



## Member Profile: Winfield Sample

by Becky Luening

Winfield "Win" Sample's father was an English-American who came to the U.S. to study chemistry and then served with U.S. troops in World War I. Trilingual in English, French and German, during the war he was a translator for prisoners of war. He married an American woman in the early 1920s and Win was born in 1925; Win's sister came along five years later. Apparently, the marriage was doomed from the beginning, and they called it quits after eight years. Win says his mother confessed to him on his 50th birthday that she wished he'd never been born. Tragically, his sister died at the age of 35 of a gunshot wound to the head. She was pregnant at the time, and although it was declared a suicide, Win has his doubts.

Win grew up in Pasadena, California. He graduated from high school on June 30, 1943 and was inducted into the U.S. Army Infantry on July 8. It was a common fate for young men of that generation to be drafted, and five of Win's friends were sent overseas at the same time. Only three of the five returned home.

When he first set foot in Europe it was on the shores of France. Win's division used LSI (Landing Ship Infantry) boats. Unlike the infamous beach landing at Normandy, they didn't go in under fire, but they did get their feet wet.

Win experienced heavy combat at the Battle of the Bulge. Although he can't prove it, he has always believed that the Germans broke through Allied lines as a result of a grand screw-up on the part of General Patton. As the Americans pushed the German troops east and the German, in a concentrated effort, pushed back hard in the north, American supply trucks delivered ammo, but no food. The lack of food didn't matter so much, because in combat soldiers are energized by adrenaline, but the ammunition supply ran low in spite of deliveries and eventually they lost ground.

A certain percentage of medics served in his division, but too few for the heaviest battles. Everyone was required to carry a packet containing bandages and sulfa, the antibiotic of the day. When a fellow soldier was wounded in battle, Win sprinkled sulfa powder in his wound and then wrapped it with a bandage to help reduce bleeding. Win has always been squeamish around blood, and he remembers having to stop to vomit in the middle of this operation. "Psychologically," says Win, "war is a nightmare" during which the mind becomes

narrowly focused on one thing: survival.

Further along, just a few months before the war's end, Win and another man were assigned to scope out a group of buildings on a hill outside the German city of Ordruf. What they found there was a concentration camp that had apparently been vacated by the Germans just a few hours before their arrival. A few emaciated prisoners were still alive, but in the middle of a bare space was a big pit, and it was filled with probably hundreds of bodies of people who had been recently shot, and the bodies were sprinkled with a layer of lime.

Win at that moment was focused on his own survival, since he fully expected to find Germans still hiding at the camp, and

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*"Psychologically,  
war is a nightmare."*

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he recalls experiencing those bodies as "just so many pieces of cordwood," devoid of life. He and his partner reported to their commander what they had found. As the group moved on to the next town, he just shoved whatever emotions he might have been feeling. But he carried the memory of that pit in his subconscious, along with the images of the emaciated, skeletal bodies of the survivors, and a few years later, after seeing the movie *The Young Lions*, a realistic dramatization of a similar situation, his memories surfaced and for three nights he was unable to sleep. He cites his personal experience as an extreme example of how people respond to horror or trauma by suppressing their memories. He has since dealt with these horrible memories, having processed them over many years. But to this day, whenever he sees a thin, bony person, Win thinks of those holocaust survivors at Ordruf.

At this point in the war the German troops were quickly being pushed back. As the American troops moved from town to town, bringing supplies and ammo with them, they sometimes stopped to rest for a few days before moving on. In Ordruf they slept in the houses of Germans that had been chased out. As Win wandered around the town with a couple of his buddies, he had two interesting experiences.

