



VETERANS FOR PEACE
HUMBOLDT BAY
CHAPTER 56

THE FOGHORN

JULY
2016

“Cutting Through the Fog of War”

GOLDEN RULE SETS SAIL ONCE AGAIN

To All:.....:

Tuesday May 31st., 0630, The Golden Rule cast off the city dock and motored out of Humboldt Bay. The crew this year is Captain Norm Peterson, 1st. mate Kent Mitchell, Ships Carpenter and crewman Michael Gonzalez, and our beautiful Oceanography major from Humboldt State University, Victoria Sheldon. Destination, The Columbia River, Portland and eventually many points North. The cruise this year will be almost five months long. We don't expect to see her again until mid October when she'll return to Humboldt Bay for another winter and the crew saying "fix it Chuck".

This last winter we accomplished many things most of which I've already written about, however in the last month we've installed a new, workable head with a holding tank and a real door that latches from the inside, imagine that girls... Michael put in new latches on the butterfly hatch, with new weather striping that should solve the small leaks we have experienced in the past. There is now a back rest attached to the aft life line so the Helmsman may actually lean back in comfort while on watch. The Mizzen mast has a new boot so no more water running down into the bilges. There is a new light on the top of the Main mast (running light) that is like all lights on board an LED, actually two LED's. The Gaff jaw's have been reshaped, thanks to Captain Ed Fracker. The best change is our brand new, 6 man life raft with all the bells and whistles in it's very own fiber glass case mounted on the aft deck port side. This is a huge improvement over what we had last year. Thanks to VFP Chapter 56, Steve Sottong and Peter Aronson who donated the much needed money to make the purchase and ensure the safety of the crew of The Golden Rule... The raft is good for 2 years before needing to be opened up back at the factory and all the water and food stuff replaced with fresh stuff and batteries also must be checked, recharged or replaced.

I'm probably going to be sued for plagiarism for what I'm about to say, but here goes anyway. I recently read in the Lost Coast Outpost (a local Internet news outlet here in Humboldt) an article written by Delia-Bense-Kang (head of The Surf Riders Association and The Northcoast Environmental Center) in which she reminds us that The Golden Rule was the inspiration for the peace vessels Greenpeace and Sea Shepards. Delia

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goes on to quote Libby Toning aka Zippo, our committee secretary, talking about how the original Captain Burt Bigelow had said in 1958, that all of the people associated with this project were considered Plank owners, that is members of the crew. They are all just as important as the people that actually sailed from port to port. This project has spent over a quarter of a million dollars in the last 6 years to achieve what it is doing today and it is finally doing what it was meant to be doing.

Respectfully submitted by Chuck DeWitt,
Restoration Coordinator for The Golden Rule
Project.....

NEWS FLASH

Golden Rule Is Hit by a Police Boat!

by Harvey Wasserman

The good ship Golden Rule is a miracle of the modern peace movement. In its iconic quest for global peace and ecological sanity, it has been refloated, revived ... and now hit by a police boat!!!

The boat was first launched from a dock near Los Angeles in 1958 by Quaker activists intending to sail into the Marshall Islands to stop nuclear weapons testing.

Among those present was the legendary singer John Raitt, star of the stage shows Carousel and Oklahoma, and leading man in the film Pajama Game. His daughter, multiple-Grammy-winner Bonnie Raitt, has carried on the tradition of No Nukes commitment throughout her stellar career.

The 1950s Golden Rule crew of four were arrested before they could get into the test zone. One sailor for peace, Jim Peck, contracted tuberculosis while imprisoned in Honolulu.

But their cause was picked up by another boat, the Hiroshima Phoenix, which did affect the testing. The entire effort contributed mightily to a global disarmament movement that won a lasting atmospheric test ban in 1963. Millions of living creatures (possibly including you) have been saved from death and disease by the halt in radioactive fallout from the US and USSR's flood of bombs.

