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and Militarism Since 1985

VETERANS FOR PEACE

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VFP Newsletter

veteransforpeace.org

Summer 2022

REFLECTIONS ON MEMORIAL DAY 2022

Violence devastates families at home and abroad

by Michael T. McPhearson

On Memorial Day 2022, I am weighed down by death. Death and violence are at the core of the holiday. It is the day to honor military service members who died in our nation's wars and veterans who died after returning home. But this Memorial Day, with so many violent deaths and death reminders around me, the holiday is complex. Two years ago, George Floyd was murdered on May 25th. I will probably forget the exact date, but I will never forget it happened on Memorial Day. The last three weeks have seen mass shootings in Buffalo, New York, with ten dead and three injured; Laguna Woods, California, with one dead and five wounded; Chicago, Illinois, with two dead and eight wounded; and the horror of Uvalde, Texas with nineteen children and three adults murdered.

I can no longer compartmentalize one type of violence from another. The pain from war violence is the same as the agony caused by gun violence and police brutality. I know because I've seen the pain.

Once Memorial Day was simple. Unofficially marking the first day of summer, I celebrated like most people having fun at BBQs and taking advantage of sales while also giving obligatory "Thank you for your service" to those in the nation's armed forces and veterans. I knew in theory that the purpose of the holiday was to honor service members who died in the nation's wars, but I did



Members of Maine Veterans For Peace marched in their local Memorial Day parade.

not understand what that meant.

My close contact with families who lost loved ones to gun violence and police aggression opened my eyes to the pain caused by violence. Lives turned upside down, vacant chairs at the Thanksgiving table, and unfillable holes in hearts. This emptiness is especially true for parents. We make sense of death by accepting the cycle of life and death seen in our families. Babies are born, they grow up, their parents turn old, the now-adult children have babies, the now-grandparents die, and the circle continues. Parents are not supposed to see their children die. It defies the process and breaks us.

Even though I witnessed parents

struggle with losing their children to gun and police violence, I still rationalized the brutality of war as somehow different and more acceptable than violence at home. Clarity began in 2001 when the U.S. invaded Afghanistan and Iraq. First, I met military families with loved ones deployed and Gold Star families who lost a family member serving in the U.S. military. In 2003 I traveled to Iraq to observe the U.S. occupation firsthand and met Iraqis with family members who U.S. troops had killed. I observed how their pain and the pain of the Gold Star families were the same. The depth of loss for both was nearly unbearable. I met service members who returned home, but their

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Due to rising costs of printing and mailing, plus climate considerations, we are moving to a twice-a-year publication schedule. Next deadline TBA.

Chapter reports ≤ 200 words

Include chapter number, name/location, and your chapter reporter's name.

High-res photos print best!

1200+ pixels wide works well. Please include a photo credit and a caption, and try to identify the people pictured. Thanks!

Please email submissions to:
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A warm welcome to our newest VFP Advisor

WE ARE VERY PLEASED TO WELCOME KATHY GILBERD TO THE VETERANS FOR PEACE ADVISORY BOARD.

Kathy Gilbert is a paralegal who has worked as a military counselor for over 30 years, assisting conscientious objectors, soldiers fighting sexual harassment and racial discrimination, GI whistleblowers, soldiers and sailors accused under "Don't Ask Don't Tell" policies, and veterans unfairly denied benefits after "bad paper discharges." Her writing and cases have garnered her national recognition as an expert in military administrative law.

Ms. Gilbert is co-chair of the National Lawyer's Guild's Military Law Task Force and a frequent contributor to its legal publication, *On Watch*. She is co-author of *Fighting Back*, which was for many years the only legal manual on military policy on homosexuality, and a contributing author for the respected legal manual, *Sexual Orientation and the Law*. She serves on the national advisory committee of the GI Rights Network and has been involved in both national and local work in the National Lawyers Guild since 1977. She received a degree in sociology from the University of California, Berkeley.

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gail@veteransforpeace.org

Dear Veterans For Peace Comrades and Friends,

It's been six months since the VFP Board of Directors elected its officers. Along with myself as president, Jeremiah Knowles was elected vice president, Joshua Shurley, secretary, and Mike Tork, treasurer. Together we have worked as a team to face a number of difficulties.

Our first major issue occurred in February when the Executive Committee reviewed the national VFP bank account and discovered we were just able to meet payroll for national staff in the following two weeks. We called on you, our members, supporters, and donors to contribute and keep us functioning and developed a financial plan to move us through 2022. One of our active board members was able to raise money through a substantial grant to help put funds back into our savings account (see board minutes from April, May 2022).

During this time, we have maintained transparency regarding board decisions and functioning. Monthly board meetings are open to VFP members, with public comments welcomed at the beginning of the meeting. After being approved at the following board meeting, minutes are publicly posted at <https://www.veteransforpeace.org/who-we-are/governance/minutes>.

Board meeting agendas are set by the ExComm and sent to board members several days prior, along with an invitation to recommend additional items. Recent agendas include reports from board liaisons regarding committee work, and status of national projects and working groups. In order to improve communication between the board and chapters, Garrett has developed a system assigning each board member the responsibility of attending chapter meetings in order to bring members' concerns back to the board.

Board members have also been joining together in a community circle on the Friday prior to each Saturday board meeting, during which interpersonal and political issues are aired and

discussed. With the assistance of Jeremiah Knowles, board members have maintained civility and respect, giving everyone the opportunity to speak without interruption, and calling for votes on major issues.

The draft VFP Strategic Plan has been completed. Focus groups are now being developed to review the plan and provide feedback for further refinement.

For the past several years, there has been substantial disagreement among members of the VFP board regarding the costs and benefits to VFP of maintaining the *Golden Rule*. After doing a financial analysis of costs over the past year, 2021, we agreed to continue fiscal responsibility for operating costs and insurance at about \$5,200/year. Additional costs including a salary for the project manager are raised independently.

The *Golden Rule's* successful trip from northern California to San Diego received major publicity, with stories published in the *San Diego Tribune* and *San Francisco Chronicle*, and even *Stars and Stripes*. Starting in September, the *Golden Rule* commences its two-year Great Loop journey, traveling the Mississippi River, the East Coast, and the Great Lakes. It continues to serve as a visible and popular educational symbol for nuclear disarmament, under sails for VFP and peace.

Veterans For Peace has been active with a number of peace coalitions. We developed a position statement on the situation in Ukraine. It is clear the war industries complex is the major winner in the current war. While denouncing Russia's invasion of Ukraine, we call for a negotiated end to the conflict, and safe refuge for war resisters from every nation. We recognize that there are



SUSAN SCHNALL
VFP Board President

Photo by Ellen Davidson

different analyses and opinions within our organization.

VFP's Climate Crisis and U.S. Militarism National Project continues to educate our members and the public about the connections between global warming and habitat destruction and the U.S. military.

There are many statements the national organization could issue on current events including recent decisions by the Supreme Court, and we welcome member initiatives. During the public comment period of our June 25th board meeting, a VFP member asked the national organization to take a stand against the court's ruling overturning *Roe v. Wade*. As a result, an intergenerational committee was formed and struggled together for four days to produce a strong statement representative of the concerns and values of the national organization. See <https://www.veteransforpeace.org/pressroom/news/2022/06/30/veterans-peace-statement-roe-vs-wade>.

Finally, we are working hard, moving plans forward for the annual VFP National Convention with the theme: *From War Making to Peace Seeking*. The keynote speaker on August 27 is Bishop William J. Barber II of the Poor People's Campaign. [More convention info on page 28 and <https://www.vfpconvention.org/>.]

I look forward to seeing you there!

*Susan Schnall, President
VFP National Board*

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Continuing our legacy

Garett Reppenhagen, VFP Executive Director

Imagining what Veterans For Peace will look like in 10 years, we have to ask: Are we doing enough today to ensure there will be a community of younger veterans to carry on this work tomorrow? Are we actively forwarding the baton of veteran resistance to war? Are we preparing leaders of tomorrow's VFP, and mentoring them to succeed?

The U.S. seems to be entering a new era of military engagement. The Global War on Terror is morphing into a new cold war with major world powers. Unilateral occupations fighting proclaimed terrorist groups may give way to more conventional warfare between well-equipped and trained national militaries. We teeter on the verge of nuclear war as world leaders threaten Armageddon. Climate chaos and violence in the wake of scarcity, migrating communities, and failed states will certainly set the stage for increased militarization.

Veterans For Peace has an amazing legacy of anti-militarist organizing and peace activism. But if we want to continue to build on that legacy; to build for the struggles ahead, we must make every effort to both attract and retain younger generations of military veterans to our membership.

When I got home from Iraq in 2005, I met David Cline, who at the time was 58 years old. Ten years from now, I too will be 58, and when I meet disillusioned young veterans returning from combat, I hope to be able to steer them to a vibrant antiwar veteran community that is making real impacts on foreign policy and challenging national war culture.

The last few years have been challenging. COVID forced a lot of members off the streets and chapters saw participation decline as meetings moved to Zoom. There have been few mass mobilizations, and we have missed the family reunion aspects of our in-person conventions. Worst, we have seen the passing of too many great members.

VFP is not unique in our need for

younger members. The fact is, the peace community is graying. What's different for veterans' organizations is the clumps of age demographics specific to major conflict eras. The lack of "bridge" age groups makes the gaps more pronounced, and the cultural differences between generations can feel profound. Major veterans service organizations are experiencing a similar problem.

I am afraid VFP is rapidly approaching a gap where we will have lost too many key supporting members without having found next-gen successors. But I also believe VFP is too valuable an organization and its potential to influence militarism too great to allow it to disappear into the archives.

So how do we build the bridge before we reach the gap?

First of all, we need to reactivate and build momentum. We need to engage in bold actions that bring attention to VFP. Our audience includes not just direct donors and supporters, but many people all over the world suffering from global militarism. The world needs to see that VFP is active and engaged.

The biggest recruiting tool we have is effective organizing. When veterans and others tell us they noticed us in the streets, on social media or in the news, we know we are getting the word out.

If your chapter feels depleted, or you are not part of a local chapter at all, partner with a local peace and justice group. Just show up with your VFP gear and have fliers and QR codes ready.

When planning activities, think about what will attract younger members. Consider using music that came out in the last 20 years. Freshen up your T-shirts and banners. Learn to use modern tools. Target places where young veterans gather: college campuses, social movement events, VA facilities, main street cafes and restaurants.