Out of curiosity, they walked into a small store. Two

*continued on page 7...*

# Nguyen Van Quy, Named Plaintiff in Agent Orange Lawsuit on Behalf of Vietnamese Victims, Dies

*by Merle Ratner, Vietnam Agent Orange Relief & Responsibility Campaign*

***Mr. Quy was presented with a Purple Heart Medal awarded to U.S. veterans' leader and Vietnam combat veteran David Cline at a ceremony in New York City***

NEW YORK – Mr. Nguyen Van Quy, a named plaintiff in the lawsuit brought on behalf of victims of the Agent Orange sprayed by the U.S. during the war in Vietnam was buried on July 9, 2007 in his hometown of Hai Phong, Vietnam. Mr. Quy died one week after returning from a speaking tour in the U.S. He suffered from stomach and lung cancer as well as liver illness due to his exposure to Agent Orange while serving in the Peoples Army of Vietnam along the Ho Chi Minh Trail from 1972-75. He is survived by his wife, Vu Thi Loan, and his son and daughter, Nguyen Quang Trung and Nguyen Thi Thuy Nga, both of whom are physically and developmentally disabled due to Mr. Quy's exposure to the dioxin contained in Agent Orange.

On June 18th, Mr. Quy, as part of a delegation of Agent Orange victims, attended a court hearing on the lawsuit which charges the U.S. chemical companies that profited from the manufacture of Agent Orange—including Dow Chemical, Monsanto, and 35 others—with knowingly providing the U.S. government with a poisonous agent to be sprayed indiscriminately on civilians and seeks compensation, clean-up and medical monitoring and support. The case was initiated by the Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin, which represents Vietnam's more than three million victims of Agent Orange. The delegation visited New York, Washington DC, Chicago and San Francisco and met with U.S. veterans suffering from the affects of Agent Orange and other concerned citizens.

During a meeting at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Labor Center in New York on June 16th, David Cline, the former President and current National Spokesperson of Veterans For Peace and a 100% disabled Vietnam combat veteran, gave the Purple Heart he had received for his service in Vietnam to Nguyen Van Quy, saying, "We are brothers." Cline reaffirmed his determination to achieve justice and compensation for Quy and all Vietnamese Agent Orange victims. "Along with American veterans, it is time that the Vietnamese be compensated for the terrible damage done to them and their land from the use of these chemical weapons," said Cline.

U.S. Vietnam veterans have received some measure of compensation for their exposure to dioxin through a court set-

tlement with the chemical manufacturers and Veterans Administration service connected disability for Vietnam veterans with more than thirteen different health conditions.

"We are deeply saddened by the death of our friend Nguyen Van Quy who dedicated the last months of his life to fighting for justice for Vietnam's Agent Orange victims. Even as he suffered tremendously, Quy expressed optimism that, with the support of U.S. veterans and all the people of good



Nguyen Van Quy sits with his son Nguyen Quang Trung, left, and his daughter Ngyuen Thi Thuy Nga at his house in Hai Phong in July 2004. Nguyen Van Quy believed his cancer and his children's birth defects were caused by exposure to Agent Orange.

will he had met in the U.S., he and his children would be able to obtain compensation for their injuries. While Mr. Quy has lost his personal battle with dioxin, his wife and two children still remain among the many others who cry out for justice," said Merle E. Ratner, a Co-Coordinator of The Vietnam Agent Orange Relief & Responsibility Campaign which sponsored the tour.

The Vietnam Agent Orange Relief & Responsibility Campaign is also pressing for U.S. government compensation for Vietnamese victims. For many years, the United States has recognized international laws of war that outlaw the use of poison or poisoned weapons. The Hague Convention of 1907, ratified by the U.S. Senate, contained a blanket prohibition on the use of weapons calculated to cause unnecessary suffering. Subsequent conventions, including the Geneva Conventions of 1925 and 1949, have reinforced these prohibitions.

Please contact the Vietnam Agent Orange and Relief and Responsibility Campaign at [www.vn-agentorange.org](http://www.vn-agentorange.org) for additional information.

*[Article submitted by Becky Luening.]*



## Court: VA Must Pay Agent Orange Victims

by Scott Lindlaw, Associated Press



SAN FRANCISCO—An appeals court chastised the Department of Veterans Affairs on Thursday and ordered the agency to pay retroactive benefits to Vietnam War veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange and contracted a form of leukemia.

“The performance of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs has contributed substantially to our sense of national shame,” the opinion from the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals read.

It was not immediately known how much the department would have to pay under the order or how many veterans would be affected.

VA spokesman Phil Budahn said late Thursday that officials were reviewing the ruling, and declined further comment.

