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VETERANS FOR PEACE NEWS

MINNESOTA VETERANS FOR PEACE, CHAPTER 27

Veterans for Peace News is published quarterly by Minnesota Veterans for Peace, Chapter 27.

Veterans for Peace works to increase awareness of the costs of war, restrain government from intervening in the internal affairs of other nations, end the arms race, reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons, seek justice for veterans and victims of war, and abolish war as an instrument of national policy.

We pledge to use democratic and nonviolent means to achieve our purpose.

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*"There won't be any
trumpets blowing come
the Judgement Day —
on the bloody morning
after, one tin soldier
rides away..."*

(Potter & Lambert)

Fasting for peace on Iraq War anniversary

Members of Veterans For Peace Chapter 27 fasted from sunrise to sunset last March 18 at the St. Paul Cathedral to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. A collection was taken for the Iraq Water Project for \$160.



Truth in Recruiting presentation impress students

by Michael Orange

"Did you kill anybody?" This is, no doubt, the most frequently asked question when I give my Truth in Recruiting presentations in the schools. It always takes me back to my first time: "Bring a Vet to School Day" back in 1984 in my daughter's 6th grade class. It was my first try at peeking out of the veterans' closet and it was not very pleasant. I got the first few words out of the seven-word truth — "It was my job to kill people" — choked up, spun around, and lost it right there for several minutes. It has gotten better since then after a hundred more presentations, but it still exacts a heavy psychic toll, not just on me, but on all who are willing to expose their participation in our country's wars of aggression.

Since 2008, members of Chapter 27 have worked hard with representatives of WAMM

and other groups to gain access to local schools for our speakers and tablers. This is no small task. It would take a separate article to describe the heroic efforts by our valiant chair, John Sherman, to keep this program vibrant for so many years. I'm proud to report that our speakers made 25 presentations this school year.

A typical high school class for me begins with students shouting out guesses to my list of ten startling questions about the effects of war, PTSD and Military Sexual Trauma, and the half-truth pitches from recruiters. I ask them not to look at the answers that are on the back of the sheet and explain that I will cover them during my presentation. From the students I observe avid interest, tears, and occasional snores. I always get a surprise question; like the time a girl, with a look of deep con-

Presentations, cont'd page 4

The rest of the story is not a good story

by Larry Johnson, President of VFP Chapter 27

ly false idea that he wasn't fully a man.)

My dad was a builder and remodeler, mainly building affordable homes, one at a time with the environment in mind, rather than mowing down everything and building row after row of "Little Boxes" as immortalized in the Malvina Reynolds song. The story of the home I grew up in was that dad borrowed \$500 from my grandfather and built largely with salvaged materials from a demolished Minneapolis school building; he bargained for materials before they were hauled to the dump and paid my grandfather back in two years and never had a house payment. That was fortunate because my dad spent his life in and out of the hospital, suffering from exposure to toxic building materials, a civilian version of what veterans go through dealing with exposure to Agent Orange, Depleted Uranium, and all the poisons pooled under the term "Persian Gulf Syndrome."

Dad also built the "low payment" church building we were raised in, which spewed the 50's "kill a Communist for God," the toxic theology I reacted to when I signed on as a Vietnam-era conscientious objector. I became a medic with no weapon, because, in the words of John Prine, "Jesus don't like killin', no matter what the reason for."

When my dad was dying, too young, in 1981, we got into some pretty deep conversations, and finally he said, out of his grounding in so-called conservative theology, "I never understood that decision you made during Vietnam. Even the Bible says 'There shall be wars and rumors of wars.'"

"Dad," I said, "That's a statement of fact. I believe the Bible (and now I would say, most other holy books) teaches it's not right to participate in making them happen."

Then he told me a story I think he had never told anyone. It went something like this:

When they bombed Pearl Harbor, I went down to enlist, and they wouldn't take me. I had fallen off a ladder that year and had a slight concussion, and they wouldn't take me. (I could feel the pain in his body, and the realization that the fervor of World War II, and his inability to do "what everyone was doing," had tainted his life with the total-

It's wrong. The foreclosure craze on veterans and civilians stems directly from unnecessary war spending, and that the banks doing the foreclosing tend to be the same big ones that profit from investing in war efforts in the first place.