The Golden Rule subsequently sank in Humboldt Bay, California. But in 2010 it was rescued by Leroy Zerlang. A crew led by Chuck DeWitt of Veterans for Peace spent five years restoring her to seaworthiness, and the Golden Rule was relaunched on June 20, 2015.

On June 8, 2016, the reborn Golden Rule sailed into Portland, Oregon, to "greet" Fleet Week—an annual maritime invasion of US and Canadian warships meant to put on a public display of military might. This year the warships include a PT boat and numerous other armed vessels.

On Thursday, June 9, the Golden Rule set sail around 1:00 p.m. to travel up the Willamette River. The drizzle was steady. The purpose was to show our colors for peace amidst the fleet week warships.

With the ship moving by motor power, the crew unfurled large red sails featuring its peace sign and the Veterans for Peace logo. Through the gray, chilly chop, the ship sailed peacefully around the men of war. There was no intent to stage a blockade or to do civil disobedience.

In the steady rain, podcasting via cell phone from the ship's deck, the "Solartopia Green Power & Wellness Show" was wet but

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sustainable. It featured activists Helen Jaccard and Mimi German, who discussed the ship's history and the movement in the northwest to shut the WPPS2 nuclear power plant, the region's last operating commercial reactor, which is losing tens of millions of dollars per year.

Finally, while preparing to sail back to dock, the Golden Rule idled behind a drawbridge, waiting for it to rise. Suddenly a Washington County patrol boat with a two-man crew came along our starboard side. The Golden Rule had been peacefully boarded at least once during the day, and there was extensive, cordial communication between us and various police patrols.

But while inexplicably floating right next to the Golden Rule, the Washington County boat suddenly gunned its engine. Neither its lights nor sirens were on. As it turned sharply away, the sharp corner of its rear smacked into the hull of the Golden Rule, about a yard directly below my feet.

"The Sheriff's Patrol boat made an emergency maneuver to avoid an impending serious collision," says an official press release. "The port aft of the Sheriff's Patrol boat collided with the starboard of the sailboat." The Sheriff's office says the damage was "minor."

In a separate statement, the crew of the Golden Rule called the damage "cosmetic" and said, "We were unintentionally 'hit' by incompetent Sheriff's deputies."

Standing directly above the point where the police boat's tail smacked into our hull, it wasn't clear to me what the two officers meant to do, or why they had sailed in choppy waters to sit within just a few feet of us. The officer in the back of the boat in stood in clear view about fifty feet from me. He showed no emotion when his boat hit the Golden Rule. I could not see the driver.

But activists working with the Golden Rule cite ongoing problems. "They decided to come

up on us without any warning or signals," says Jaccard, of Veterans for Peace. "They were not in control of their boat."

"It was an act of aggression," says German, of No Nukes NW. "They fucking rammed The Golden Rule peace boat!"

Meanwhile, the ship will be sailing throughout the West Coast promoting the cause of peace.

Some 58 years after its maiden voyage, this legendary little boat is once again at center stage in the global struggle against the nuclear madness.

In a nation bristling with atomic weapons and reactors, where innocent civilians are regularly gunned down en masse, this graceful vessel represents an ark of civility, nonviolence and hope.

Six decades after it first helped stop a bomb-testing program that spewed deadly radiation throughout the atmosphere and threatened all life on Earth, the Golden Rule is back to say that peace is possible ... and essential to our survival.

Next VFP56 meeting will be held
on Thursday, July 7th at
7:00 PM.
Meeting will be held at 24 Uni-
tarian Fellowship Way, Bayside,
Jacoby Creek Road. Veterans and
non-veterans are more than wel-
come to come and help us dialogue
about what we together can do to
bring about peace in this complex
world.