Support organizing spaces where younger members can talk, plan and support each other. Gamers For Peace,



This Memorial Day, Garett Reppenhagen was in Madison, Wisconsin, where he visited VFP Chapter 25's "Memorial Mile," a roadside display of more than 7,000 markers representing U.S. military deaths in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Photo: Phil Fransen

for example, is a great community of solidarity for younger veterans and associates. We are working on more ways our young members can caucus, organize, and connect with each other, and chapters can work on creating these opportunities in locally.

Ask for young people's opinions. Listen to their ideas, and if they offer suggestions, try to implement them. Consider changing up your projects and traditions in ways that may bring more participation from young members.

The visibility of younger members is an attractor, so it's important to support our young veteran staff members, and to encourage younger veterans to run for the board or sign up for other visible leadership positions.

Lift up younger generation veterans in chapter spaces, in national projects, and in working groups. Prepare them to take the reins.

And don't forget about younger-generation associate members. We need them as well. We all exist in systems that perpetuate war culture and a military industrial complex. We all deserve a space to help confront militarism. Let's grow that space into a vibrant community that feels safe, supportive and empowering for all, y'all!

Violence devastates families *...from page 1*

buddies died in Iraq and Afghanistan. I watched tough marines kneeling at the foot of memorials, sobbing with inconsolable grief as they mourned their lost comrades.

My son's deployment to Iraq was an extremely emotional time. I lived in perpetual fear that I would personally know the grief I witnessed others endure. Sometimes, I would break out in tears when I thought of him. The news that a soldier died in Iraq filled me with dread. Joy overcame me when I learned that it was not my son, followed immediately by guilt because I knew someone had lost their child.

Meeting Palestinians and Jews who lost loved ones in the Israel/Palestine conflict cemented my certainty about the senselessness of killing. The depth and intensity of their pain were no different. The reasons for it were as unnecessary as all I had already seen.

When most people think of gun violence in the United States, they think of mass shootings, drive-byes, police killings, and murder. However, the deaths caused by the aforementioned are dwarfed by the number of suicides. In 2020, according to Pew Research, 45,222 people died from gun-related

injuries; 54% were suicide (24,292). This information is essential to know as it relates to Memorial Day. The 2021 Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) stated that in 2019, 17.2 veterans died by suicide a day and that the adjusted suicide rate for veterans was 52.3% greater than for non-veterans.

How did my comrades die? The report went on to say, "Firearms accounted for 70.2% of male Veteran suicides in 2019 (up from 69.6% in 2018) and 49.8% of female Veteran suicides in 2019 (up from 41.1% in 2018)."

As a veteran, I am heartbroken that so many of my comrades in arms feel such deep pain that life is not worth living. I am outraged that after we veterans sacrifice our mental health for this nation, our country's obsession with guns and selfish disregard for the harm they cause stand in the way of cultural change to protect veterans and, most notably, our children.

This Memorial Day, our nation is overwhelmed by death. It looms as a monstrous shadow cast by over a million lives lost to COVID. It seeks to smother us with violence driven by alienation and deep-seated hate. But we cannot let

death win.

What are the answers? In the short term, we must do what it takes to control access to guns for people who clearly should not have them and to address the nation's mental health crisis, but the long-term solution is cultural change.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. called for a revolution in values.

"I'm convinced that if we are to get on the right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, militarism and economic exploitation are incapable of being conquered."

Please do not take his words as a simple call to defeat the giant triplets as he names them. This is a prescription to save us from our worst demons. It is an appeal to us to step into the role of our higher selves.

We must stand against violence by standing up for life. We must change our culture from one that celebrates violence to one that loathes using it. We must confront the suicide epidemic with acceptance and love. We must break the deep isolation felt by millions. We must see and accept each other.

Look around us and witness the carnage. It will not stop unless we stop it. As a veteran on Memorial Day, I ask you to join me in becoming more human.

Michael T. McPhearson is a social and political commentator, human rights, peace, and Movement for Black Lives activist, U.S. Army CPT Veteran. He is a member and former executive director of Veterans For Peace.



Cindy Heil reads from Wendell Berry's Peaceableness Towards Enemies at Chapter 99's Memorial Day ceremony at the Asheville, North Carolina Veteran's Memorial. Photo: Susan Oehler

Gamers For Peace



VFP member Chris Velazquez (right) and XR accomplice Frank (left) are hands on Stopping the War Machine with a 1:20-scale model of a Reaper Drone created and constructed by VFP Board member Nick Mottern. Drones: the latest technology used by the MIC to prop up a War Economy while failing to meet the needs of the people. The model joined VFP members and the anti-militarism contingent of the Poor People's Campaign Moral March in Washington, D.C., on June 18, to highlight the links between poverty and the War Economy." Photo: Ray Bailey

by Chris Velazquez

The livestream comes to life as I open a Twitch channel featuring live gameplay of Apex Legends, one of the most popular competitive first-person-shooter video games currently being played. A smiling face, eyes focused on the action going on in their virtual environment, greets me. Narrating their gameplay for their audience, they describe in detail the firefight they are engaged in and talk to their teammates about the tactics needed to survive this in-game moment. I look toward the bottom edge of their video and see over 2,000 current viewers, the number slowly ticking upwards. I sit back and enjoy the show with the rest of the spectators for a moment, heartbeat increasing as if the streamer's

adrenaline spike is contagious, as if I'm the one controlling the on-screen avatar, firing and maneuvering under pressure. The game drains of color. The word "Eliminated" animates in red across the center of the screen. The streamer leans forward to press a button and the scene changes from the game to a wide-angle view of their gaming studio, centering the smile that has returned to the player's face. All around the dark, neon LED-lit room are stylized gold-and-black stars with the subtext U.S. ARMY. The streamer is wearing an Esports jersey proudly displaying the army marketing logo. I wait for the inevitable questions to start from the audience only to be met by the practiced responses of someone trained as a recruiter to paint a perfect day in the life of a soldier.

THE U.S. ARMY

is not alone in this newish approach to reaching an audience full of youth and children as young as 13 years old with their message of patriotism, service, honor, and nationalism. After the Army's failure to reach its 2018 recruiting goal, a concerted effort was made to shift its priorities and recruiters' presence in gaming and gaming-adjacent spaces. Gaming-adjacent spaces like Twitch, YouTube, Discord, and Reddit are social media or digital platforms that foster communities of fans, gamers, and content creators with shared gaming or hobby interests. Along with a new doctrine placing its more traditional recruiting efforts in 22 of the most

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STOP THE WAR MACHINE ...from page 6

impoverished cities in the country where the realities of the poverty draft are most harshly felt—predominantly in vastly underserved Black and Latinx schools and communities—the military as a whole has honed in on the best strategy for supplying bodies to fuel the war machine: Meeting children outside of school in their hobby and community spaces. Military recruiters now inhabit digital spaces—largely unsupervised or regulated—where those trained in predatory and manipulative practices and techniques have uninterrupted time to provide the answers and solutions for the collapsing labor market, lack of education opportunities, unaffordable healthcare system and other economic conditions that children are growing up under. All of those solutions point toward enlistment in the military; in other words, the solutions reside in an acceptance of participating in state violence as a means to address the material conditions of each child.

According to 2017 U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) statistics, of 33.4 million kids aged 17 to 24, 9.7 million are qualified for military service. Reasons for disqualification are largely caused by socio-economic factors: fitness and weight standards, medical issues, misconduct, substance use, and mental health. Of the 9.7 million, about 5.7 million are available to enlist—i.e., not already enrolled in college. Of the 5.7 million, the Army only actually deems 1.7 million children as being desirable to fulfill the needs of the war machine. And finally, of those 1.7 million children..., only 136,000 showed interest in joining the Army in 2017.

Those are stunning statistics that when scrutinized with critical

thought leave many questions currently unanswered. With the military entertainment complex having a controlling interest in almost all entertainment platforms from Hollywood to the NFL to video games like the military-simulation first-person-shooter (fps) game: Call of Duty, the dedicated and extremely well-funded propaganda campaign doesn't only reach the eyes and ears of the 0.407% of children qualified for, desired by, and interested in Army service.

What is happening to the children whose answers to lack of healthcare, lack of college options, lack of jobs in their community, and desire to escape abuse at home was found in the practiced speech of a military recruiter in a gaming adjacent space?

Evidence and current events point to a gruesome conclusion. The spaces in which military recruiters are grooming children to accept and participate in violence in the name of the state are also the spaces where a culture of generalized violence, oppression, and authoritative hierarchy is encouraged. A culture in which disenfranchised youth subjected to but ultimately rejected by the poverty draft are left seeking solutions to their conditions; a culture that gives cover to a pipeline of escalating communal rhetoric arriving at the final destination of violent extremism.

There is a direct relationship on full display between military exceptionalism, military glorification, and the war economy affecting American society at large—propped up by military recruitment propaganda and practices—and the instances of 17-year-old boys being radicalized in digital communities to the point of opening fire with an AR-15 on a crowd of innocents as a means to answer the ways they perceive society has failed

them.

For those that do not grab a rifle and take what they believe is justified and sanctioned vigilante justice into their own hands, these radicalized youth are pulled into a war economy where the law enforcement and technology industries are further militarized and rooted in the application of systemic violence, giving alternative outlets subversively acceptable for those extremist ideals.

This established pipeline to violent extremism arises from a disenfranchised white hyper-masculine dominator culture creating internet based counter-culture movements like GamerGate, the MANOSPHERE, and Involuntary Celibacy Culture while finding societal acceptance and justification through military culture; the military's involvement in game development; the gamification of war; and the future of 4th generational warfare. It can be demonstrated that recent violent, right-wing extremist actions, including Kyle Rittenhouse's race motivated "vigilante" murders and the Buffalo and Uvalde mass homicides, had evidence of radicalization to the point of violent action within these counter-culture communities—communities that flourish under the emphasis on recruiting children and youth into the violent enforcement wing of capitalism through digital and gaming-adjacent spaces that encourage a male-centric warrior culture.

Addressing the poverty draft and military recruiting practices through active engagement in counter-recruitment projects such as VFP's Gamers For Peace program and a strong GI Resistance movement are required to divert global society from a violent end. Peace is Possible, when we collectively decide and work towards there never being another generation of veterans.