I saw an ad for going to Berkeley and taking a welding course so you could work on the war ships. I'd always wanted to learn to weld, so I went and took the training. When we graduated, they gave me a rivet gun and told me to go stand by this ship and make it look like I was working on it. (Again, I could feel a different kind of pain, the one violating his sense of honest, hard work). I wasn't enlisted so they couldn't hold me. I quit, hitchhiked down to Texas to see your Uncle (he had enlisted and been wounded in Germany) and came home and went back to work.

That's pretty much how he told the story, making no value judgments, but saying to me as best he could, "Well, maybe I can sort of see what you did. I mean, even in a war as pure as World War II, not everything was totally on the up and up."

I don't know, but I'd like to think that if my Dad were still alive, his background of putting people in homes they could afford, would have him out with us saying IT'S WRONG TO BE BLOWING UP HOMES OVERSEAS, AND THEN TRYING TO TAKE THEM AWAY BACK HOME FROM THE VETERANS WE ORDERED TO DO IT.

A number of us were down last week, standing and speaking in support of a veteran facing foreclosure. Our point is always that IT'S WRONG – THAT THE FORECLOSURE CRAZE ON VETERANS AND CIVILIANS STEMS DIRECTLY FROM UNNECESSARY WAR SPENDING, AND THAT THE BANKS DOING THE FORECLOSING TEND TO BE THE SAME BIG ONES THAT PROFIT FROM INVESTING IN WAR EFFORTS IN THE FIRST PLACE.

If you'd like to stay on top of this, check in to www.occupymn.org and/or call the office and ask to be on the list to be notified when we're standing up to this activity. One of the veterans, whose home we stood up to save,

The rest of the story, cont'd. next page

The rest of the story, from previous page

just told me last week, “I want to join up with you guys.”

Also, since we’re talking about “war profiteering,” or the profit motive, which I believe is the core problem driving unnecessary warfare, be sure to be at PEACESTOCK on July 14. Besides all the other speakers and activities highlighted at www.peacestockvfp.org, one of the keynoters is David Swanson. Swanson most recently has written *The Military-Industrial Complex at 50*, as well as *When The World Outlawed War*, the little known story that the 1928 Kellogg-Briand Act is still on the books, making war illegal as a means of setting international differences. CALL THE OFFICE. WE HAVE TICKETS.

That reminds me – at the end of March I clipped the long, glowing obituary for Edson Spencer, the CEO at Honeywell before the armaments and weapons were spun off as the Alliant Tech subsidiary. The piece says that in the 1980s Spencer often defended Honeywell’s defense contracting, saying that “Japanese and German aggression during World War II was what you get when countries can’t defend themselves.” Well, OK, but the rest of the story has to do with the American companies who made fortunes arming those aggressors, and then turned around and made a whole lot more arming the United States and our allies to fight them off. This is not a good story, but I’m afraid that’s not the reason so many people like Spencer don’t want to tell it. WE MUST KEEP TELLING IT, IN ALL IT’S VARIATIONS, WHEREVER WE CAN.

“A newspaper is not just for reporting the news as it is, but to make people mad enough to do something about it.”
Mark Twain

The War Crimes Times

Read what “THEY”
don’t want you to read.
Know what “THEY”
don’t want you to know.
www.warcrimestimes.org

This War Business: Memorial Day thoughts

by Tom Dooley

On Memorial Day there are the usual flowers, tears and solemn speeches praising the dead war heroes. Does this event make war more hated or more acceptable? I think the latter.

Try taking this survey: Rank, in order of importance, with #1 being the most important, the following: We go to war to:

Bring democracy to nations we invade ____

Liberate the people (Iraq for example) ____

Bring peace and democracy to the world ____

Make money for arms makers ____

Provide employment for our youth ____

Expand American imperialism ____

Add your own ____

On a related note:

F is for fraud: the Disabled Veterans National Foundation ripoff victimized 56 million people over three years, and all the veterans got were some trinkets.

The mainstream, lame-stream media FAILED to mention that the “Disabled Veterans” could easily be mistaken for the “Disabled American Veterans” a legitimate organization that has been helping vets for decades.

Type in “Disabled Veterans fraud” in your search engine and look at the results.

Want updates by E-mail?

To receive Chapter #27 notices and information by email, please send the request to Bob Heberle, bjheberle@gmail.com. We now have a list of about 230 and would like to be able to reach more on a regular basis.