NEW FLASH! WHITE HOUSE INTERCEDES IN ARMY AWOL CASE

BY JON REISDORF

I received amazing news this week. Two of our GI Rights Hotline clients were improperly taken from Ft. Sill where they had turned themselves in to be administratively separated from the army. Normally unless there are additional charges if you are in your first 180 days this only takes a couple weeks at most. You get a an ELS or more probably an Other Than Honorable in lieu of courts martial. The LT. Col. in charge of AIT training at Ft. Leonard Wood (LW) had other ideas. He wanted these young men and sent two drill sergeants without orders to Sill to pick them up. Leonard Wood has a dark history of abuse of soldiers. Still taking two AWOL soldiers back for punishment and recycling is very unusual even for Leonard Wood.

Our counselors learned later there was considerable push-back at Sill but the drill sergeants got their men. Once back at Leonard Wood they were escorted to Trial Defense at Leonard Wood without charges being read. Again unusual. Later they would receive the following charges: AWOL, Desertion, Conspiracy. Desertion gets dropped later.

While waiting one week for their next appointment at TDS they see an opportunity to communicate outside Ft. LW. Thursday, they send a message to whitehouse.gov telling their commander in chief of their entire story from abuse at Basic Training, to holdover, to AWOL, to Ft. Sill, to Ft. LW.

Friday morning the base Commanding General (two star) receives a phone call from the White House. The two recruits are to be discharged "immediately...today". The two charges are dropped. One pending charge is waived.

The two privates are escorted around the base by their Captain to pick up all necessary forms and meet with the prosecuting JAG. They later report to their Hotline counselors "high ranking officers were literally running around and between offices" to complete all paperwork.

When the soldiers arrived at each office and their Captain announced who they were, everyone at desks jumped up and made stuff happen. Friday, just before midnight, they leave

base for the airport with their DD214s, a general under honorable discharge, and paid transportation; both are now at home in Ohio.

Jag now says the request for handover from Ft. Sill was "illegal". Ft. Sill legal had "pushed" to keep them there. The proper paperwork for transfer was ignored. There was no required form 4187 at the time of the handover. Ft. Sill and Ft. LW JAGs apparently had a tense negotiation the morning they were handed over to the the drill sergeants.

The army recruits were informed that as a result of their phone calls by the end of next week the following people will be reassigned or retired: Their LT. Col. the XO (1st Lt), and the CSM (command sergeant major).

This report is an edited version of an email filed by Dawn Blanken, formerly a counselor with the Arcata Node of the GI Rights Hotline, and now on the Board of Directors of the Hotline.

The San Francisco Bay Area Federal Executive Board recognizes the Eureka VA Clinic's Town Hall Council Team for a Customer Service Award

In the May 3, 2016, awards program book, *Feds Soaring High*, the executive board proclaimed:

"The Eureka VA Clinic Town Hall Council Team ... was formed in 2015 to improve communication between Eureka VA Clinic staff and the local veteran community. The group of dedicated VA employees and veterans meet biweekly to discuss ideas for improving the clinic environment and ensuring that Eureka veterans have access to the care they need. Since establishing the Town Hall Council, the Eureka VA Clinic has seen an improvement in patient satisfaction and a decrease in patient complaints.

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This dedicated team works hard to bring the best care possible to Eureka veterans.”

The San Francisco Bay Area Federal Employees of the Year Awards Program recognizes outstanding federal employees in the San Francisco and Sacramento region. Nominees demonstrated exceptional and noteworthy performance and results, outstanding leadership, innovative approaches to assignments, and/or continuous improvement of procedures and processes in one of several categories during 2014–2015.

“This is a big deal!” exclaimed Rogan Rice, RN, VA Clinic Director, at the June 7, 2016, Eureka Town Hall meeting. He went on to explain that there are, literally, hundreds or more nominees. To be singled out for an award is a significant honor.

Your Veterans For Peace representative on the Town Hall Council is:

N. S. ‘Nate’ Lomba, PE, SE (Ret.)

He would like to hear your suggestions for improving VA Clinic services

He can be reached at: NSLpe@reninet.com

Little By Little

by Daniel Shea

I don’t know when my opinion about war changed, there’s no date, time or place certain, it just happened. It didn’t happen suddenly like some epiphany, it was little by little, more like it revealed itself from something deep inside, something that was always there, but silent in its ignorance not knowing how to express itself.