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- LISTEN "Keep the Army Out of Gaming" on *It Could Happen Here* daily podcast with Robert Evans • Feb. 23, 2022 • 40 mins. <https://www.iheart.com/podcast/11119-it-could-happen-here-30717896/episode/keep-the-army-out-of-gaming-93326106/>
 - READ "The Unseen Scars of Those Who Kill Via Remote Control" by Dave Philipps, *The New York Times*, April 15, 2022 <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/15/us/drones-airstrikes-ptsd.html>

Korea Peace Campaign

Contact: kpc@veteransforpeace.org

JOHN ("JACK") DOXEY'S LETTER to President Biden urging a peace treaty to officially end the Korean War is now open for endorsement by both veterans of the Korean War and other U.S. veterans who served in South Korea in the post-Armistice period. Jack is a veteran of the Korean War as well as a member of VFP's Korea Peace Campaign project. Thanks to Ellen Barfield for being the first endorser of Jack's letter as a post-Armistice veteran of the U.S. military, having served in South Korea as a 2nd division soldier in 1980.

Please contact kpc@veteransforpeace.org if you are eligible and interested in endorsing Jack's letter.

AT OUR MAY ONLINE MEETING, some KPC members expressed interest in visiting the Korean War Memorial site in D.C. on July 27 (the Korean War Armistice Day), in connection with the site's special ceremony dedicating a "Wall of Remembrance Memorial" which will list the names of U.S. and KATUSA (Korean Augmentation to the U.S. Army) soldiers who died in the Korean War, 1950–1953. Those of us who go will be collecting endorsements to Jack's letter to Biden. Volunteers who go to D.C. for this event will assume their own travel expenses. Early hotel reservation is recommended (one lodging suggestion is Hotel Harrington, hotel-harrington.com). Please contact us at the email below if you have questions.

KPC NOW HAS A GROUP EMAIL. If you are a VFP member and would like to join, send a request to kpc@veteransforpeace.org.

Paying homage to U.S. military veterans lost during the Korean War

THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT was made by Soobok Kim at the Korean War Memorial in Battery Park as part of the New York City VFP Chapter Memorial Day Observance on May 29, 2022.

I came here today to pay my homage to all of you. May you rest in peace! I know you were in Korea, breathing the same air as me, for some time between 1950 and 1953, when the ceasefire was signed.

Veterans For Peace, thank you for giving me a chance to tell my story.

When you came to Korea, I was only six years old. You may remember Daejeon City where General Dean was captured at the end of July 1950, not too long after the war broke. My village, Nonsan, was about 10 miles west of Daejeon in central South Korea.

On July 28 or 29, the U.S. Air Force bombed my small town. They destroyed bridges, schools, churches, houses and

everything in the town at random. Our house's thatched roof caught fire. My mother put out the fire with buckets of water in the midst of the shrieking noise of low flying Mustangs, bombs blasting like thunder and lightning all around, and debris flying everywhere. It was *HELL*.

When the fire was out, she came inside the house, and through the haze of smoke, found three of her children lying motionless on the floor in their own blood.

My sisters were three and nine years old. The three of us were hit by machine gun fire from the Mustangs. Mom loaded us into a farming cart and rushed us to a North Korean military base in town for treatment. That was the only place available for medical service. We came home after very simple sanitation of our wounds. They didn't have any medicines either.

My father had passed away two years prior to the war, so when the war broke out, my mother was raising her six children as a single woman.

My nine-year-old sister died of cancer, much later, probably caused by the copper bullet in her thigh, which was never removed in the chaos of the war. My left foot is still scarred from where I was shot. I still have to massage the scar before I go to bed, otherwise I suffer muscle tension.

You know, for years after [that attack], whenever I heard the sound of low flying aircraft approaching, I would immediately take cover under blankets, a table, or even in large earthen jars. The trauma and fear stayed with me for a decade.

Two of my uncles and two cousins were killed in the war. This story is but a glimpse of the tragedy my family suffered due to the horrific war.

Today, I don't intend to blame you at all. Instead, I want to remember the past and reconcile myself with the present. I hope you will agree with me. We stand against war.

The Truman administration shouldn't have dispatched American troops to fight in Korea. You should have stayed home—happy with your families.

Americans should have left the situation to the Korean people. We shouldn't have intervened in a Korean domestic dispute. We should have let the Korean people decide their own fate.

Korean people have an extensive, more than 5,000-year history. They are not stupid. They are smart enough to choose their own future. They have every right to set up their own government. They have declared that they will keep peaceful relationships with their neighbors.

Now 70–72 years have passed since you were in Korea. Yet our government repeats the same mistake. President Biden visited South Korea a few days ago. He is applying the same confrontational policy toward the divided Korea. Such American policy has failed before. We have to learn from our past

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PAYING HOMAGE ...from page 8

experience. How long should we wait for the right answers?

Now it is time to correct the mistake, not only for the Koreans, but also for us, Americans.

You who perished in the Korean War long ago, watching us from the heavens: I believe you agree with me. I believe you regret the mistakes made 72 years ago. We should stop the war in Korea and elsewhere.

I came to talk about reconciliation with you today. We love you. I thank you for your support in building a better world, free from war.

Stay well, until I see you again.



Deported Veterans Advocacy Project

Contact: Robert Vivar, Executive Director, Unified U.S. Deported Veterans / Deported Veterans Advocacy Project (UUSDEPVETS/DVAP), robert.vivar@uusdepvets.org

2022 BEGAN with boots on the ground running, as COVID came under more control and the world opened back up. Of course, we never stopped our mission to assist deported veterans. Our continued work with ImmVets—the Department of Homeland Security’s services for current and former immigrant military members and their families—has permitted us to assist in the repatriation of more deported veterans.

It is not only deported veterans who have benefited from our work. Migrants seeking protection from persecution at our border have also benefited. We are very active in the ImmVets program, working in conjunction with the ACLU. The Immigrant Defenders Law Center (ImmDef), public counsel nonprofit law organizations and advocates have created and are part of the ImmVets Deported Veterans Coalition. We also have a social media page, which I co-administer, on the migrant asylum-seeking project. We are also members of the Chaparral Humanitarian Alliance, a small group of nonprofit organizations



Repatriated veterans present the Leave No One Behind Mural to DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas.

under the direction of Border Angels’ Executive Director and DACA immigration attorney that has been very successful in the presentation of several thousand asylum-seeking migrants to Customs and Border Protection at the San Ysidro point of entry (POE), thus giving these families life-saving opportunities.

Our work in collaboration with the ImmVets team has prompted us to host events in Tijuana, Mexico, as well as San Diego, California, with the ImmVets Director and team as guests, to provide deported veterans and advocates a briefing on the ImmVets Initiative in support of reviewing deported veterans’ cases for opportunities of repatriation. Since the start of this program we have assisted, in one way or another, in the repatriation of 8 deported veterans and 3 family members. The work continues and several more veterans are in the process of repatriation.

With the new ICE policy recently announced, we expect many more veterans will have the opportunity to not only be repatriated for humanitarian purposes, but to have their legal residence restored and further removals eradicated. On June 7, repatriated veterans including myself were invited to meet with DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and the ImmVets team to talk about improvements needed to make the ImmVets program more effective in support of repatriation of deported veterans and military families. The event included our presentation of the *Leave No One Behind Mural* to Secretary Mayorkas.

During the asylum-seeking migrant program from April to August 2021, over 1,000 persons were presented to POE for entry under Title #42 exemption. So far this year, April 21, 2022 to date, over 1,500 persons have been admitted for protection under Title #42 exemption.

God’s blessings have been immense in support of our UUSDEPVETS/DVAP mission. With the continued support and love from VFP chapters, we expect even greater accomplishments.

Golden Rule Project ~ Sailing for Peace in a Time of War



Captain Chris Appleton snapped this group shot of Golden Rule crew and departed veterans after sailing the boat to San Diego and Ensenada. After their meeting, he wrote: "Previous to this I was, like most Americans, completely ignorant of this largely forgotten and conveniently overlooked group of outrageously wronged veterans. We spent three days in Ensenada, meeting and sharing meals with them after going on day sails in Ensenada Bay. Heroically, these vets have remained organized to help and keep track of each other, and to agitate from afar for the U.S. government and President Biden to make good on their promises to make an effort to repatriate these veterans." [For the complete report, see the Golden Rule News, Spring 2022 at <http://tinyurl.com/GRNewsSpring22>.]

IN 1958, FOUR QUAKERS SAILED *Golden Rule* towards the Marshall Islands to interfere with nuclear weapons tests. Veterans For Peace led a rebuild of the *Golden Rule* from 2010 to 2015 and has been sailing along the West Coast and to Hawai'i and back. We have held hundreds of events to educate people about nuclear issues and what they can do to prevent nuclear war.

San Diego

IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY we visited San Diego. Thanks to San Diego VFP, we had a COVID-safe indoor event, online and outdoor presentations, and took dozens of people sailing!

We commemorated the first anniversary of the entry into force of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and scattered the ashes of our long-time skipper, Wil Van Natta.

Great Loop

FROM SEPTEMBER 2022 through December 2023 the *Golden Rule* will sail around the eastern U.S. "Great Loop," with the mission of educating the rest of the country about how they can help stop the possibility of nuclear war.

- Schedule: bit.ly/GRStops
- Map: bit.ly/GRGLMap

- To volunteer, go to <http://www.vfpgoldenrule.org/volunteer>
- To crew, go to <http://www.vfpgoldenrule.org/crew-application>

Golden Rule Committee openings

DO YOU HAVE EXPERIENCE as a peace or anti-nuclear activist, with boats, or non-profits? Would you like to help decide where the *Golden Rule* sails, how the boat is maintained, or assist with the nuclear education program?

The Golden Rule Committee is particularly interested in recruiting younger activists and people of color for these important leadership positions.

If interested, please fill out a volunteer form at <http://www.vfpgoldenrule.org/volunteer> or send an email to Helen Jaccard at vfpgoldenruleproject@gmail.com.

Golden Rule: A Journey For Peace

THE TRAILER for the new documentary, *Golden Rule: The Journey for Peace*, is out! The film is about the Veterans For Peace historic sailboat, its mission to stop nuclear weapons, and the boat's return journey from Hawai'i to California. We are really looking forward to seeing the entire documentary—SOON!

