



VETERANS FOR PEACE
HUMBOLDT BAY
CHAPTER 56

THE FOGHORN

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2009

“Cutting Through the Fog of War”

SAVE THE DATE: BECKY LUENING VISIT/POTLUCK!

Becky will be in town over the weekend of March 13-16th and we are wanting to host a potluck for everyone who wants to visit with her. There is a possibility that Brian will come too, but it is undecided as yet.

Afternoon/evening of Saturday, March 14th at Carl and Mashaw's place. Details to come when the date gets closer.

URANIUM RADIATION POISONING – Scourge of the Modern Battlefield

By Peter Aronson

Chair DU/WMD Committee, VFP56

Members of VFP56's DU/WMD Committee presented the above program January 31st at the Eureka Labor Temple. It was a public informational program about uranium & depleted uranium properties & what DU is used for; health effects & exposure scenarios; and government & testing issues related to the use of toxic uranium in warfare.

Presenting the program were Laura Simpson, Esq., Dr Richard Gilchrist, PhD, and Peter Aronson, PA-C. Many thanks go to those who supported this effort that was filmed by Eileen McGee & will be available as a resource in schools, veterans groups, & public TV.

Fred Hummel, also from the DU/WMD committee, manned the resources table at the event. Mashaw McGinnis & John Mulloy help with promotion; Gordon Anderson & Steve Starnes with media equipment; and thanks go to Ernie Behm & the Labor Temple for hosting our event.

We wished to provide information that was factual & referenced, not hyperbole. We wanted to provoke attendees & listeners to learn more about DU & its many related issues. We wanted to answer all questions posed, and we wanted to videotape the program. Thanks to all who helped, our objectives were met.

Look at our website in weeks to come, vfp56.org, for the final video, and currently for other important information & resources about DU. It appears our government, in OUR American names, has once again created a scandalous whitewash, far worse than with Agent Orange. Our soldiers, veterans & non-combatants exposed without consent or knowledge are those hit hardest & know the least.

A Life Cut Short

By Jon Reisdorf

Many of us have become numbed by the high incidence of unprovoked and random acts of violence against the innocent out in the world. There are some of us who feel somewhat safe behind the Redwood Curtain. Therefore it is shocking, even jolting when our friends and loved ones become targets of violence in our Northern California sanctuary. Such happened recently to the family of Andrew Pease. Andrew, the son of a teacher I taught with for years, was stabbed to death February 6, Friday night around 5:30 at night in Eureka.

The Times Standard's reporting on the story has been exemplary. From the stories we learn how Andrew, a gentle, devoted family man was killed by two demented young men during a robbery spree. Andrew was with one of his charges, an autistic teenager, when he was assaulted. The young man who hid behind a car while the assault took place ran into Ray's Food Place at 3460 Broadway to get help when the assailants fled. Andrew succumbed to his injuries a short time later at the local hospital. The two men were apprehended and are being arraigned for armed robbery, attempted robbery and murder. There is much, much more to the deeper story of Andrew Pease.

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A Life Cut Short: Continued from Page 1

This deeper story is the story of so many of our members of VFP. Andrew joined the army in 1991 in an attempt to find some direction in his life. In 1993 he was injured while doing physical training, shattering a bone in his ankle. The injury was badly treated and ended with Andrew receiving a medical discharge and a ten percent disability. Struggling with considerable pain Andrew had a long road back to some semblance of life. He began to self-medicate and seemed to be drifting aimlessly through life. He had begun dating a wonderful woman, Christian when he was enlisted and when their relationship turned serious that was a turning point for Andrew. They married and she became pregnant with their first child, giving the young man a sense of security and direction that he had been lacking.

The struggle was not over but Andrew now had the emotional and moral support that he never got from the military. And when Andrew and Christian had their first of two wonderful boys, Andrew had the direction he needed in his life. Andrew began classes at HSU in 1996 while working part time. Life was difficult but also filled with joy. He hiked, fished, and spent hours with his wife and sons. Money was always tight but they managed.

Andrew was always great with kids, especially difficult teenagers. He found a job at the Eureka Boys and Girls Club Teen Center where he eventually became the teen director. His supervisor, Liz Smith said he was well loved by staff and students. Even after he left his job teens came by asking for him. Andrew moved on to work with autistic teens. Ryan Green, his supervisor, described Andrew as someone who was able to make real connections with his clients, something very rare. Green: "With this population, you don't see much improvement - we just really try to give them a better life. That's what Andrew is really good at."

Andrew had found his niche when he began work at the Teen Center, but his struggles were not over. During a routine checkup he was given some grave news: it seemed he had thyroid cancer. The cancer treatments on top of his life long battle with Celiac disease left him exhausted, and he was forced to quit the job he loved. Last December, when he was finally given a clean bill of health he landed his dream job: working with autistic kids.