The VA agreed in 2003 to extend benefits to Vietnam vets diagnosed with chronic lymphocytic leukemia, known as CLL. U.S. troops had sprayed 20 million gallons of Agent Orange and other herbicides over parts of South Vietnam and Cambodia in the 1960s and ‘70s to clear dense jungle, and researchers later linked CLL to Agent Orange.

But the VA did not re-examine previous claims from veterans suffering from the ailment, nor did it pay them retroactive benefits, which was at the heart of the latest dispute.

Thursday’s opinion was on a technical matter involving whether a lower court had properly interpreted a landmark agreement in 1991 on benefits, stemming from a class-action lawsuit originally filed in 1986.

The appeals court sided with veterans groups who said the veterans were entitled to retroactive benefits.

“We would hope that this litigation will now end, that our government will now respect the legal obligations it undertook in the consent decree some 16 years ago, that obstruc-

tionist bureaucratic opposition will now cease, and that our veterans will finally receive the benefits to which they are morally and legally entitled,” Judge Stephen Reinhardt wrote in the court’s opinion.

Richard Spataro, a lawyer with the National Veterans Legal Services Program, said Thursday’s ruling could finally halt years of legal battles—if the VA does not appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

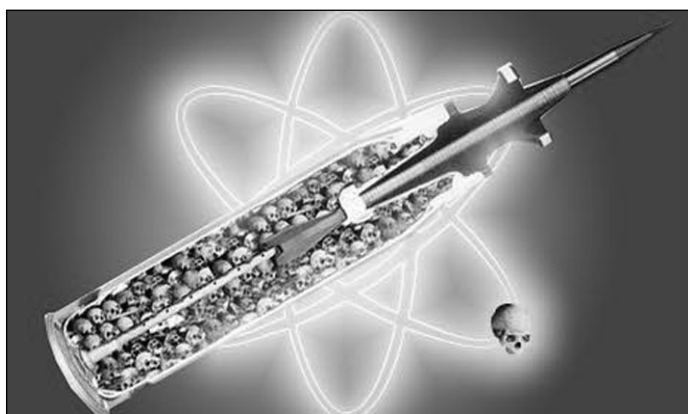
Spataro said if researchers link other disabilities to Agent Orange the decision will prevent the VA from denying retroactive benefits for those veterans, too.

[Article submitted by Fred Hummel.]

## Updated Depleted Uranium Info on VFP56 Website

by Becky Luening, Media Committee Chair

The DU/WMD Committee recently updated their section of our chapter’s website with information about California’s new DU law, the Veterans Health and Safety Act of 2006 (VHSA). Although passage of the law was seen as a victory, there is still much consciousness-raising to be done about the consequences of use of DU weapons, and the need for veterans to be tested for exposure after returning home. With that in mind, the DU/WMD Committee has made available several resources to help with education and publicity. Included on the website are an informational brochure in MS-Word format, an informational slide show, a VHSA brochure in PDF format, and a QuickTime-movie public service announcement about the VHSA. Please visit [vfp56.org](http://vfp56.org) to view these resources. The brochures, of course, may be printed and shared with others offline.



NOTE: We have found that older browsers may have trouble downloading the slide show and PSA, and it will be helpful to receive feedback about people’s success in accessing these resources. You may email feedback about this to [bluening@humboldt1.com](mailto:bluening@humboldt1.com).



# VFP and the '07 Reggae Event

*by Peter Aronson, VFP Chapter 56 Member*

When I think of the community division over the Reggae Festival this year I'm reminded about the experience with any fledgling organization. At first a few connected volunteers, who often also work other jobs, do the work of organizing the group, its interests and actions. As the work and scale increase the group assumes greater financial and other responsibilities. Paid staff replaces volunteers and the organization may incorporate for tax and other organizational advantages.

One could suggest the organizers of Reggae On The River (ROTR) traversed this ground. What was initially a set of local community volunteers, people tightly connected to the resources needed to plan for a larger event each year, evolved into a production company taking responsibility for what exceeds volunteer help. Some elements of producing an event of this scale had become critical and precluded a more informal style. People Productions (PP) assumed responsibility for producing what the Mateel Community Center (MCC) owned but could not execute.