Thanks to crew member and filmmaker Nolan Anderson and his production team! View the trailer at <https://redfordcenter.org/films/the-golden-rule>

VFP “No Nukes”



Contact: vfp.nonukes@gmail.com

Facebook group: facebook.com/groups/vfpnonukes/

VFP'S NUCLEAR ABOLITION WORKING GROUP, a.k.a. *VFP No Nukes*, has been meeting for over a year. Together we wrote the “Veterans Nuclear Posture Review” [<https://tinyurl.com/VFP-NPR>], a document that calls for full-spectrum cooperation instead of the U.S. military's posture of full-spectrum dominance. Massachusetts Peace Action taped an interview with VFP No Nukes coordinator Ken Mayers about VFP's U.S. Nuclear Posture Review [<https://tinyurl.com/MPAKenMayers>].

In February, in collaboration with Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, our monthly meeting featured special guest speaker Ray McGovern, co-founder of Veterans Intelligence Professionals for Sanity. His presentation is available at <https://tinyurl.com/VFPNoNukesRay>.

Climate Crisis & Militarism

Contact: climate@veteransforpeace.org

VFP'S CLIMATE CRISIS AND MILITARISM PROJECT (CCMP) will host a plenary panel at VFP's upcoming online convention [see back page] titled ***War and Climate Crisis: The True Costs***. Panelists—

- David Collins, VFP-UK and CCMP member
- Lindsay Koshgarian, National Priorities Project
- Ellie Kinney, The Conflict and Environment Observatory
- James (Jim) M. Rine, VFP and CCMP member

—will discuss the compounding tragedies of numerous armed conflicts around the world while the global climate crisis worsens. They will address the UN climate negotiations, the necessity of reporting military emissions, the need to reduce war budgets to decrease those emissions, and VFP's continued work on the twin crises of climate and militarism.

Write to Daniel Hale!

A note to Veterans For Peace from Steph Atkinson

Greetings,

I recently attended a letter-writing party in support of Daniel Hale—former drone pilot, whistleblower of distinction, political prisoner, and man of conscience.



He's just finished the first year of a 45-month sentence and his support team would like to remind us not to get complacent. Daniel is in the Communications Management Unit (CMU) at the Federal Penitentiary in Marion, Illinois. This is a serious facility where crime bosses, serial killers, international weapons dealers, neo nazis and domestic terrorists are incarcerated. It's also in a crappy, isolated area of the country; I know because I grew up in Southern Illinois.

Daniel would appreciate correspondence about your everyday life, what's going on politically, and what you are doing to promote peace and democracy. Your letters root him in community with us on the outside. He would really enjoy photographs of nature and outdoor scenes, wildlife, pets, vistas, etc., on 3 x 5 or 4 x 6 photo stock. He's composing a world and creating an environment in his own small space. Letter writing is simply one of the best ways, as a community and individuals, of demonstrating that we care for him.

Where to write: Daniel Everette Hale 26069-075
USP Marion
P.O. Box 1000
Marion, Illinois 62959

Best practices for writing to Daniel Hale:

1. Plain white paper, use one side only blue or black ink.
2. Include the day and date as well as his name and BOP (Bureau of Prisons) number on each page:
Daniel Everette Hale 26069-075

3. Number each page for continuity, so none of them get “lost”: Page 1 of 4, Page 2 of 4, etc.
4. Use your full legal verifiable name (as it appears on your driver's license, passport, voter's registration) and registered address. Correspondence has been rejected from writers using their nicknames. No correspondence is accepted from return addresses using P.O. Boxes.
5. Know that your correspondence will be read and screened by CMU. Write according to your conscience and knowing that anything overtly political, high profile, or considered third party organizing isn't helpful if CMU feels vindictive.
6. Know that your correspondence may get rejected for an arbitrary reason. VERY IMPORTANT: Keep trying, if it does. Don't get discouraged. *Illegitimi non carborundum*.

Daniel has successfully been inundated with the generosity of books and magazines. Big thanks! However, in a small space, he's at capacity for keeping these materials and any more donations could be taken away from him, depending on the arbitrary mood of the CMU.

Please don't send certified mail. Paying the extra postage for expedited service requiring the signature of the recipient doesn't apply to the Bureau of Prisons and will not insure confidentiality. The extra funds could be used to support Daniel's causes of interest:

- The Nashville Abortion Fund: <https://abortionfunds.org/fund/abortion-care-for-tennessee/>—or the Blue Ridge Abortion Fund: <https://blueridgeabortionfund.org/>
- National Black Mamas Bail Out Fund: <https://www.nationalbailout.org/>
- The New York Anarchists Black Cross: <https://nycabc.wordpress.com/>
- The Whistleblower and Sources Protection Program: at Expose Facts: <https://whisper.exposefacts.org/>

Local groups join together to protest war industry



Members of Veterans For Peace joined a protest at the gates of Lockheed Martin in Grand Prairie, Texas, during the War Industry Resisters Network Week of Action!, April 17–24, 2022. Photo by Leslie Harris

by Ken Jones

A movement is afoot.

All over the country, there is a growing awareness that corporate profiteers are at the root of the existential crises humanity is now facing: endless wars and the climate emergency. There is increasing public expression of resistance to that profiteering.

We in Veterans For Peace have, for a long time, actively opposed war in all its forms, as well as the injustices that lead to wars. Now, more and more, we are honing in on those making enormous profits from war: the war industry.

We understand the war industry includes not just arms makers like Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Boeing, General Dynamics, and Northrup Grumman, along with their many interlocking subsidiaries and supply chain companies. It also includes big investment banks like BlackRock and Vanguard, which own much of the stock of those companies and provide capital investments to them.

The war industry includes the Silicon Valley IT groups that provide the digital infrastructure for the military. The fossil fuel corporations for whom wars are waged. The universities that participate in research and recruitment. The think tanks that are paid to provide the rationale to justify the war machine. The media that gets big ratings and advertising dollars by running the nonstop propaganda. The far-flung intelligence and surveillance apparatus. And of course, our elected officials.

No matter where we live, we are connected to the war industry in one way or the other. Our capitalist economy is firmly dependent on war and militarism.

It is this very ubiquity that is giving rise to a movement of local groups that are coming together under the banner of War Industry Resisters Network (WIRN). Initially formed in November 2021, the coalition has expanded in its brief existence to 30 local partner groups, with a mailing list of over 1,000 members. With the help of Massachusetts Peace Action, WIRN has produced six webinars to date, addressing different aspects of U.S. militarism, including its colonial nature, its pervasiveness in our culture, and its presence in our borderlands. Each webinar has had over 100 people attending. The plan is to continue with these educational webinars every month.

In addition to education, the network spurs local action. WIRN inspired a great deal of organizing energy in mid-April when they called for a week of action against the war industry. People in 30 different locations came out for various kinds of demonstrations, in locations including Portland, Maine; Boston, Massachusetts; New York City; Washington D.C.; King of Prussia, Pennsylvania; Linthicum, Maryland; Asheville, North Carolina; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Madison, Wisconsin; Huntsville, Alabama; Dallas, Texas; Tucson, Arizona; Ventura, California; and Portland, Oregon. (These are just the ones that made it onto the WIRN website.)

One event was held by the group Reject Raytheon AVL in Asheville, North Carolina, on Earth Day. They held a rally, parade, and direct action aimed at Pratt & Whitney, a division of Raytheon Technologies that is building a plant along the French Broad River to manufacture turbine airfoils for jet engines, many of which will go into fighter jets like the F-35.

continued on next page...



Poor People's Campaign Report Back

About 30 Veterans For Peace members joined the Anti-Militarism contingent at the Poor People's Campaign Moral March and Assembly in Washington, D.C., June 17-19, 2022. We participated in a meeting with allies from Military Families Speak Out, volunteered for communal meals, marched, gathered and celebrated. Highlights included a confrontational peace illumination at the MLK memorial, fantastic banners and the drone model at the massive assembly, and the joy of seeing so many members in person. It is great to mobilize once again. If you don't already have Armistice Day plans, consider joining staff and members in D.C. this November 11th!

WAR INDUSTRY ...from page 12

The Asheville event, "Convert the War Economy: Windmills Not War Machines," which drew 50 people, featured rally speakers from Veterans For Peace and the Sunrise Movement, as well as local activists and the pastor of a UCC church. After the rally, the peace and justice marching band Brass Your Heart led a parade that briefly occupied the Blue Ridge Parkway bridge over the river. Then, eight people, including three from VFP, took positions on a nearby access road to the P&W facility, and managed to block construction traffic for over two hours.

Those doing the direct action eventually received citations for misdemeanor trespass and are looking forward to an August trial. The Earth Day 8, as they call themselves, are preparing to use a necessity defense. They will plead not guilty on the grounds that they were trying to prevent a much larger crime taking place by Raytheon. In essence, they hope to put Raytheon itself on trial.

Knowing that multiple actions such as these are happening around the country can have a galvanizing effect on local organizing and contribute to building a national movement. As more and more local groups join together to gain greater visibility in resisting the war industry, there will be more pressure for change—to move the money away from war profiteering and toward addressing the climate emergency and pressing social needs.

We know that the war industry has intentionally spread its tentacles into every congressional district in the country as a key strategy to keep politicians in its pocket. This same strategy can work to our advantage as peace seekers. We seek to build and connect a network of local movements pressing for change. Thinking globally and acting locally together will be the hallmark of this rising movement that the War Industry Resistance Network is working to coordinate and sustain.

Join the resistance to the war industry. Visit: <https://www.veteransforpeace.org/take-action/war-industry-resisters-network/events>.



Cancel RIMPAC

The Pacific Peace Network and its allied organizations call for the cancellation of the dangerous, provocative and destructive international Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) naval war practice and for increased citizen pressure for a demilitarized Pan-Pacific Zone of Peace.

RIMPAC naval war practice, the largest naval war maneuvers in the world, will take place off Hawai'i and the West Coast of the U.S. from June 29 to August 4, 2022. At RIMPAC 2022, over 25,000 military personnel, 38 ships, 170 aircraft, 4 submarines from 26 countries will practice war simulations engaging "enemy forces."