Southwest High presentation

by Dick Foley

On June 1, I visited Southwest High School. I was asked to speak to three classes of freshmen in Advanced Placement – Human Geography. I spoke of the events leading up to and including my combat experiences in Vietnam, 1967-68. I followed up describing my 70 percent disability for PTSD, anxiety and depression.

I was well received by all the sessions and students had good questions to ask. After my third session the teacher told me that group has been her most unruly class all year. She couldn't believe how quiet and attentive they were and she expressed deep thanks to me. I don't think any of those students will be running off to the Marine recruiting station.

Communion denied

by Pat Downey

Jennie and I attended Mass and wore Rainbow sashes, in solidarity with Catholic G.L.B.T. brothers and sisters and supporters of equal rights in the Catholic Church. We who wore sashes were asked to remove them or . . . no communion. We were denied communion by the priest.

Several Veterans For Peace members, wearing sashes were denied communion right along with the rest of us. Other folks who received communion thanked us and we are encouraged by their solidarity.

We hoped to urge other Catholics to work for the rights of GLBT brothers and sisters.

"When plunder becomes a way of life for a group of men living in society, they create for themselves, in the course of time, a legal system that authorizes it and a moral code that glorifies it."

Frederic Bastiat, French writer and economist

presentation, from page 1

cern, asked, "Are you OK now?"

I keep a folder bursting with the cards and letters I've received. The following excerpts are from two college students who wrote this past year:

"I very much appreciated your visit to our classroom . . . [I]t was so important to hear your stories . . . as many are not willing to talk about their experiences or perhaps not around any longer to do so . . . I especially appreciate that you are a Veteran for Peace. I feel that it is so important for people who have firsthand experience with participating in war are part of the peace movement, and I feel that you and those like you give a different face to the protesters of war and purveyors of peace."

"During your presentation, I was impressed with your honesty. You were able to share a very personal part of your life; your year at war and after without 'sugarcoating' the events or their outcomes. This helped me understand that 'war poisons veterans' just as you had said, but you made me realize how much family members also share the heartbreak and sacrifices of war."

When the sound of the bell signals it's time to rush to the next class (usually in the midst of one of my long-winded answers to a straightforward question), the smiles, handshakes, and sincere thanks confirm that this is, as my wife, Cynthia, calls it, holy work.

If you are interested in having a veteran speak to your school, community or church group, please call our office at 612-821-9141

Soldiers: Know Your Rights

To Soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan: You took an oath to uphold the Constitution, not to support policies that are illegal.

The GI Hotline phone number is: **1-800-394-9544**

AMICUS: volunteers for peace

by Dick Foley

I feel it is important at times to slow down and reflect upon the name of our organization: Veterans For Peace. Peace entails much more than the absence of war.

A channel for advocating that peace is Amicus, a volunteer organization that pairs volunteers to befriend and visit inmates within the Minnesota Prison System. Careful screening is done to reach meaningful matches of volunteers to inmates. The inmates have to express an interest and be cleared for a match. These inmates are typically people who have no other, or very few, visitors. Volunteers are expected to visit their friend at least once a month for at least a year.

I've been involved most recently for over two years and my friend is an Army veteran. The visits are very rewarding to me. My friend, Craig, assures me they mean a lot to him. He's serving a life sentence in Oak Park Heights. He has served 21 years and is eligible for parole in 2020. Those of us who served in combat can easily say, "There but for the grace of God go I."

With the large numbers of combat veterans returning to civilian life, large numbers are entering our prison system. The needs and the cries for lasting, meaningful friendships are also increasing. We all have the opportunity to bring some peace to these veterans.

Those of you at the April meeting had a chance to meet Mark McDuffie, who currently works for Amicus as a veteran's advocate. He is a veteran of the Iraq and Desert Storm wars and is currently serving in the Army Reserve.

I ask each and every member to consider becoming an Amicus Volunteer. The rewards and promotion of peace are limitless. In addition to visiting the prisons, there are needs for employment and housing which are ongoing. If you are interested, contact Mark McDuffie at 612-877-4277 or at mark@amicususa.org.

Rememberance as a path to the future

by Elaine Wynne

Each year the Minneapolis/St. Paul Hiroshima/Nagasaki Commemorative Committee (www.MSPHNCC.org) remembers the first nuclear (atomic) bombs dropped on cities and people. They say it is a Reflection from Past Action in the Present with Hope for the Future.

To commemorate this, there will be a Commemorative Tea Ceremony at Lyndale Peace Park Garden, Sun. Aug 5 at 6 p.m.