When I spoke to him after Christmas he seemed like a man truly at peace with himself. Growing up adopted, Andrew had just made contact with his birth mother, and they looked forward to embarking on a new relationship. Christian and Andrew talked a lot about what would happen when he graduated from HSU in the fall. He considered getting a job teaching middle school but he really loved his autistic kids. All seemed possible. Christian and Andrew were thinking about finally getting out of the cramped quarters they were renting and get their first home. All of those dreams were shattered one fateful Friday, by two men in a senseless act of violence.

Andrew's pain and suffering are over. Unfortunately for Christian, Caleb, 13, and Ethan, 11, the suffering is just beginning. Christian and the two boys will be staying in their rented space in Eureka.

For now they are still numb. The boys seem to be expecting their dad to walk in as though it was one of his practical jokes. All too soon the staggering grief will hit home. The economic worries, layered on the loss of their father, will also all too soon become a painful reality. If you wish to help please send your checks to The Children of Andrew Pease Washington Mutual 337 F. St. Eureka, Ca. 95501 or take your check into any Washington Mutual branch.

Activists Engage With Army Experience Center

By John Grant

At 11:30 AM on Monday, February 16th, around 30 peace and anti-war activists from New York to Washington DC, collected in the food court at the Franklin Mills Mall in Northeast Philadelphia. They pasted pre-printed signs on their chests that said: WAR IS NOT A GAME. At noon, they walked 100 yards to the Army Experience Center and took up positions inside the \$12 million experimental Army recruitment store that takes up 14,000 square feet of mall space with 80 video game stations and three shooting simulators, where kids can have fun as a gunner on an apache, a blackhawk or a humvee.

VFP members from the Philadelphia chapter, from the Bucks County area and from the Lehigh Valley chapter were involved in the action, as were members of the Granny Peace Brigade, the Military Project in New York and some members from World Can't Wait. It was a diverse coalition of people all united in opposition to an expensive commercial store using very expensive interactive computer technology and violent video games to seduce young people into joining the Army at a time of economic difficulty, as an unnecessary war in Iraq continues and the war in Afghanistan is being escalated into a classic quagmire. The experimental Center -- if successful, planned for malls throughout America -- seems a vital nexus in a culture of Militarism.

Once the activists were inside the Center, Mall Cops arrived

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**NEXT VFP 56
MEETING IS
SCHEDULED FOR
MARCH 5, 2009,
7:00 PM AT THE
LABOR TEMPLE IN
EUREKA, 843 E ST.**



Activists Engage With Center: Continued from Page 2

from all directions, some on those cool two-wheel electronic scooters. About a dozen members of the group took up freeze postures inside the Center, while some did so outside in the open mall area near the Dave & Buster's entrance. The Mall Cops were very intent on preventing photographs from being taken, since that seemed to be some kind of crime against the Mall. (Maybe cameras would steal the Mall's soul.) Anyone with a camera out was threatened with removal. Eventually, two large cops from the Philadelphia Civil Affairs police unit arrived on the scene.

These two African American officers spent time in a circle of activists very calmly and civilly addressing all sorts of questions having to do with the rights of activists who opposed the Army Experience Center. It all boiled down to the fact the Center was a paying tenant in a private commercial property, which in their world meant that the Center and the Mall could dictate to us what we could and could not do. The fact the Center was paid for by taxpayers like us and failed to present a balanced view of information vital to the young people it was seducing was, naturally, irrelevant to the Private Property Rule. We were on the edge of civil disobedience. One of the activists asked the ranking cop how this situation was any different than those people who sat-in in a privately-owned lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina in the 1960s. He paused for a moment, then kind of smiled. "You aren't being discriminated against," he said.

"Oh, yes, but we are," was the reply. That was as far as the discussion went. But it seems enough of a point was made that the officer's mind turned to figuring out a diplomatic solution to the situation.

All the activists eventually left the Center rather than face arrest, since it was decided this was not a day for arrests. Several of us made a demand for a veterans' table to present an alternative view to young people in the vicinity of the Center. An agreement was made that four members of the activist group would go into the Center with the civil affairs officers and read a press release to the director of the center, Al Flood, a retired lieutenant colonel who had been a helicopter pilot in the Gulf War. Flood very cordially listened to the press release from Veterans For Peace Chapter 31, the Brandywine Peace Community and the Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern (LEPOCO). The release is copied below.

Bob Smith from the Brandywine Peace Community told Flood that we were glad he cordially listened to the reading of the release. Flood said he would contact his superior and suggested we contact the Mall about leasing space in the Mall, which would give us the right to speak our minds. Smith told Flood that, unless an agreement on a tabling option could be arranged, "we will be back." Flood said, "Fine. It's a free country."

See what the Army Center describes on its website as "the latest in technology interactivity and gaming. ... an experience only the Army can provide." To witness it, go to: <http://www.thearmyexperience.com/>

PRESS RELEASE

From: Veterans For Peace Chapter 31, Brandywine Peace Community, Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern (LEPOCO)
 Date: Monday, February 16, 2009
 Contact: John Grant, Veterans For Peace; 610-832-7028; 610-564-7628

Balancing The Army Experience Center

As tax-paying citizens and veterans who have consistently opposed the invasion and occupation of Iraq and who believe Afghanistan is becoming a classic quagmire for our young soldiers, we are disturbed by the Army Experience Center at the Franklin Mills Mall.