Regardless of PP's politics and plans for the future, or the many rumors that criticize both parties in this division, they are the organization that produced ROTR for the past 12 years. The MCC own the property rights for the name ROTR, and applied for the permits but has never produced a single show. The coordinators have always been central in making Reggae happen since the event's inception.

The current 75–80 coordinators who signed a January 12, 2007 resolution describing their detailed vote of no confidence in the MCC BOD (for outsourcing another production company and terminating mediation) unanimously choose to not work for the out-of-area, untested, production company proposed by MCC.

Some of the current characterizations of the MCC/PP division includes suggesting that PP is "a corporate takeover" of ROTR and an assault on the financial and ethical integrity of the MCC. Other community members defend the integrity, honesty, and success of PP and refute suggestions of any impropriety. Pick a side if you wish, but insist on documentation of what you are being told. All the rest is unsubstantiated gab.

The '06–'07 food vendor coordinators, so important to our VFP chapter last year, feel strongly in favor of supporting PP and Reggae Rising (RR). The same support to PP/RR comes with the vast majority of the community coordinators who are

essential for executing a safe, consistent, event. For me, this is compelling.

At our chapter meeting of April 5, 2007, I presented a version of this division and asked for group direction. Consensus was the reggae planning group was given the authority to act on behalf of the chapter, and that "it didn't matter" which producer produced the event, our VFP work would benefit by our doing '07.

Legal challenges may still preclude an '07 event. If so, legal arrangements will be made to refund the cancelled event. If we withdraw from the event at this late date we assume the financial liabilities and the many other ethical issues associated with breaking our own commitments, of which there are many.

When this issue is discussed by concerned chapter members, I wish to go on record as strongly in favor of completing our commitments by vending at RR, and pressing for anyone with enough concern to suggest VFP withdraw from this event now, or in the future, to present evidence to support their recommendations.

Our chapter may wish to re-visit criteria we choose to implement when participating in actions and events. We all want to feel right about what we do.



VFP Chapter 56 plans to serve chili rellenos, carne asada tacos, seitan asada tacos, black beans, rice, possibly green salad, and cheesecake at our fundraising food booth at Reggae Rising on the weekend of August 3-5, 2007. For more info, contact either Peter Aronson at 442-3009 or Gordy Anderson at 498-5889.



# ON TRACK: The Brian Willson Story

A new, Nevada Shakespeare Company original work-in-progress



PHOTO: JOCK McDONALD

S. Brian Willson dancing, 1988. September 1st marks 20 years since Brian was run over while protesting U.S. arms shipments to Central America at the Concord (Calif.) Naval Weapons Station on September 1, 1987.

*A multi-media performance event  
based on the life of S. Brian Willson*

PREMIERING:

**Sat., Sept. 1st at 8:00 pm**

in the Carlo Theatre at Dell' Arte  
International School of Physical Theatre  
131 "H" St., in Blue Lake

WITH A SECOND PERFORMANCE:

**Sun., Sept. 2nd at 2:00 pm**

preceded by an 11 a.m. group bike ride  
from Arcata to Blue Lake, followed by brunch,  
led by Brian on his 3-wheeled hand-cycle

**On Track** is an original work authored and directed by acclaimed playwright Jeanmarie Simpson of Nevada Shakespeare Company (Reno, Nev.), who wrote and performed the powerful play, *A Single Woman*, about life-long pacifist and first U.S. Congresswoman, Jeannette Rankin (1880-1973).

The audience is invited to participate in a post-performance forum with Brian and the cast, which includes Judd Nelson and Kamala Lopez.

**Judd Nelson** plays the adult Brian Willson. Judd Nelson was born in Portland, Maine, 1959. His parents were liberal lawyers and Judd studied philosophy in college. In Hollywood some of his most notable movie roles have been: *The Breakfast Club* (1985), *St. Elmo's Fire* (1985), *Dear America: Letters Home From Vietnam* (1987), *New Jack City* (1991, 2005), *The*

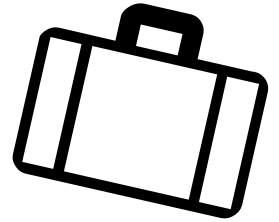
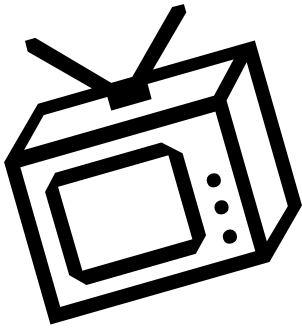
*Caretaker* (2007), and the TV series, *Suddenly Susan*, 1996-98.

