisville. We also participate in the coordinated committee to end veterans' homelessness in Louisville.

Members John Wilborn, Harold Trainer, and Carol Trainer had Letters to the Editor published letters in the Louisville Courier Journal (CJ) paper regarding the wars and veterans support. Member Janet Wilborn had a Haiku on war published in the annual Courier Journal Haiku contest in December. Peter Berres had two outstanding op-eds published in the CJ and the Lexington Herald papers. Gregory Abatti one of our members published a book on his Viet Nam experiences as a combat Marine. The book titled *Thou Shall Not Kill* is published and marketed thru Amazon.

In March we will once again volunteer to work at the Louisville NPR radio Station's fundraiser.

## CHAPTER 970 - JANESVILLE, WI

### Norm Aulabaugh

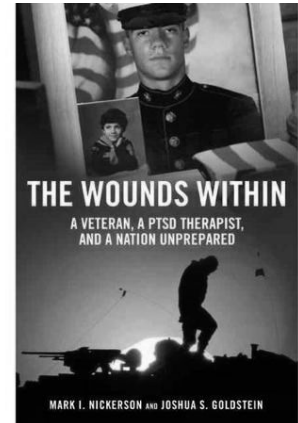
Blackhawk Technical College in Janesville, Wisconsin holds a Veterans Resource Fair every February to help connect veterans with organizations that provide resources to veterans. Our new Chapter participated with an information booth and made many good contacts with area veterans and the more than 40 veterans' organizations that provide services for veterans in Rock County Wisconsin that also had booths at this fair.



**New Chapter 970 at the Wisconsin Veterans Resource Fair: (L-R) Lars Prip, Norm Aulabaugh, Kyle De Wolf, and Brad Geyer**

## JUST PUBLISHED

*The Wounds Within: A Veteran, A PTSD Therapist, and a Nation Unprepared*  
Mark I. Nickerson, Joshua S. Goldstein  
Skyhorse Publishing, January 2015



A notice to members and friends of VFP of the very recent publication of this book by Mark Nickerson who was psychotherapist to Jeffrey Lucey, who committed suicide after returning from the war in Iraq and whose personal and family story has affected many of us in VFP. Chapter 41, Cape Cod, MA, is officially the Jeffrey Lucey Chapter.

Jeffrey's parents, Kevin and Joyce, have worked with many of us and have been untiring in their heroic efforts to tell their son's story, which is sadly the story also of a generation of young people for whom the misbegotten war on terror became an often unwinnable war within themselves. Mark Nickerson, an authority on the treatment of PTSD, has worked closely with the Lucey family throughout their ordeal to help tell that story.

The director Oliver Stone describes the book as "A powerful family drama and a reminder of the price veterans pay long after the fighting ends." A full review of the book will appear in the next issue of the newsletter. You can read the first chapter and buy the book at its website [woundswithin.com](http://woundswithin.com).



## Kandahar Mission Briefing

They brought me in quietly.  
Sitting us all in a large half circle.  
A chalk board, a captain  
And a mission leader.

Everyone was serious,  
But friendly. "The mission  
Is to take this poet into  
City Center Kandahar tomorrow.

"To get into the city,  
We will take four Mraps.  
The leader will scout  
The road ahead for IED's.

"The second one will carry  
The poet and a turret gunner.  
The third and fourth vehicles will  
Serve as lookouts and follow up.

If any of these vehicles hits  
An IED, and if the vehicle doesn't  
Tip, do not, under any circumstances,  
Exit the vehicle. If the gunner

Is hit or killed, the poet must  
Grab his legs like thus and hold on  
For dear life. You must not  
Let go of the gunner's lower body.

"When we arrive at the outpost,  
Soldiers in vehicles one, three and  
Four will exit and search school grounds  
For insurgents disguised as Taliban poets.

"When the all-clear is given, the poet  
Will exit vehicle number two, with  
Body armor, helmet and first aid kit.  
He will be surrounded by six soldiers.

"Once the 'okay' is given, soldiers  
Will bring poet into building,  
Where he greets director and 34  
Male Kandahar poets and authors.

"If room is not compromised,  
Poet may take off his body  
Armor. If scene seems dangerous,  
He must keep armor and helmet on at all times.

"After talk, reading and hummus, we must  
Leave grounds ASAP. No lingering!"



## The Wrong Enemy

The young male soldiers stand  
With an M-16 in one hand, and their privates in the other.  
"This is my weapon, this is my gun  
One is for killing, one is for fun."

We were young female soldiers.  
Innocent.  
We trusted.

Trusted that we could  
Serve our country  
The way men have  
For all of history.

We didn't know our duties would include  
Dealing with some horny old soldier  
Who didn't get enough pleasure  
Out of killing other men  
So he had to kill a woman's soul.  
Killed it with what he believed  
Represented himself as a man.

His weapon wasn't enough  
So he had to use his gun.  
And to us women  
It was not fun.

Our nightmares are different from  
Men who were in a war zone.  
But they are still nightmares.  
You see,  
To us women,  
Sexual assault creates a war zone  
Wherever it happens.

This isn't the enemy  
We enlisted to fight.

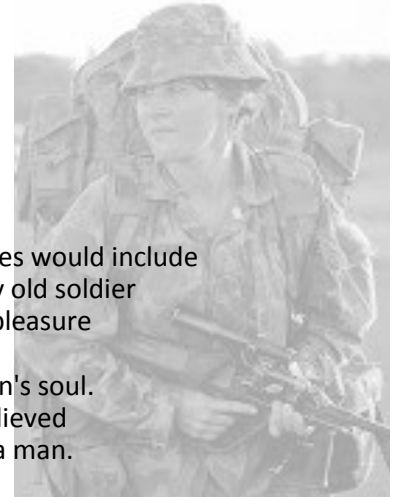
### ***Diane Rejman***

*Diane Rejman is a Lifetime Member of Veterans for Peace. She served in the US Army from 1977-80. In 2014, she settled a claim against the Army for sexual abuse she experienced during her enlistment.*

Upon our drive away, I was informed  
The school's director would likely be executed

For collaborating with Americans.  
"They'll likely kill his family too."  
I was told not to concern myself with that.  
Poetry is serious business in Kandahar.

### ***M. L. Liebler***





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