LEARN MORE about RIMPAC and its dangerous effects and sign the petition at <https://diy.rootsaction.org/petitions/cancel-largest-naval-war-maneuvers-dangerous-rimpac-2022>

A nation built on war

Speech by Nate Goldshlag, member of VFP's Smedley D. Butler Brigade, delivered in Boston, Massachusetts, on May 30, 2022

Today we gather as Veterans For Peace on Memorial Day in a different way from the other veterans' groups. Over there are tens of thousands of U.S. flags, each representing someone from Massachusetts killed in a war. Remembering them is appropriate, but we have a different message. We mourn and remember *all* victims of war, from the world wars to Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Yemen, Ukraine, and many more.

In [pondering] the carnage, I am reminded of the words of Martin Luther King, Jr.: "... the greatest purveyor of violence in the world—my own government." Yes, the awful invasion of Ukraine is a crime, but so are all the others. And by far most deaths in war are not soldiers but civilians. Estimates of those deaths are almost 2 million in Korea, 2-3 million in Vietnam, over a million in Iraq, and hundreds of thousands in Afghanistan and Yemen. And it is my own government

responsible for those. The U.S. government talks about war crimes in Ukraine committed

by Russia and undoubtedly there are war crimes. War itself is a crime. But the U.S. does not even recognize the International Criminal Court that investigates war crimes, and has never been held to account for its own war crimes, which are on an exponentially larger scale.

This country is built on war, militarism, and violence. We see it in the massive number of guns owned by people and the huge number of mass shootings, including the latest of little girls and boys in Uvalde, Texas. We see it in the military parades, the cheering, "USA! USA!," police violence mainly against black and brown people. We see it in the militarized police using weapons normally only used in war. We see it in the massive amount of money going to companies that produce weapons of death—Raytheon, Boeing, Northrup Grumman, Lockheed Martin, and the rest. War is good for business if you are in that business. We see it in massive bloated military budgets, now added to, to fuel the war in Ukraine. And note that the only people voting against the \$40 billion for Ukraine were Republicans. We see it in large amounts of money being spent on nuclear weapons,

Over 400,000
Civilian Deaths
caused by war
(since 9/11)



Upper left: VFP Chapter 99 placed this wreath at the Veteran's Memorial in Asheville, North Carolina, to remember all victims of war. Photo: Susan Oehler. Above: Tom Paine Chapter members and friends rest after walking in the Albany, New York, Memorial Day Parade. Photo: Wendy Dwyer

which cannot ever be used without causing a world-wide holocaust and the end of civilization, if indeed we really are a civilized people.

And those flags over there—people say they honor the people represented by those flags, their sacrifice. But in the wars of the last 70 years who did they sacrifice their lives for? It was for U.S. imperialism, big corporations, the arms merchants of death. What Eisenhower called the military industrial complex is now called the MICIMATT by Ray McGovern—the Military Industrial Congressional Intelligence Media Academic Think Tank complex. The United States has been spectacularly unsuccessful in Viet Nam, Iraq, Afghanistan and yet we continue down this road



Above: VFP Chapter 34's annual Memorial Day procession in New York City. Photo: Ellen Davidson. Left: Sue Ellen Klein and Robyn at the Chapter 178 Memorial Day gathering in Fort Collins, Colorado.



of militarism and war. And on this day, we must remember all victims of war, and shout out that the main victims of war are civilians—men, women, and children.

War is never the answer. In Ukraine there must be serious negotiations and an end to the war. Sanctions are another form of warfare. They almost never work for their intended purpose, and they harm many other people other than those they are directed towards. As we remember the victims of war, we must work to change the culture of militarism and war to one of nonviolence and peace.



VFP Chapter 23, Rochester, New York, showed their colors in the Memorial Day parade in Rochester with ten members marching the full length of the parade accompanied by one SUV with large Veterans For Peace emblems as well as support for Black Lives Matter.

VFP CHAPTER REPORTS



Chapter 25's Will Williams challenges a large audience to more actively work for peace now. When Will speaks, the city listens!
Photo by Paul T. McMahon

#025 – MADISON, WI

Memorial Day brings much activity to the Clarence Kailin chapter. For several years now we have installed the "Memorial Mile," tombstone-shaped markers, along a major city thoroughfare. Each marker represents a U.S. military death in Afghanistan and Iraq, over 7,000. The public reaction is impressive and thoughtful.

We also presented an alternative Memorial Day service, to an overflow crowd. This year's speaker was VFP Executive Director Garrett Reppenhagen, who was given a standing ovation for his thoughts on militarism and the moral injury we inflict on our troops.

Chapter member Fr. David Couper, who was a Marine in Korea before becoming Madison's police chief, gave the invocation, quoting Thich Nhat Hanh. Our stalwart peace campaigner Will Williams gave powerful closing remarks.

We announced the winners of \$4,750 in peace scholarships for high school seniors, read the names of deceased chapter members whom we remember with respect, and placed red carnations on the monument to the Lincoln Brigade and our chapter's namesake, Clarence Kailin, who fought the fascists in Spain and devoted the rest of his life to peace.

Garrett Reppenhagen then joined chapter members John Fournelle and Larry Orr for a one-hour radio broadcast on peace in our time.

Larry Orr

#034 – NEW YORK CITY

Chapter 34 continues holding online monthly meetings with great speakers while hosting in-person events as well.

Recent speakers: David Swanson of World Beyond War [https://youtu.be/gS3o_r6r08]; Ken Mayers re VFP Nuclear Posture Review & Helen Jaccard re Golden Rule Project [<https://youtu.be/NtOV39JHBmk>]; Garrett Reppenhagen & Chris Velazquez: Gamers for Peace [<https://youtu.be/Uzv2ykcGYA>]; Lindsay Koshgarian of Natinoal Priorities Project and Tara Currie of Move the Money-NYC [<https://youtu.be/dsXPkly-5NI>]; and Kelly Smith of New York Poor People's Campaign.

Projects: Move the Money; Stop Sanctions/Save Yemen; Agent Orange; *Peace & Planet News*; Ban Killer Drones

In-Person: Numerous events concerning Peace in Ukraine, Ending U.S. support for War in Yemen, Closing Guantánamo, Freeing Julian Assange, Korean Unification, Philippine Human



The New York City chapter's Memorial Day commemoration caught the attention of tourists in Battery Park including a few sailors from Fleet Week!



Veterans For Peace Chapter 50 members commemorate Memorial Day in Traverse City in Northern Michigan.

Rights, Demilitarize Okinawa, TPNW Support, Climate Change, War Tax Resistance, Ban Killer Drones, Black Lives Matter and Anti-Militarism.

Twenty-five people marched in the Veterans For Peace contingent at St. Pat's For All Parade in Sunnyside, Queens; 100 attended our Memorial Day observance in Battery Park on May 29.

Jill Godmilow's amazing 45-minute film, *For High School Students—Notes and Images from the Vietnam War*, is being distributed to high schools throughout the nation by the Zinn Education Fund, and will be screened at the VFP Convention.

Tarak Kauff and Ken Mayers returned to Ireland for trial for their St. Patrick's Day 2019 peaceful protest at Shannon Airport.

The NYC chapter is on Facebook @veteransforpeacenyc034.
Bob Keilbach

#050 – NORTHERN MICHIGAN

On Memorial Day, we had our annual event in remembrance of all veterans lost in war, the 17+ veterans that commit suicide daily, and the almost 400,000 civilians that have lost their lives as a result of war since 9/11. (see attached photo)

We also took a moment to remember the millions that have lost their lives or been wounded by gun violence in our country. More Americans have been killed by guns since 1968, than in all U.S. wars since 1775, and we've been in lots of 'em.

After the taps at noon, members of our chapter, and members of our community participated in the reading of the names of those Michigan veterans that lost their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We are gathering applications for our John Lewis college scholarship, given annually to a veteran or child of a veteran at Northwestern Michigan College.

On June 10–11, Veterans For Peace Chapter 50 held a giant yard/garage sale to raise assistance for victims of war in Pakistan, Somalia, Yemen, Afghanistan and Iraq.

To quote Kevin Powers; "If someone writes honestly about war, it will inherently be anti-war."

Thank you, *Peace and Planet News*.

Tim Keenan

#055 – SANTA FE, NM



Santa Fe, New Mexico, June 3, 2022—VFP members join Nuclear Watch New Mexico and Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety in front of Los Alamos National Laboratories' new Santa Fe headquarters.

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VFP CHAPTER REPORTS cont'd

Chapter 55, Santa Fe, New Mexico, continued...

On the first Friday of August, the Joan Duffy Chapter of Veterans For Peace in Santa Fe, New Mexico, will mark its twentieth year of weekly protests on one of the busiest intersections in Santa Fe.

In February of 2021, Los Alamos National Laboratories (LANL) announced it had leased 28,000 square feet of office space in downtown Santa Fe. In response, Nuclear Watch New Mexico and Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety (CCNS) approached the VFP Chapter with a proposition: if we would move our protest to the corner nearest the LANL lease, members of Nuke Watch and CCNS would join us there. So for the last 15 months, there has been an average of 15 protesters every Friday from 12 noon until 1 pm, usually with at least one VFP flag on each of the four corners of the intersection. In addition, each corner hosts an 8-foot banner announcing the going into effect of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons along with miscellaneous related signs and banners.

Ken Mayers

#063 – ALBUQUERQUE, NM

Our annual Charles Powell essay contest has been brought to a close with the naming of first and second prize winners for their moving essays and poetry. The contest was shepherded by the tireless work of associate members Bill Tiwald and Laura Martin and assisted by a grant from NAACP, enabling us to give cash awards.

We are trying to bring local awareness to the need for the U.S. to sign on to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. To this end we sponsored a memorial in the City Council. The memorial lost 5 to 4. We will reintroduce it to the County Commission. We are also urging our mayor to join Mayors for Peace.

We attended the Memorial Day ceremony at the New Mexico Veterans' Memorial and passed out information including many copies of the new *Peace and Planet News*.

We are, as much as possible, supporting the New Mexico downwinders.

In June, we proudly marched in Albuquerque's Gay Pride Parade with our VFP banner.

Sally-Alice Thompson

#075 – PHOENIX, AZ

Phoenix Veterans For Peace, Mark Von Hagen Chapter 75 continues to urge Senator Mark Kelly to introduce a Senate version of H.R. 3518 to remediate the damage inflicted on the people of Viet Nam, Laos, and Cambodia by the use of Agent Orange during the Viet Nam War.