**Kamala Lopez** is a film and television actor, producer, director and editor who has starred in such well known movies as *Born in East L.A.*, *Deep Cover* and *The Burning Season* (co-starring the late Raúl Juliá). Lopez-Dawson graduated from Yale University with degrees in Philosophy and Theatre Studies. She is currently directing a film adaptation of Nevada Shakespeare Company's *A Single Woman*.

**On Track** is a pay-what-you-can event (\$10 recommended minimum) hosted by Dell' Arte. The Carlo Theatre seats only 120, thus reservations are advised and can be made through Dell' Arte by calling 707-668-5663, ext. 20.

A portion of the proceeds will go to Humboldt Bay Veterans For Peace Chapter 56.



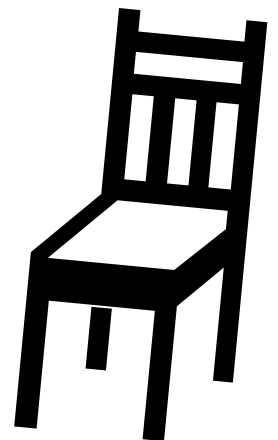
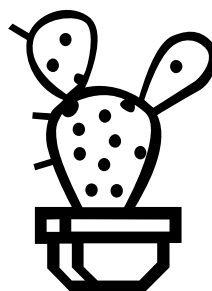


# WANTED

## Stuff to Sell at VFP-56 September Rummage Sale



Hey everyone! It's time to start going through all your stuff in preparation for the second annual VFP-56 rummage sale being organized by Laura Simpson. The actual date is yet to be determined, but Laura will begin accepting donations at her house at the beginning of September. Working appliances, tools, books, furniture, musical instruments, sporting equipment, clothing, jewelry, dishes, knick-knacks, doo-dads, brick-a-brack, etc.... (If you can suggest a price at time of donation, that will be helpful.) Call Laura anytime after Sept. 1st to arrange for drop-off: 839-7624.



## VFP Profile: Win Sample ...cont'd from page 1

concentration camp survivors happened to enter the store a few minutes later, and as one of them reached down to touch a piece of food (they were starving), the store owner yelled, "Nein!" Win immediately responded by taking his gun off his shoulder and yelling "Yes!" Both of the prisoners proceeded to take some food, which made Win feel real good.

As Win walked around the town he found that many of the middle-aged German civilians could speak English. (Although Win had studied German language in high school, his vocabulary consisted of only about ten words.) When he asked the locals about the nearby camp on the hill, the responses were very interesting. Some denied knowing of the camp at all. "What camp?" they said. Others dismissed the evil of the concentration camp, remarking, "Oh, it was only Jews."

Now Win could not help notice that these nice, English-speaking, European folks were very much like people he'd known back home in Pasadena. This left him with a tremendous intellectual puzzle, because he knew people in the U.S. couldn't have done this. Not until the 1960s, while watching the civil rights struggle on television, did he see the error of his thinking, realizing, "We *can* do that." In fact, he had an uncle who lived in Tennessee who very likely would have supported Sheriff Jim Clark, the chief of police in Selma, Alabama who used dogs and cattle prods to attack African-American citizens who were standing up for their rights.

It was a sobering realization for Win that the beliefs he had always held about his fellow white Americans "were so damn wrong." While giving this interview he wryly observed that, just like George W., Hitler was also elected twice. He sadly noted that hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have been and still are being killed due to the U.S. war and occupation.

Win says his experience in the U.S. Army instilled in him a gross dislike of the military mentality in general, a psychological attitude that he likes to call the "ladder of fear": Out of fear, the private says yes to the corporal, the corporal says yes to the sergeant...and so on, up to the top. Hierarchical thinking really makes Win bristle, so much so that he had to speak up at June's VFP meeting when he felt that introducing ourselves as "members" or "associates" implied that some VFP members were more important than others. He really objects to any kind of ranking.