At 7:30 a.m. on Aug. 6, a remembrance of Hiroshima will begin. Near the new bridge, Jay Kvale will speak on Nuclear Disarmament, Elaine Wynne and her granddaughter Renee Weeks-Wynne will tell the story of Sadako. After Kairos Dance, folded cranes will be hung on the trees.

At 11 am. at the Spirit of Peace statue, Veterans For Peace, Chapter 27, led by Larry Johnson and Steve McKeown, will do the 11 Bells Ceremony.

There will also be a Nagasaki remembrance on Wednesday, Aug. 8, at 7 p.m. at the Global Harmony Labyrinth in Como Park, St. Paul. Well known Twin Cities Sculptor, Jane Powers will speak of her visit to Nagasaki last year. There will also be songs and a reading of "On That Summer Day."

Prior to these events, a sculpture titled "A New Vision Of Peace" by Bill Hueg will be unveiled on July 10 at 5 p.m. at the St. Paul City Hall. This is a gift from the S.P. Rotary Club to the city of Nagasaki.

On July 11 from 6:30 to 7:30 Carondelet Center will sponsor a Peace Park ceremony to bless the sculpture on its way.

Gestures of friendship are the kernels of peace.

Once again, we are sponsoring a bus to go to the
School of the Americas at Fort Benning GA
the weekend of Nov. 16-18.
Contact Jim Steinhagen at 612-722-1112

War IS a racket! So? Let's do art!

by Chante Wolf

Over the past few years I have been going through a personal overhaul as a war veteran. Burned out, bummed out, stressed and finally getting wise about my own health and healing when the universe showed me a different direction to take my activism: art.

As the reptilian-brained GOP officials clamor for their last breath, they are attempting to change what gets said and read about whom and that is censorship in its most vile form, I think. So the most important thing to be done is to get printed, have your art shown publicly and listed into the Library of Congress so future generations doing research will have that material to throw into their projects making them best rounded and not so one sided.

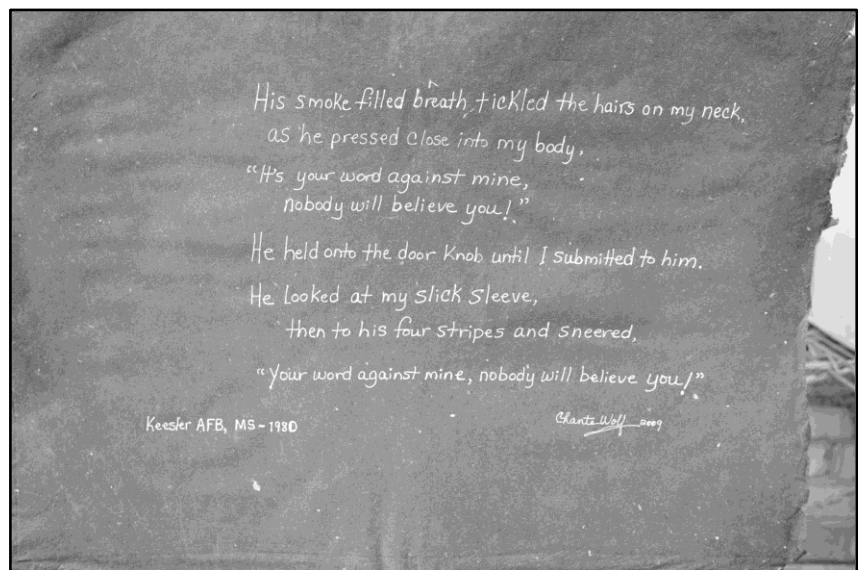
Art is much more than some hippie, drop-out, doped-up and lazy thing people can do. It is about processing life in a different way and form. There is something about its own spirit that connects with the humanity of the person doing the art, those looking at it, interacting with it, and hearing or reading the words. There is something burning inside all of us that wants out. Art has an uncanny way of unlocking Pandora's Box, especially if you keep at it when your initial efforts don't turn out like you wanted. Art takes practice. But what doesn't?

In September, 2009, I attended a series of workshops at the Minnesota Center of Book Arts. One was the Combat Paper Project, which showed us how to turn our uniforms into paper and then into art. The other two workshops focused on writing about our military and war experiences. Warrior Writers helped veterans with their poetry and short stories, and the Veterans Book Project helped veterans put their stories into book form. Both writing programs got the veterans' writings published, and the Combat Paper Project got veterans uniforms into art shows across the country and into the Library of Congress.