On May 4, we commemorated the 52nd anniversary of the Kent State shootings. We conducted our event at the invitation of Changing Hands Bookstores in Phoenix and Tempe. We distributed fact sheets designed to educate the public about Kent State's place in history. We engaged in discussions with those who approached us unanimously expressing support for our cause.

On May 15, we attended a Planned Parenthood rally at the Arizona State Capital along with 10,000 others. The rally served as a call to action to address the impending Supreme Court decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.

We return to Changing Hands on November 11 to distribute poppies reminding the public of the true meaning of November 11th. Indeed, changing the name of "Veterans Day" to "Armistice Day" remains our goal.

Richard A. Smith



VFP members Carol Konyha and Dennis Stout tabled at the Changing Hands Bookstore in Phoenix, Arizona, on May 4.

#091 – SAN DIEGO, CA

Hugh Thompson Memorial Chapter has been busy this winter and spring. The VFP Peace Boat *Golden Rule* was here in February and docked at several different San Diego and Mexican locations to greet the public and offer rides.

During March, the chapter hosted two significant displays on college campuses here, "Waging Peace in Vietnam" at San Diego State University and "The My Lai Experience" at the University of San Diego, both brought to us by Ron Carver of the New Internationalism Project of Takoma Park, Maryland. Both displays were well received and one essay at each college won the writer a \$500 prize.

The San Diego chapter continues to buy and hand out sleeping bags to our growing houseless population downtown. On Memorial Day, near the USS Midway Museum, the chapter hosted our version of Arlington West, honoring the 288 fallen servicemen and servicewomen from Southern California in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. In addition to full local press coverage, many people came by, honored the fallen, read their names, and chatted with chapter vets. The chapter looks forward to an active summer of events as well as increased social activities, as COVID declines (we hope).

Gil Field



Event coordinator Gary Butterfield (left) and Chapter 91 President Jim Brown (right) pose with the four finalists in a college essay contest sponsored by San Diego VFP Chapter 91 in concert with two touring exhibits related to Vietnam war history. All finalists were presented with the book *Because Our Fathers Lied* by Craig McNamara, the son of Robert McNamara, Defense Secretary under Kennedy and Johnson.



VFP92 Member Ray Nacanaynay chawks big peace signs on the road near the entrance to the Trident nuclear submarine base, Naval Submarine Base Bangor in Washington.

#092 – GREATER SEATTLE, WA

VICTORY!

In a lawsuit, *Whidbey Environmental Action Network (WEAN) v. State Parks Commission*, the Navy was finally booted from “our”—acknowledging colonization of Indigenous land—parks! Superior Court Judge James Dixon was incredulous that the Navy was even allowed to encroach on public land. Judge Dixon stated in his bench ruling that the Parks Commission, in approving the Navy’s use of parks, was “outside its statutory authority.” Our chapter was part of the Not In Our Parks Coalition that worked arduously for this “eviction.” Hundreds of complaints were recorded from distraught citizens. Fortunately, the Parks Commission did not appeal the decision, and Judge Dixon’s ruling stands—WEAN WON!

Our contingent attended the annual Mother’s Day event organized by Ground Zero activists. VPer Ray Nacanaynay, who chalked many colorful peace signs in the road (see photo at left), was one of nine demonstrators cited by the State Patrol for temporarily blocking the entrance to the Trident nuclear submarine base at Bangor.

VFPers participated in the May Day March, and a rainy Palestinian Nakba event at Westlake Park.

Last but not least, there was a memorial for VFP Korean War veteran John Makey who died recently at age 92. John was also a member of Lake Forest Park For Peace, north of Seattle. *John Makey, Presente!*

Kim Loftness

Chapter Reports continued on page 20...

VFP CHAPTER REPORTS cont'd

#102 – MILWAUKEE, WI

Summer in Wisconsin brings people out of hibernation and into the sunlight for neighborhood festivals and other community events. Many outdoor events returned this year, with some cautions still in place because of COVID. We staff tables, share literature, tell people about our work and goals, and do some fundraising and recruitment.

After hearing from Gerry Condon (via Zoom) at our April chapter meeting about the exciting plans for the *Golden Rule's* Great Loop voyage, we agreed to sponsor the sailboat's visit to Milwaukee, planned for several days in August 2023, by providing housing, meals and financial support.

VFP Executive Director Garrett Reppenhagen also did a virtual presentation in April, co-sponsored by our chapter and Peace Action-Wisconsin, including the slide show from VFP's Climate Crisis and Militarism project. We have created a Climate Crisis and Militarism public Facebook group, open to all, to share information.

We are supporting the local 80 Per Cent Coalition in its call for sensible gun regulation, and invited the director of the state's leading advocacy group on the issue, the Wisconsin Anti-Violence Effort (WAVE) to speak to us at our June meeting about their work and how we can be more involved.

Bill Christofferson

#104 – EVANSVILLE, IN

Our chapter held a cookout to reconnect members and discuss our future initiatives. The 30 members and guests in attendance enjoyed the windy day, the good food, and the camaraderie as we updated everyone on our efforts to encourage our mayor to join Mayors for Peace, and the Green Legacy Project.

We were invited to submit an op-ed to our local newspaper about our reaction to the growth of violence in this country. Gary May and John Michael O'Leary crafted an article explaining how the VFP theme of Peace at Home, Peace Abroad developed, and how it illustrates a way to address the poison that flows through our country. We believe that fear of "the other" continues to rise and continues to be inflamed by the voices of intolerance. As veterans, we recognize our responsibility to call out this toxic behavior in an effort to reduce the likelihood of continued violence, and begin to build a culture of peace.

We endorsed the Energy for All Coalition in southwest Indiana, which is advocating for sustainable power generation in opposition to CenterPoint Energy's push to build two gas-fired "peaker" plants. Air quality is already greatly compromised by fossil fuels, and our region has some of the worst air quality in the country.

Lynn Kinkade

#105 – BALTIMORE, MD

On May 14, 2022, the Phil Berrigan Memorial Chapter 105 in Baltimore, Maryland, celebrated the 54th anniversary of the Viet Nam draft-file burning action that took place in Catonsville, Maryland, a suburb of Baltimore. The action was carried out by chapter namesake Phillip Berrigan, a World War II veteran, and eight colleagues. They became known as the "Catonsville 9."

A dozen VFP members and friends gathered at the very site of the historic action, behind the Knights of Columbus Hall that housed the draft board in that era. We read comments from some of the nine who did the action, as well as more recent book passages, and remembered what we were doing in 1968.

Then we moved across a side street to the Catonsville Library where an official state historical marker tells about the Catonsville 9. The sign was installed during 50th anniversary events four years ago.

Now, with a coalition of local peace and justice groups, we begin organizing for the long-hoped-for visit set for next April of the *Golden Rule* Peace Boat to Baltimore and especially to Annapolis, Maryland, home of the U.S. Naval Academy. A new, young chapter member is a long-time sailor who lives in Annapolis and is excited about opportunities the visit will provide.

Ellen Barfield



Dave Schott (left) and Ellen Barfield commemorate the Viet Nam-era draft-file burning action of 54 years ago led by the Baltimore chapter's namesake, Phillip Berrigan.

#114 – SHEBOYGAN, WI

Greetings from the bratwurst capital of the USA.

2022 began with our having to cancel, yet again, another March Peace concert thanks to the Omicron COVID variant. We continued our “Fridays for the Future” demonstrations calling attention to the threat of global warming.

In March we joined “Peace in Ukraine” demonstrations on Sunday afternoons, flying our VFP colors and clarifying to folks that “peace” meant a negotiated settlement and de-escalation with concessions on both sides with no victors [photo below].



Ventura County VFP contact Michael Cervantes sits at Chapter 112's booth during the Children of Many Colors Native American Powwow at Oxnard College in June. Veterans were given a special greeting on Sunday of the three-day event. Thanks to Joe Asebedo, past chapter president, the application was submitted in time for the Powwow.

#112 – VENTURA COUNTY, CA

Of most concern to our chapter at this time is our news about Joe Asebedo, Native American, Yaqui Nation, and long-time VFP member who survived a terrible auto accident as a passenger in mid-May. A Go Fund Me account has been set up for Joe. The page can be found at <https://gofund.me/9d121c15>. We ask that you celebrate his life and pray for his full recovery.

Years-long collaboration with local communities has brought a kind of pay-off as civic-minded organizers begin to re-invite VFP to public events. In March we participated in a Ukraine peace rally at our customary public gathering point, the Ventura County Government Center. Public tabling opportunities re-emerged for the chapter with invitations to the Moorpark College Multicultural Festival, the Ventura College Diversity in Culture Day, followed by a three-day Children of Many Colors Native American Powwow at Oxnard College in June. We also saw the return of the Juneteenth Festival at Oxnard Plaza Park. As this newsletter goes to press, we will be at the March For Our Lives rally in Thousand Oaks, one of the cities in eastern Ventura County.

In April, VFP Chapter 112 had a table at the local high school district career Expo where 600 students came through. The event resumed after the pandemic closed it down for two years. We have a 15-year history of attending the Expo. All the branches of the military are also invited to attend.

Michael Cervantes



Our book club continues to read and discuss *The 1619 Project*, considering the impact of over 400 years of white racism on our culture and institutions. On May 30, 2022, our chapter displayed its flag in the Sheboygan Memorial Day parade, calling attention to veteran and active-duty suicides due to PTSD. Our chapter, “The Soxy Baughman Brigade,” is named for my friend, a Viet Nam combat vet who suffered from bad memories and took his life after coming home... *Presente!* old buddy.

Some of our members participated informally in Sheboygan's 4th of July parade. Chapter member and resident artist Bob Fleming designed a “Peace Train” float, a colorful steam locomotive that played Cat Stevens' classic song of the same name.

Finally, sad to report, our hope of acquiring a “Peace House” has fallen through, but it seemed like a bright possibility for a while. As usual, Frank and Mary Koczan continue working on and for our Peace Park, doing everything from organizing, to fundraising, to weeding gardens. The park has become a real gem on our lakeshore.

Well, that's all the news for now. Let's keep working for a more peaceful world and take it easy, but take it.

Tom Contrestan

Chapter Reports continued on page 22...

Broken on the Rock of War

THIS ART INSTALLATION by Veterans For Peace member John Sheridan was juried into the 2021 Austin Veterans Art Festival (AVAFEST). It was first installed for a meeting of the California Statewide Collaborative (for assistance for discharged veterans).