His dislike for authority made Win a gentle parent. He is proud to say he instilled little fear in his children. He remembers his daughter, at 3 years old, standing with her hands on her hips during an argument with him, proclaiming, "*I live here too!*" It made him happy to know he hadn't frightened her into submission and she felt free to tell him to go to hell. He had similar experiences with his son.

When Win himself was 8 years old, going into third grade,

he was classified by his teacher as mentally retarded because he couldn't read out loud. Dyslexia interferes with his eye-to-mouth functioning to this day. Luckily, his parents moved at that time and interrupted whatever intervention may have stymied his elementary education. Later in life, after leaving the army, he attended university and earned engineering degrees. After receiving an A in his first calculus class, he says he would have loved to shove his grade slip under that third-grade teacher's nose.

Win enjoyed a 38-year career as a mechanical engineer, the first half employed by companies and the second half self-employed as a consultant. He enjoyed working for customers on both coasts, and got to spend time in New York, New Jersey, and Florida among other places, which broadened his view of our country. In 1990, he happily retired at age 65.

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Win laughs when explaining that his first marriage ended the way many marriages end: his wife left him for a woman 20 years younger than himself. His partner of 12 years, Maya McKenzie, who is also a member of Veterans For Peace, met him at Unitarian Fellowship. They were delighted to discover that they had both attended the same elementary school in Pasadena in sixth grade, albeit in different classes. Win and Maya discovered VFP through Unitarian connections as well, being good friends with Bill and June Thompson. Bill told him about the group and when Win attended his first meeting he felt right at home. "Politically, we're all on the same side," he remarks.

Win has a daughter and son from his first marriage. His daughter lives in Florida, and is about to move to Washington, DC, and his son lives nearby in Eureka. Neither have children, which Win thinks is a good thing. "This is an unhappy world," he says. "We're in for both political and economic chaos and it's a bad situation to bring kids into. It's a gross imbalance when 5% of the population consumes 25% of the world's resources." Win subscribes to the Buddhist perspective that all problems are fundamentally based on ego. He is not so clear about what one should do in response, although he has found some good organizations to support, including VFP, Common Cause, and the ACLU. He reassures me that if he discovers the answer to the world's problems, he will call at midnight to tell me.





**Veterans For Peace  
Humboldt Bay  
Chapter 56**

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**LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Rob Hepburn, Steve Stamnes  
Judi Rose, Linda Sorter  
Jim Sorter, Steve Sottong  
Gordon Anderson

**STANDING COMMITTEES**

**Weapons of Mass  
Destruction/DU:**  
Peter Aronson

**General Store:** Doug Smith

**Media:** Becky Luening

**Veterans Education and**

**Outreach Project:**  
Carl Stancil & Jon Reisdorf

# LET US HEAR FROM YOU!

If you would like to submit an article, opinion, comment or response to anything you have read that might interest the members of VFP-56, please email it to [turtldncer@aol.com](mailto:turtldncer@aol.com) in Word format, or mail to Jim Sorter at 1762 Buttermilk Lane, Arcata, CA 95521. Submissions will be included on a first come basis until the newsletter is full. Late arriving submissions will be archived for future issues.

## - Food for Thought -

*"Many people would sooner die than think. In fact they do."* – Bertrand Russell

*"The hottest places in Hell are reserved for those who at a time of crisis proclaim their neutrality."* – Dante

*"If we could read the secret history of our enemies, we should find in each person's life sorrow and suffering enough to disarm all hostility."* – Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

*"It's not enough just to believe in something: You have to work, and the future belongs to the people who are passionate and do the work."* – Paul Wellstone, (Sen. MN, 1944-2002)



**Veterans For Peace Chapter 56**  
P.O. Box 532  
Bayside, CA 95524

## **Next VFP 56 Meeting**

**Thursday, August 2, 2007**

**7:00–9:00 pm**

**Marsh Commons**

**101 H Street, Arcata**

**Info: 707-826-7124**