There is something healing that happens through the physical action of ripping apart a uniform and then cutting, tearing and putting the tiny pieces into water to be broken apart and turned into pulp. There is something to putting your hands into the water and touching all the fibers of something you wore while violence was done to you and others in the name of freedom, liberation, and democracy. Touching the intentional transformation of those experi-

ences and changing the form into something different, whether you want to admit it or not, is healing. There is a quiet focus that happens while you put the screen into the water of pulp and pull out paper on that screen. Images and memories whirl around you, those demons you want to exorcise, as you lay the wet paper onto the felt and go back to pull more paper.

Writing a poem or short story does something similar but is not as physical. However, it is change, and all change with positive intent begins to heal any negative. Art in all its possible forms comes from the creator source within us as



True incident that happened to me right out of Basic Training and my technical school in Biloxi, Mississippi, for Air Traffic Control Training.

human beings. Some will touch others in a profound way. Some will not be touched at all, or so they believe, yet they will be moved to tears with music or words and stories and from those tears comes change, empathy, encouragement and healing.

Plus really doing art from deep within you is not for the weak. It takes great courage to bear your soul and put it on display for others to look at, read or hear it. And that is the part of "letting go" where the deep healing really happens.

We are a country out of balance, but to get that balance back there has to be an infusion of positive energy happening while the negative is swirling around us. So! Don't despair. War IS A Racket! So? Let's do art!

Further information, can be found at www.combatpaper.org, www.veteransbookproject.com and www.warriorwriters.org.

Is the “Greening” of the Military more of the same?

by Steve Mckeown

A non profit organization called the Center for a New American Security put out a report in 2010 calling for the U.S. military to operate solely on renewable fuels in the next 30 years and rid itself of its 77 percent dependence on oil and its daily usage of 360,000 barrels of oil, which is over 90 percent of all government oil used nationally. This does not count the oil used for the Defense plants workers commute, people working at the VA, going to Legion or VFW meetings, attending ROTC and military schools, or for that matter protesting war and its preparation etc.

The report essentially outlines a 12-point strategy of transition, which consists mainly of advocating this or that techno fix. Much of this would be a heavier reliance on computerized systems (read drones and weapons in space) and achieving this without burdening any of the branches of the military so they could still take on anyone deemed our enemy.

One can just see it. Solar panels and nuclear weapons in space and the desert with helpful lasers for those of us who have lost our way. Recruiters would go to schools in

electric cars, our nuclear weapons will be sustainable, depleted uranium will be fired from tanks run on veggie oil, and the School of the Americas will even teach more democracy.

And pigs will fly -- at least to the trough of so-called “military ecology.”

The military is very astute about peak oil. They are not in denial. They want to grab and assist what they can for corporate profit in fossil fuels and perpetuate their existence when this oil era comes to an end. This means taking money away from domestic development of alternative fuels and equipment for peaceful purposes. Does anyone think the Pentagon is going to stand by and allow school districts and communities to implement solar or wind power, etc., while their facilities around the world go dark?

The main gold in our Veterans For Peace Statement of Purpose is to abolish war as an instrument of National policy no matter how green the military proposes its pie in the sky to be. The green we need to follow is the same as it always has been: the insatiable greed of the military industrial complex that can only be sustainable in hell.



Veterans For Peace members joined forces with WAMM, AlliantACTION, Anti-War Committee, Stop FBI Repression, 911 Truth, Pax Christi, Sisters of St. Joseph and many more at WAMM's 5th Annual Walk Against Weapons. Walkers (and a few bikers) carried signs and waved at motorists as they weaved their way around Eden Prairie Shopping Center. Why Eden Prairie? Because the headquarters of Minnesota based largest military contractor, Alliant Techsystems (ATK) was located there. In October, they moved their headquarters closer to their contracts in the D.C. area, but several employees still work at the old site. On this beautiful first Saturday in June, activists educated, showed resistance to weapons and raised money for Women Against Military Madness. photo by Tom Bottolene

10th annual Peacestock takes place July 14

The 10th annual Peacestock, sponsored by Veterans for Peace, Chap. 115, Red Wing, will take place Saturday, July 14, starting at 9 a.m. at Windbeam Farm, N2934 750th St., Hager City, Wisconsin (www.windbeamfarm.com). It costs \$30 per person, \$50 per couple, or students \$10. No one will be refused entry if unable to pay.