BROKEN ON THE ROCK OF WAR consists of twelve small stools placed in two arcs around a block of Sierra granite strewn with broken bits of stone. The stools are made of recycled plywood from shipping crates. In a permanent installation, the seating would be cut stone.



The installation invites visitors to use the setting for meditation and discussion about what should be done to assist military veterans, particularly the youngest, who have served in war and have not had the opportunity to deal with the psychological aspects of what they experienced. The setting is intended to provide a place for reflection.

The colors of the stools—the colors of the American flag—reference patriotism, while the black represents the despair and helplessness that may affect up to 50 percent of combat veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

John Sheridan, a woodworker based in Portland, Oregon, is the lucky recipient of timely and effective treatment for PTSD at the VA facility at Fort Miley in San Francisco. A member of Veterans For Peace, John is a combat medic of the American War in Viet Nam. Email him at johnsheridan1944@gmail.com.

THIS MORNING

as I swam up from the depths
of heavy sleep
it came to me
that the war over there
was still rumbling on
and my eyes
before I even opened them
wanted to weep.

— Lynn D. Gilbert

VFP CHAPTER REPORTS cont'd

...from page 21

#168 – LOUISVILLE, KY

Veterans For Peace 168 would like to congratulate chapter member, veteran Mike O'Connell on his recent re-election to the Louisville Jefferson County Attorney position. Good job, Mike!

June Gardiner, longtime supporter of peace and human kindness, who also happened to be chapter president Steven Gardiner's mom, passed at the age of 91. While traveling, Steven supported an End All Wars event in Portland, Oregon, where VFP Chapter 72 member and former national board member Dan Shea spoke.

Members Kyle Ellison and Steven Gardiner have acted as event security at a series of interfaith vigils sponsored by the Louisville Buddhist Justice Collective and endorsed by a wide array of local groups. The vigils were held to honor those who have died in the Louisville Metro Department of Corrections system and to protest the deadly conditions in the jail.

Carol Trainer was honored to participate in the first all-women veteran Kentucky Honor Flight to D.C. Memorials on June 11. She is happy to bring attention to the fact that women served too, a fact that is too often forgotten.

We continue to participate with WFMP 106.5 LP FM, all-volunteer community radio station. The *Veterans For Peace Radio Hour* (Louisville) airs on the 4th Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of each month. You can listen live or access archived shows at <https://www.forwardradio.org>. If you have a topic you'd like us to cover or if you would like to be interviewed on a topic, please contact us at crawerttrainer@gmail.com.

Lastly, we did our first (scaled back) tabling since the beginning of COVID, at the WFMP 5th Anniversary event. Associate member Johanna Camenisch constructed Ukrainian flags and passed them out. We hope to organize a long overdue gathering and hold chapter elections soon.

Carol Trainer

PLEDGE THIS!

We stand beneath the symbol of our union.
We pledge to do whatever must be done
To strengthen those so fragile bonds of conscience
That should unite the multitudes as one.

We might have been a fit and worthy nation
With liberty and justice under law.
Instead, we pledged allegiance to illusion,
To burning, bombing, killing, shock and awe.

Never was a banner so dishonored,
Stars and stripes dragged rudely through the mud.
Boys and girls must wake at each dawn's twilight.
Reckoning its toll in flesh and blood.

This we pledge, then, as we gaze upon you,
Dreaded symbol all the world around:
Someday by our acts we will redeem you;
To this pledge shall we be ever bound.

—Stephen Fournier

Stephen Fournier served in the U.S. Air Force from 1966 to 1970 and is a member of Connecticut Veterans For Peace Chapter 42. This poem is included in *Cooking with Hair*, a collection self-published under the pen name Guy Touquet (guy2k).

SO FRAGILE, SO PRECIOUS

Bulwark and rampart of stone and steel,
Its tower casts disfigured shadows
Upon a lawn of 90-year-old trees
Where man, lion, bull, and eagle
Debate the immediate or ultimate
Restitution of all things with God.

Sepia photographs from the War
After the War to End All Wars
– Taken before he was so haphazardly
Missing, captured, still missing, and then
Liberated – are encased in leather
And secured in plastic, surely forgotten.

A yellow sky of no one's liking:
Quiet presage to a disconsolate grey,
Replete with drab and weighty clouds
Whose minatory forms chatter with thunder,
Whose distant rains can still erase
Both stone and paper – so fragile, so precious.

—Arthur Martinson

Arthur's note: This poem has three inspirations: the hulking Peace Tower at Universalist National Memorial Church in D.C., dedicated to the work done by Owen Young; delicate WWII photographs received from my grandfather; and the forces of nature that can destroy both of them. "Marti" spent 6 years in the Navy and then 24 years with a security clearance as an Intel contractor. He has much to answer and atone for.

THE HEART OF THÍCH QUẢNG ĐỨC

is pink as a lotus blossom,
unshakable in its conviction
in enlightenment,
self-regeneration,
rising above,
even in a typhoon.

Even when that typhoon
is fire that burns and sears

skin, flesh and muscles.
There is no word for this
kind of pain. There is no word
for this kind of bravery.

As the story goes,
Thích Quang Đức's
heart remains intact,
the one thing the fire
could not consume.

Now it sits guarded here
in the temple of my heart.

In the altar of my heart,
the light
that lights
my compassion
and resistance
against oppression

the scent of sandalwood incense,
smoke rising to the heavens

half a century later

I sit in lotus position
meditating, keeping my heart strong.

—Teresa Mei Chuc

Teresa Mei Chuc is a refugee of the American war in Viet Nam.



RECOMMENDED READING



MY WHIRLWIND LIVES

A POLITICAL MEMOIR & MANIFESTO

by Dee Knight

Reviewed by Buff Whitman-Bradley

Back in the mid-'60s, when I was first getting involved in the opposition to the

war in Viet Nam, I had a conversation with an older activist who told me something I have never forgotten—that being an activist was not only the “right thing to do,” it was a “better way to live.” What he meant, I believe, is that a life of activism, a life joined with others fighting for peace and social justice, a life of questioning the conventional wisdom and seeking more nuanced answers, of discovering commonality and building community and taking action with others, was a life more fully lived. The “whirlwind” in the title of Dee Knight’s book describes such a life.

Knight’s initiation into activism will sound familiar to many who came of age during that era. He started out as a Goldwater teenager, but after leaving his conservative home and family in eastern Oregon and arriving at college in San Francisco, the scales fell from his eyes when he saw that “somethin’ happenin’ here.” He became a conscientious objector and an antiwar activist, and eventually a socialist. It’s a path that many young people trod in that time. And as he walked along that road, he never stopped learning and growing. He lived several years in Canada campaigning for amnesty for war resisters, spent three years in Nicaragua supporting the Sandinistas, then back in the U.S. became, among other things, an immigration activist, a climate activist and supporter of the Green New Deal, ever involved in “the endless task of stopping the U.S. war machine and fighting for a better world.”

What, to me, is most heartening about his book is that it portrays a committed human being, never flagging in his determination to participate in the project of building a communitarian world, hanging on to his belief that such a world is not only possible, but essential for the survival of us all. His energy and spirit infuse this “activist memoir” and I find it inspiring that after more than 50 years, he’s still going strong, is still filled with hope and even a sense of optimism—no mean feat in these grim times. “Pessimism of the intellect,” Gramsci wrote, but “optimism of the will.” The book speaks directly to our will for a better, fairer, more just world. Dee Knight is able to keep his eyes on the prize, focusing on what is possible rather than what, on our worst days, seems probable.

Buff Whitman-Bradley was the originator of the Courage to Resist Audio Project and an editor, along with Sarah Lazare and Cindy Whitman-Bradley, of the oral history book, About Face: Military Resisters Turn Against War.



TISTOU

THE BOY WITH THE GREEN THUMBS OF PEACE

A children’s book

by Maurice Druon (Author),
Jack Zipes (Editor),
Joellyn Rock (Illustrator)

Little Mole & Honey Bear, 2022
(originally published in 1957)

Reviewed by Larry Johnson

Maurice Druon, a World War II veteran who interrupted his writing career to join the French army as part of the Nazi resistance, wrote this fun-to-read chapter book to help children understand one of the most complex problems in our world: war profiteering. Tistou is a boy who “asks too many questions.” He is a boy who cares and who has a gift. He is able to correct multiple issues like poverty and environmental degradation even when the adults around him insist such problems are “just the way it is.” When he learns his father’s weapons factory is aggravating the world’s problems by selling to both sides in a military conflict, Tistou sets out to correct that as well.



OUR VETERANS

WINNERS, LOSERS, FRIENDS,
AND ENEMIES ON THE NEW
TERRAIN OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS

by Suzanne Gordon, Steve Early,
and Jasper Craven
(Duke University Press, 2022)

The authors explore the physical, emotional, social, economic, and psychological impact of military service and the problems that veterans face when they return to civilian life. [Book website: <https://ourvetsbook.com/>]

“...a call to action by everyone concerned about health equity and educational opportunity for all Americans.”

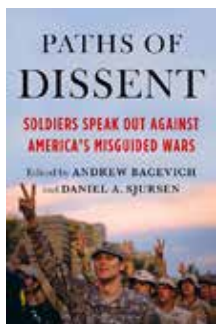
—Michael Blecker, Vietnam veteran;
executive director. Swords to Plowshares

“This book is a wake-up call for an American public led to believe that our country supports veterans.”

—Lindsay Church, Navy veteran, cofounder and Executive
Director, Minority Veterans of America

“While alarming in many ways, this book is also hopeful. It shows how VA-delivered care can be strengthened and improved as a model for health care for all.”

—Chris Lombardi, author of *I Ain’t Marching Anymore: Dissenters, Deserters, and Objectors to America’s Wars*



PATHS OF DISSENT SOLDIERS SPEAK OUT AGAINST AMERICA'S MISGUIDED WARS

**Oral history collection
edited by Andrew Bacevich and
Daniel A. Sjursen
Metropolitan Books, 2022**

NOTE: Interviews with the veterans featured in *Paths of Dissent* were featured in a special Memorial Day podcast, "Dissenting veterans on post-9/11 wars," on Radio Open Source with Chris Lydon on May 26, 2022. Listen at: <https://radioopensource.org/paths-of-dissent/>

Recommendation by Robert Bowes (via a VFP listserv):

"[This podcast] is the correct commemoration of Memorial Day, when we Remember and Mourn All Victims of War... which of course includes our enemy. The short memoirs in this series are quite diverse, all sobering, sharply focused. I have not read the paperback, but expect that the oral interviews, skillfully conducted by Lydon, supplement the book.