It was more like an ember placed there by a mother’s love and embrace. Whispered cliches of “Love thy Neighbor as Thyself” and “Thou shalt not kill” tenets of Bibles, Torahs, Korans and plain common sense.

These motherly pronouncements were part of a moral fiber that kept this internal spark fueled just enough for it to smolder.

Whispers fade as children grow older, play is loud with laughter and screaming, then comes the concentration of radios, movies and television voices telling you how lucky you are to live in this great nation and the noise of the world like a mighty storm drowns out that now faint lesson of love.

Teachers teach American Exceptionalism, Eurocentric history, our Country Right or Wrong while we stand at attention reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Parents like my own were living the American Dream, struggling from poor working class renters to owning a home, a car and credit at the local grocery store.

I was the oldest of six kids, three boys & three girls. We lived in a two bedroom house and by the time I started high school we outgrew it. We were like the Jeffersons (for those of you to young to know, it is a reference to a Black Family television series) moving on up from the hood to better neighborhood.

“Better” is relative, our house was bigger with room for all of us, but the schools were not much better. The high school had its bullies and was self segregated by class and race. Teachers were mediocre and school bored me, so I dropped out and went to work.

The Vietnam War was raging on, the draft was licking at my heels. Work was hard labor and I saw no future on the horizon, the American Dream was in decline, so with abandonment I join the United States Marines.

You want to know what Fascism is like, join the marines, bootcamp will kick the Democratic shit out of you. I witnessed enough corruption, cruelty and racism while at Camp Pendleton.

Then came Vietnam. The war was a backdrop to firefights, snipers, mortar rounds and boobytraps, close calls with death, of which others - names long forgotten- were not so fortunate.

I often expected to see my own name on the Vietnam Memorial Wall as evidence that I too had been kissed by a sniper’s bullet, or planted in the ground by a boobytrap, now just a lost soul walking the earth dreaming up a surreal life refusing to accept my own end.

October 1969 I returned home to a civilian life, in short order fell in love and by June of 1972 was married. Vietnam was a distant shadow flickering in some deep cavern of my subconscious far from my reality. I had left the war, but the war never left me and on December 16th of 1977 it came rushing back into my life to wound my son with birth anomalies related to Agent Orange/Dioxin.

I was given three good years with Casey before the war ghosts of the past wrestled him from my arms, as he took

his last breath, leaving me, his mother Arlene and his little sister Harmony to cling to each other as we cried out “WHY?”

Shouldn’t Casey’s name be inscribed on the Vietnam Memorial

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Wall along with my own, because a part of me ended when he died and that ember almost blew out.

Not right away but something was growing inside of me, I began to get beyond my own grief, to see that of the Vietnamese and the grief that all wars cause.

Mother's early ember of wisdom now began to catch fire, no longer flickering in the shadows but a sun shining a light, turning night into day and chasing the lies that sent me and so many others to a monstrous war that should never have been.

So for every name on that Dark Wall and all the names missing, my son's, the Vietnamese, the 22 veterans suicides a day, the Agent Orange victims and all the families who flood of tears, like mine ask WHY? Why Vietnam? Why Afghanistan? Why Iraq?

Why Any War?
I say No More!
Thou Shall Not Kill!
Thou Shall Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself!

Let these pearls of wisdom burn bright in your hearts and its roar, silence drums that beat for war.

Silencing America as it Prepares for War

By John Pilger

Returning to the United States in an election year, I am struck by the silence. I have covered four presidential campaigns, starting with 1968; I was with Robert Kennedy when he was shot and I saw his assassin, preparing to kill him. It was a baptism in the American way, along with the salivating violence of the Chicago police at the Democratic Party's rigged convention. The great counter revolution had begun.