The annual peace and justice event will feature a full day of speakers, workshops and music as well as a lunch wagon and dinner. Those who wish to spend the night can camp for free, although there are no hookups, and enjoy a Sunday breakfast.

Speakers this year include:

Father Roy Bourgeois. Following military service in the U.S. Navy, Fr. Roy Bourgeois was ordained a Catholic priest in 1972. Roy went on to work with the poor of Bolivia for five years before being arrested and forced to leave the country, then under the repressive rule of dictator and School of the Americas (SOA) grad General Hugo Banzer. In 1980 Fr. Roy became involved in issues surrounding U.S. policy in El Salvador after four U.S. churchwomen—two of them friends of his—were raped and killed by Salvadoran soldiers. Roy became an outspoken critic of U.S. foreign policy in Latin America. Since then, he has spent over four years in U.S. federal prisons for nonviolent protests against the training of Latin American soldiers at Ft. Benning, Georgia. In 1990, Roy founded SOA Watch.

Josh Ruebner. Ruebner is the National Advocacy Director of the U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation, a national coalition of more than 380 organizations working to end U.S. sup-

port for Israel's illegal 44-year military occupation of the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip. Ruebner frequently provides analysis and commentary on U.S. policy toward the Middle East on major media outlets.

Duane Kamrath. Kamrath is a military veteran and a Lutheran minister who served parishes from his ordination in 1968 until 2001 when he retired. Throughout his ministerial career he has worked in the areas of peace and justice. He will speak on his recently published booklet entitled *Wisdom about War and Violence*, written with the intention of helping Lutheran youth make a prayerful and conscientious choice about joining the military.

David Swanson. Swanson is a nationally known peace activist, author, and speaker. He has written several books, the last two being

War is a Lie and *The Military Industrial Complex at 50*. He hosts the Talk Radio Nation show. He blogs at his websites: <http://davidswanson.org> and <http://warisacrime.org>.

The title of his presentation at Peacestock 2012 will be *Abolishing War: One Last Step to Take*.

A late addition to the speaker's list is **Sami Rasouli**, Iraqi-American peace activist and founder of the Muslim Peacemaker Teams





VFP chapter president Larry Johnson starts off the annual Memorial Day Service by the Vietnam Memorial at the State Capitol with "Taps," after explaining its origin in the Civil War.



VFP members march in the annual MayDay Parade in South Minneapolis on May 13, after being rained out on May 6. This year's theme was "The End of the World as We Know It, The Beginning as We Live It Now."

EVENTS CALENDAR

ONGOING EVENTS

Second Sunday each month, 6-8:30 p.m.:
VFP Chapter 27 general meeting, St. Stephens Church.
Executive meeting at 5 p.m.
2123 Clinton Ave. S. Ring doorbell on north door.
FFI Larry Johnson at 612-747-3904

July 14 Peacestock, 10 a.m. featuring Roy Bourgeois, Josh Ruebner, David Swanson and Duane Kamrath. (See article on page 8.) FFI: 651-388-7733

Sun. Aug 5, 6 p.m. Tea Ceremony at Lyndale Peace Park Garden to commemorate the first atomic bombs used against people and cities,

At 7:30 a.m. on Aug. 6, a remembrance of Hiroshima will begin at the new bridge, followed at 11 am. at the Spirit of Peace statue, by the 11 Bells Ceremony, led by VFP members Larry Johnson and Steve McKeown.

There will also be a Nagasaki remembrance on Wednesday, Aug. 8, at 7 p.m. at the Global Harmony Labyrinth in Como Park, St. Paul.

Aug. 8-12, VFP National Convention Miami, FL. This year's theme: "Liberating the Americas: Lessons from Latin America and the Caribbean." (See article on this page.) FFI: vfpnationalconvention.org

For information on vigils, go to the VFP website at vfpchapter27.org or call 612-827-5364 or visit www.worldwidewamm.org

Alice Walker, Phil Donahue and Camilo Mejia will speak at National Convention

The 27th annual VFP national convention will take place Aug 8-12 in Miami, Fla., at the Marriott Hotel/Biscayne Bay.