"For Veterans For Peace who visit middle and high schools to educate about war, our national systems, the misuse of our military, this paperback would be an appropriate handout... no political science theories, just raw life experience, some combat, but also lots of crosscultural predicaments common to 'winning the hearts and minds.'

"In one of Bacevich's books he speaks to the necessity of us people to evaluate/judge the wars conducted by our nation. This interview/book is very helpful in that regard."



HOWARD ZINN ON WAR

**Revised and Updated Edition
(Seven Stories Press, 2011)**

Now available as an e-Book, this collection of twenty-six short writings chosen by the author represent his thinking on a subject that concerned and fascinated him throughout his career. Zinn reflects on the wars against Iraq, the war in Kosovo, the Vietnam War, World War II, and on the meaning of war generally in a world of nations that can't seem to stop destroying each other. A World War II veteran and peace activist, Zinn lived through the most devastating wars of the twentieth century and questioned every one of them with his combination of integrity and historical acumen. In *Howard Zinn on War*, his message is clear: "The abolition of war has become not only desirable but absolutely necessary if the planet is to be saved. It is an idea whose time has come." <https://sevenstories.com/books/3179-howard-zinn-on-war>

Upcoming Events

JULY 6–OCTOBER 15, 2022

This is Not A Drill: Roger Waters concert tour

Roger Waters (of Pink Floyd fame) is embarking on his last North American concert tour, titled "This is Not A Drill"—a call to action. Waters reached out to some long-time activists and invited Veterans For Peace to distribute VFP literature at every one of his concerts on this tour, as a way to lift up veterans who stand with him as anti-fascists and nonviolent activists for peace, justice and truth. Veterans For Peace is working closely with Roger's staff in organizing a VFP presence at concerts throughout his 31-city U.S./Canada/Mexico tour.

THURSDAY–SUNDAY, AUGUST 25–28

Veterans For Peace 2022 Online Convention

Join us August 25-28 for another dynamic online convention. Esteemed guests for this year's event include Bishop William J. Barber II of the Poor People's Campaign, who will deliver the Saturday evening keynote address, and Claude Anshin Thomas, American Zen Buddhist monk and Vietnam War veteran, who will lead a special program on Sunday morning.

On Sunday, watch *Crossings*, a documentary about the women who crossed the DMZ in Korea almost 70 years after the war. Two additional Vietnam War-related films are slated for Sunday after the Closing Plenary.

Keep an eye on <https://www.vfpconvention.org/> for program updates, and follow the same link to register for the convention and the poetry reading.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24

Veterans For Peace Board of Directors Meeting

5:00pm EDT | 4:00pm CDT | 2:00pm PDT on Zoom. Watch our eNews and/or website for the link.

SATURDAY–SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15–22

Shut Down Creech Fall Action

Shut Down Creech is a national mobilization to nonviolently resist killer drones, sponsored by CodePink and Veterans For Peace. Mark your calendars and PLEASE JOIN US at our 2022 Fall convergence in the desert near Las Vegas, Nevada. Find more info at: <https://shutdowncreech.blogspot.com/>

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2021 • 11AM

Armistice Day

Honor veterans by ringing bells 11 times at the 11th hour. Begin planning local bell ringings and prepare to publicly celebrate the Armistice that signaled the end of the hellish First World War while calling for an end to *all* war.

EVERYDAY MEALS DURING WARS

In previous wars, our neighbors would share meals with us in our basement. My brother would start a fire in the old brazier, and I would prepare tea and put the kettle on the burning coals.

There were truces every couple of days. My father could go out and check on the hens and ducks in their coops. My mother would climb the ladder to the roof to put water in bowls for the sparrows and pigeons.

Men would be taken to jails or concentration camps. They could see those who were fighting and killing them and their families.

Nowadays, we don't see those who take everything beautiful away from us. We don't even see our shadows during the day. The F-16s swallow the light from the sun, casting shadows of their fat bellies on us, dead or alive.

Bombs punch the houses, knock them down, smash the fridges and the dishes. A house turns into a stew of concrete-and-blood.

We no longer share meals with the neighbors.

— Mosab Abu Toha



Where is the rest of me? Shattered in pieces.

OLYMPIC HOPSCOTCH LEAP

We sit and drink tea
in the hot night of Ramadan.
Boys play hide-and-seek.
Girls hopscotch around.
Mothers chat and laugh.

A buzzing sound of drones flying
above my family and friends
stops the games, the chatting, and the laughter.

A missile fails,
falling into farmland nearby.
Shrapnel cuts electric wires.

Dust tops off our tea,
like latte foam.

More missiles come flying in,
on the lookout for anything that moves.

Angels get hold of my infant niece.
We look around and find only
her milk bottle.

— Mosab Abu Toha

Poems & photograph from *Things You May Find Hidden in My Ear: Poems from Gaza* © 2022 by Mosab Abu Toha, reprinted with permission of City Lights Books, www.citylights.com.



GET CONNECTED

Official VFP channels:

- www.facebook.com/veteransforpeace
- www.youtube.com/VeteransForPeace
- twitter.com/VFPNational
- www.instagram.com/veteransforpeace

Weekly VFP Social Hour

NEW TIME!

Every Tuesday at 7 pm (Eastern) |
6 pm (Central) | 5 pm (Mountain) |
4 pm (Pacific).

To Join Social Hour, click on the link in the Calendar sidebar of our website. Or go to Zoom and click join meeting and enter in Meeting ID: 324 812 650.

VFP-ALL Google group

The VFP-ALL listserv is open to all VFP members for sharing announcements and information and engaging in lively discussions with other members.

To join the VFP-ALL group, go to:

<http://bit.ly/VFPALLSignUp>.

Look for the “Join Group” link at the top of the page, and click to automatically be added. If you have problems, email shelly@veteransforpeace.org with a request to be added to the VFP-ALL Google group.

SLACK

VFP is using SLACK—a channel-based messaging platform—to help build community by allowing members to easily keep in touch and share plans, ideas, and resources with each other, with messages categorized by topic or working group. The SLACK app is easy to download for both smart phones and computers, so you can access conversations from any device. To join VFP on SLACK, you have to be a VFP member. To get started, fill out the form at: <http://bit.ly/VFPSLACKSignUp>
VFP staff will respond with a SLACK invitation that will be good for 30 days!

Gamers For Peace

Streams: www.twitch.tv/VeteransForPeace

VeteransForPeace

Join the Discord: www.discord.gg/GamersForPeace

GamersForPeace

3407 S. Jefferson Ave. #219, St. Louis, MO 63118
Ph: 314-725-6005 • Fax: 314-227-1981 • veteransforpeace.org

Veterans For Peace is a global organization of Military Veterans and allies whose collective efforts are to build a culture of peace by using our experiences and lifting our voices. We inform the public of the true causes of war and the enormous costs of wars, with an obligation to heal the wounds of wars. Our network is comprised of over 140 chapters worldwide whose work includes: educating the public, advocating for a dismantling of the war economy, providing services that assist veterans and victims of war, and most significantly, working to end all wars.

Statement of Purpose

We, as military veterans, do hereby affirm our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace. To this end we will work, with others both nationally and internationally:

- To increase public awareness of the causes and costs of war
- To restrain our governments from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations
- To resist racism and repression in our home communities
- To oppose the militarization of law enforcement
- To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons
- To seek justice for veterans and victims of war
- To abolish war as an instrument of national policy.

To achieve these goals, members of Veterans For Peace pledge to use non-violent means and to maintain an organization that is both democratic and open with the understanding that all members are trusted to act in the best interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace.

Veterans For Peace Code of Conduct

~ a living document, to be updated as we learn ~

1. We will use our anger at injustice as a positive, nonviolent force for change.
2. We will approach every encounter, with fellow members and the public, with positivity and mindfulness, and with the assumption that concerns raised are coming from a positive place and present a learning opportunity.
3. Our attitude, as conveyed through our words, symbols and actions, will be one of openness, friendliness, and respect toward all people we encounter.
4. All members have an important role to play within Veterans For Peace, regardless of previous military rank, branch, or combat experience. We will respect one another as equal parts of a whole.
5. We will not assault, verbally, in person or online, anyone, to include fellow members and those who oppose or disagree with us, even if they assault us. This does not preclude a member's right to defend him or herself against a physical attack.
6. In keeping with our commitment to achieving our goals through non-violent means, there is an expectation that members will not carry weapons with them to VFP events or while representing VFP, regardless of the laws in their location.
7. We will follow the directions of the designated coordinators during public actions organized on behalf of VFP.
8. We will use democratic principles within our organization to ensure an open, fair, inclusive, and transparent environment.
9. We will speak as members of VFP but not for VFP, unless designated as a spokesperson for VFP. All members are free to speak for themselves or on behalf of their chapter as appropriate.
10. Sexist, racist, homophobic, ageist, transphobic, gender discriminatory, and all other discriminatory language and actions are common within the military; they are not acceptable within VFP.
11. Our words and actions will maintain the political and financial independence of VFP.
12. To achieve the above goals, we will also engage in “active listening”; that is, fully concentrating on what is being said rather than just passively “hearing” the message of the speaker.



Veterans For Peace
3407 S. Jefferson Ave. #219
Saint Louis, MO 63118

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ESTEEMED GUESTS include **Bishop William J. Barber II** of the Poor People's Campaign, and **Claude Anshin Thomas**, American Zen Buddhist monk and Vietnam War veteran. *Others to be announced.*

INFORMATIVE & INSPIRING PROGRAMS include at least 3 plenary panels and 3 trainings, in addition to workshops—details TBA.

MEET & GREET VFP Board Members & Advisors.

SOCIAL ROOM Meet and socialize with VFP members across the country.

POETRY SOIRÉE and a new VFP poet laureate to be announced!

ANNUAL REPORTS & VOTING ON RESOLUTIONS at Saturday Business meeting. [Your membership must be current to vote.]

>> REGISTER TODAY! <https://www.vfpconvention.org/>
>> PURCHASE ADS at <https://shopvfp.org/product/2022-convention-ads/>

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