The first to be assassinated that year, Martin Luther King, had dared link the suffering of African-Americans and the people of Vietnam. When Janis Joplin sang, "Freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose", she spoke perhaps unconsciously for millions of America's victims in faraway places.

"We lost 58,000 young soldiers in Vietnam, and they died defending your freedom. Now don't you forget it." So said a National Parks Service guide as I filmed last week at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington. He was addressing a school party of young teenagers in bright orange T-shirts. As if by rote, he inverted the truth about Vietnam into an unchallenged lie.

The millions of Vietnamese who died and were maimed and poisoned and dispossessed by the American invasion have no historical place in young minds, not to mention the estimated 60,000 veterans who took their own lives. A friend of mine, a marine who became a paraplegic in Vietnam, was often asked, "Which side did you fight on?"

A few years ago, I attended a popular exhibition called "The Price of Freedom" at the venerable Smithsonian Institution in Washington. The lines of ordinary people, mostly children shuffling through a Santa's grotto of revisionism, were dispensed a variety of lies: the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki saved "a million lives"; Iraq was "liberated [by] air strikes of unprecedented precision". The theme was unerringly heroic: only Americans pay the price of freedom.

The 2016 election campaign is remarkable not only for the rise of Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders but also for the resilience of an enduring silence about a murderous self-bestowed divinity. A third of the members of the United Nations have felt Washington's boot, overturning governments, subverting democracy, imposing blockades and boycotts. Most of the presidents responsible have been liberal – Truman, Kennedy, Johnson, Carter, Clinton, Obama.

The breathtaking record of perfidy is so mutated in the public mind, wrote the late Harold Pinter, that it "never happened ... Nothing ever happened. Even while it was happening it wasn't happening. It didn't matter. It was of no interest. It didn't matter ...". Pinter expressed a mock admiration for what he called "a quite clinical manipulation of power worldwide while masquerading as a force for universal good. It's a brilliant, even witty, highly successful act of hypnosis."

Take Obama. As he prepares to leave office, the fawning has begun all over again. He is "cool". One of the more violent presidents, Obama gave full reign to the Pentagon war-making apparatus of his discredited predecessor. He prosecuted more whistleblowers – truth-tellers – than any president. He pronounced Chelsea Manning guilty before she was tried. Today, Obama runs an unprecedented worldwide campaign of terrorism and murder by drone.

In 2009, Obama promised to help "rid the world of nuclear weapons" and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. No American president has built more nuclear warheads than Obama. He is "modernising" America's doomsday arsenal, including a new "mini" nuclear weapon, whose size and "smart" technology, says a leading general, ensure its use is "no longer unthinkable".

James Bradley, the best-selling author of *Flags of Our Fathers* and son of one of the US marines who raised the flag on Iwo Jima, said, "[One] great myth we're seeing play out is that of Obama as some kind of peaceful guy who's trying to get rid of nuclear weapons. He's the biggest nuclear warrior there is. He's committed us to a ruinous course of spending a trillion dollars on more nuclear weapons. Somehow, people live in this fantasy that because he



gives vague news conferences and speeches and feel-good photo-ops that somehow that's attached to actual policy. It isn't."

On Obama's watch, a second cold war is under way. The Russian president is a pantomime villain; the Chinese are not yet back to their sinister pig-tailed caricature – when all Chinese were banned from the United States – but the media warriors are working on it.

Neither Hillary Clinton nor Bernie Sanders has mentioned any of this. There is no risk and no danger for the United States and all of us. For them, the greatest military build-up on the borders of Russia since World War Two has not happened. On May 11, Romania went "live" with a Nato "missile defence" base that aims its first-strike American missiles at the heart of Russia, the world's second nuclear power.

In Asia, the Pentagon is sending ships, planes and special forces to the Philippines to threaten China. The US already encircles China with hundreds of military bases that curve in an arc up from Australia, to Asia and across to Afghanistan. Obama calls this a "pivot".