This year's theme is "Liberating the Americas: Lessons from Latin America and the Caribbean." Featured speakers include Alice Walker, Father Roy Bourgeois, Leah Bolger, Phil Donahue, Col. Ann Wright, Camilo Mejia, Paula Caplan, and Marleine Bastien. The opening program on Wed., Aug. 8, features the documentary film: *Body of War* presented by Phil Donahue.

This film by Ellen Spiro and Phil Donahue premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and won Best Documentary from the National Board of Review. It was also nominated for Best Documentary from Producer's Guild of America.

Other films scheduled to be shown are *Hidden Battles*, *Occupy The Movie* and *Witness to War*.

Online registration is available at vfpnationalconvention.org. It costs \$200 if registered before June 30 or \$250 after July 1. That includes the Saturday night banquet.

One- or two-day registrations are also available for those who cannot attend the whole convention. They cost \$75 or \$150.

More information is available at the website. Registration forms that can be mailed in are also available there.

"Silence is the voice of complicity"

by Pat Downey

Beginning in 1990, with nine fasters, at the School of America gates in Georgia, Father Roy Bourgeois began to call for the closure of the S.O.A..

To keep alive memories of the thousands killed by graduates of the School of the Americas in Central America and to continue efforts to close the school more than 15,000 people of all ages join Roy in November.

Recent events in Honduras were directed by graduates of the School of the Americas. More information about Honduras will be available later.

Roy was a speaker at V.F.P. Peace Camp Saturday, June 14. He will also be a speaker at the PeaceStock on July 14. See page 8 for more information.

NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

Please let us know if you want to receive our newsletter by email.
Contact: chantewolf7@gmail.com

Finding new members

In recent years, U.S. military vets have been dying at the rate of 5,000 a week, but there's still a few million out there who would join VFP if they knew we existed and if they were asked. Give them our name and contact information. Better yet, give us their names and information and we'll contact them.

Defense and security now cost \$1 trillion per year

by Frank Fuller

The New York Times recently quoted a Congressional leader saying: "The debate on the debt is an opportunity to send the world a signal that we are going to remain the strongest military force in the world.

We're saying, 'We're going to keep it, and we're going to make it the No. 1 priority of a broke nation.' "

Now there is more evidence than ever that that is exactly what we are doing.

Even as our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are supposedly winding down, our costs for war keep going up. This year alone, defense and security costs will reach nearly \$1 trillion per year. And that will only go up in the future.

That's from an analysis by Chris Hellman and Mattea Kramer who co-authored *A People's Guide to the Federal Budget*. They are research analysts for the National Priorities Project (www.nationalpriorities.org) They've taken the security and defense costs from all parts of the Federal budget and added them to the defense budget. And it's truly shocking.

Here's how they did it, as they explain it in their book and in articles on the Internet.

They started with the \$530 billion we will spend on the military in fiscal 2013. This is actually a 2.5 percent cut from 2012, but the costs only go up from here.

First, that figure does not include our current war funding, which will be \$88 billion in fiscal 2013, even though we are supposedly out of Iraq and sending troops home from Afghanistan. The authors note, just as a comparison, that the federal government will spend around \$64 billion on education that year.

They also point out that the defense budget does not pay for nuclear weapons; the Department of Energy does, and it will spend \$11.5 billion on nuclear weapons and related programs. and another \$6.4 billion for weapons cleanup. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will run taxpayers \$35.5 billion for its national security activities in fiscal

2013.

Other agencies also provide security, like the USDA's programs to secure the food supply. Those costs come to \$13.5 billion for homeland security at federal agencies other than DHS.

Then there's something called the international affairs budget. For fiscal 2013, \$8 billion in additional war funding for Iraq and Afghanistan is hidden away there, another \$14 billion for "international security assistance" (weapons and training Washington offers foreign militaries around the world). There's also \$2 billion for "peacekeeping operations," money U.S. taxpayers send overseas to help fund military operations handled by international organizations and our allies.

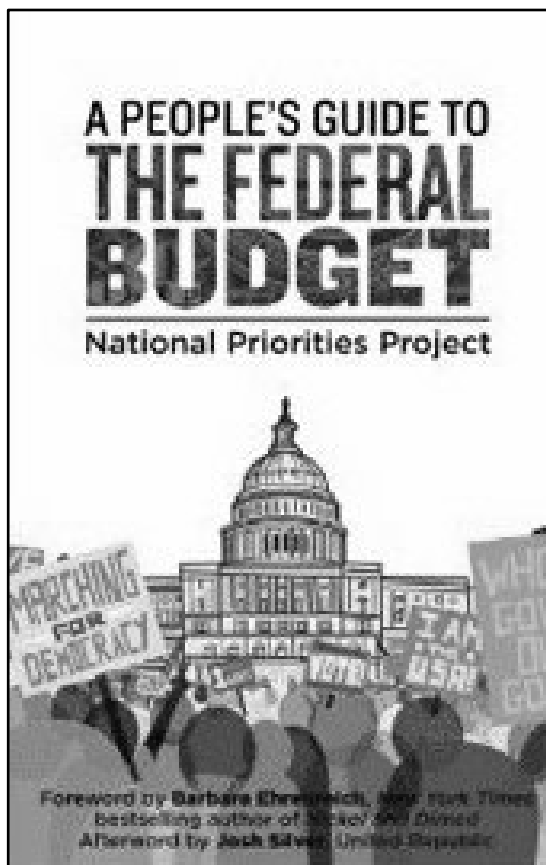
In 2013, veterans programs will cost the federal government \$138 billion. Benefits for civilian employees of the Defense Department will cost taxpayers around \$21 billion in 2013. And something called "defense-related activities" that remains unexplained has \$8 billion in it for 2013.

They added it up and got \$931 billion.

The authors emphasize that this figure does not include everything related to the defense department. They wrote that it "doesn't include the interest we're paying on money we borrowed to fund past military operations; nor does it include portions of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration that are dedicated to national security. And we don't know if this number captures the entire intelligence budget or not, because parts of intelligence funding are classified."

They add that this makes our national security budget the 19th largest economy in the world, roughly the size of Australia's."

Few people feel safer because we are spending all this money. And it's difficult to understand why none of this can be touched as Washington tries to cut its budget.





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Summer 2012 Newsletter

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Hours: M-F noon to 7 p.m.,
Sat. noon to 6 p.m.

PEACESTOCK 2012

10th annual event
devoted to peace and justice

formerly known as Pigstock

Sponsored by Veterans for Peace, Chap. 115, Red Wing

Saturday, July 14, 2012

all day event starting at 9:00 am

GUEST SPEAKERS

Fr. Roy Bourgeois

Following military service in the U.S. Navy, Fr. Roy Bourgeois was ordained a Catholic priest in 1972. Roy went on to work with the poor of Bolivia for five years before being arrested and forced to leave the country. Then under the repressive rule of dictator and School of the Americas (SOA) grad General Hugo Banzer. In 1980 Fr. Roy became involved in issues surrounding U.S. policy in El Salvador after four U.S. churchwomen—two of them friends of his—were raped and killed by Salvadoran soldiers. Roy became an outspoken critic of U.S. foreign policy in Latin America. Since then, he has spent over four years in U.S. federal prisons for nonviolent protests against the training of Latin American soldiers at Ft. Benning, Georgia. In 1990, Roy founded SOA Watch.

Rev. Duane Kamrath

Duane Kamrath is a military veteran and a Lutheran minister who served parishes from his ordination in 1968 until 2001 when he retired. Throughout his ministerial career he has worked in the areas of peace and justice. He will speak on his recently published booklet entitled *Wisdom about War and Violence*, written with the intention of helping Lutheran youth make a prayerful and conscientious choice about joining the military.

Josh Ruebner

Josh Ruebner is the National Advocacy Director of the U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation, a national coalition of more than 380 organizations working to end U.S. support for Israel's illegal 44-year military occupation of the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip. Ruebner frequently provides analysis and commentary on U.S. policy toward the Middle East on major media outlets.

David Swanson

David Swanson is a nationally known peace activist, author, and speaker. He has written several books, the last two being *War is a Lie* (2010) and *The Military Industrial Complex at 50* (2012). He hosts the *Talk Radio Nation* show. He blogs at his websites: <http://davidswanson.org> and <http://warisacrimetime.org>. The title of his presentation at Peacestock 2012 will be *Abolishing War: One Last Step to Take*.

Days events include:
speakers; workshops; noon lunchwagon; evening supper included; beautiful gardens; free camping but no hookups; music; bonfire.
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Cost: \$30 per person, \$50 per couple, students \$10; no one refused entry for inability to pay

Event location: Windbeam Farm
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For more information: www.peacestockvfp.org
Bill Habedank 651-388-7733 or 651-764-1866 David Harris 651-388-5863
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