As a direct consequence, China reportedly has changed its nuclear weapons policy from no-first-use to high alert and put to sea submarines with nuclear weapons. The escalator is quickening.

It was Hillary Clinton who, as Secretary of State in 2010, elevated the competing territorial claims for rocks and reef in the South China Sea to an international issue; CNN and BBC hysteria followed; China was building airstrips on the disputed islands. In its mammoth war game in 2015, Operation Talisman Sabre, the US practiced "choking" the Straits of Malacca through which pass most of China's oil and trade. This was not news.

Clinton declared that America had a "national interest" in these Asian waters. The Philippines and Vietnam were encouraged and bribed to pursue their claims and old enmities against China. In America, people are being primed to see any Chinese defensive position as offensive, and so the ground is laid for rapid escalation. A similar strategy of provocation and propaganda is applied to Russia.

Clinton, the "women's candidate", leaves a trail of bloody coups: in Honduras, in Libya (plus the murder of the Libyan president) and Ukraine. The latter is now a CIA theme park swarming with Nazis and the frontline of a beckoning war with Russia. It was through Ukraine – literally, borderland -- that Hitler's Nazis invaded the Soviet Union, which lost 27 million people. This epic catastrophe remains a presence in Russia. Clinton's presidential campaign has received money from all but one of the world's ten biggest arms companies. No other candidate comes close.

Sanders, the hope of many young Americans, is not very different from Clinton in his proprietorial view of the world beyond the United States. He backed Bill Clinton's illegal bombing of Serbia. He supports Obama's terrorism by drone, the provocation of Russia and the return of special forces (death squads) to Iraq. He has nothing to say on the drumbeat of threats to China and the accelerating risk of nuclear war. He agrees that Edward Snowden should stand trial and he calls Hugo Chavez – like him, a social democrat – "a dead communist

dictator". He promises to support Clinton if she is nominated.

The election of Trump or Clinton is the old illusion of choice that is no choice: two sides of the same coin. In scapegoating minorities and promising to "make America great again", Trump is a far right-wing domestic populist; yet the danger of Clinton may be more lethal for the world.

"Only Donald Trump has said anything meaningful and critical of US foreign policy," wrote Stephen Cohen, emeritus professor of Russian History at Princeton and NYU, one of the few Russia experts in the United States to speak out about the risk of war.

In a radio broadcast, Cohen referred to critical questions Trump alone had raised. Among them: why is the United States "everywhere on the globe"? What is NATO's true mission? Why does the US always pursue regime change in Iraq, Syria, Libya, Ukraine? Why does Washington treat Russia and Vladimir Putin as an enemy?

The hysteria in the liberal media over Trump serves an illusion of "free and open debate" and "democracy at work". His views on immigrants and Muslims are grotesque, yet the deporter-in-chief of vulnerable people from America is not Trump but Obama, whose betrayal of people of colour is his legacy: such as the warehousing of a mostly black prison population, now more numerous than Stalin's gulag.

This presidential campaign may not be about populism but American liberalism, an ideology that sees itself as modern and therefore superior and the one true way. Those on its right wing bear a likeness to 19th century Christian imperialists, with a God-given duty to convert or co-opt or conquer.

In Britain, this is Blairism. The Christian war criminal Tony Blair got away with his secret preparation for the invasion of Iraq largely because the liberal political class and media fell for his "cool Britannia". In the Guardian, the applause was deafening; he was called "mystical". A distraction known as identity politics, imported from the United States, rested easily in his care.

History was declared over, class was abolished and gender promoted as feminism; lots of women became New Labour MPs. They voted on the first day of Parliament to cut the benefits of single parents, mostly women, as instructed. A majority voted for an invasion that produced 700,000 Iraqi widows.

The equivalent in the US are the politically correct warmongers on the New York Times, the Washington Post and network TV who dominate political debate.





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LET US HEAR FROM YOU!

If you would like to submit an article, opinion, comment or response to anything you have read which might interest the members of VFP-56, please e-mail it to 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.



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