Many of us know and work with returning soldiers from Iraq and Afghanistan. We know what Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is, how insidious it can be and how soldiers obtain it. We know of the pain and emotional struggle soldiers who have been wounded or maimed in these war zones go through. We know what it means to be "the point

of the spear" in wars that politicians and most citizens only see media glimpses of and understand only as controversial national policy that really doesn't affect them.

We understand the cultural climate young people live in these days where they are overwhelmed by all manner of electronic media saturated with artificiality and fantasy whether it be TV, movies or ever-more sophisticated computer games. As should be clear to anyone who has witnessed it, the Army Experience Center is intended to take advantage of our youth's psychological immersion in this incredible media and computer game culture to seduce them

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Youth of America shoot at human targets in a simulated mission to protect humanitarian convoy from attack by "bad guys." This is just one of many cool learning tools at the tax-payer funded, \$12 million experimental Army Experience Center in the Franklin Mills Mall in Northeast Philadelphia. Look for one in your community soon.



Activists Engage With Center: Continued from Page 3

into the military, especially during this time of severe economic dislocation and anxiety about the future.

Because we fully recognize the Army Experience Center's seductive power for our young people and because we know the costs of war, we are convinced that it cries out for an alternative view, something not purely devoted to seducing youth into the Army, something that offers a balance and some discussion as to what, beyond all the dazzle and bang, joining the Army might actually mean for the young person's future.

Reports put the cost for this Center at \$12 million. We might facetiously ask whether the Army is designing an equally expensive and slick Veterans Experience Center in which a person can hit touch screens to locate across the country where all the wounded and maimed soldiers try to regain the lives they've permanently lost and, in many cases, where they have to struggle to get the medical help they need and the education they deserve. Where is the slick computer game that a kid can play to walk through the challenges faced by a returning soldier suffering from PTSD as he or she confronts one mundane challenge after another until it all piles up and there is an explosion? Where is the real information beyond the sexy pyrotechnics?

The idea of a PTSD video game is, of course, absurd. But what we would like to see and what we are requesting of the Army is that they agree we have the right as citizens and tax-payers to set up a modest table in one corner of the Army Experience Center or just outside the door under a sign that says WAR IS NOT A GAME, at which a young person could talk with a veteran about some of these matters, receive some of our materials and raise any questions he or she might have in order to get some balance to the slickness of the Army Experience Center.

We want young people coming to the "army experience center" to receive the entire picture and understand the full consequences of war and their enlistment in the Army. We want them able to make clear, informed choices as to their futures based on all the evidence. Our tabling here at the center, with alternate literature and information, would be setup and maintained in a non-confrontational manner respectful of the young people visiting the center and the Army.

The single clenched fist lifted and ready, Or the open hand held out and waiting. Choose: For we meet by one or the other.

Carl Sandburg

MILITARY USE & ABUSE OF DEPLETED URANIUM

*By Peter Aronson, PA-C * VFP56 * Feb. 2009*

The military use of uranium weapons in any form introduces a long list of related issues & concerns. Most are sobering & controversial - in part because the government has not been forthright about when, where, & how much uranium has been used, so exposure risks are unclear. Nor has the Dept of Defense demonstrated compliance with existing laws & regulations mandating safety training, proper protection, and adequate surveillance of soldiers potentially exposed. This despite multiple Congressional mandates to do so. The result is the public, active duty soldiers, & veterans simply don't know if when & how they may have been exposed to chemically toxic & radioactive uranium during their service, or as unsuspecting bystanders. Our government has done much to warrant concern for yet another whitewash.

Currently, many well established references & resources are available that address the common questions related to the use of uranium munitions. Examples include: What are depleted uranium (DU) weapons & what is DU used for?; what are the hazards & properties of uranium?; potential health effects of ionizing radiation & heavy metal toxicity; government regulations & legal implications of using uranium poisons; possible exposure scenarios; testing issues; & government compliance issues. Recommend resources that address most of these questions are listed at the end of this writing.

Instead of commenting on these common questions, I'd like to offer the following overview.

Depleted Uranium (DU) is first & last URANIUM ! It should be shocking to learn the Dept of Homeland Security & the NRC definition of a dirty bomb - a "radiological agent dispersed by a conventional explosive", exactly defines the def of DU munitions!

Used as a kinetic energy penetrator, each DU tank round is >10lbs of solid uranium. It burns so hot as it melts through armor all the dust in the area becomes heated to indestructable, respirable-sized, bits of ceramic glass that, when inhaled, may stay in one's body for years - emitting tiny bombs of radioactivity & toxic heavy metal poison (like lead poisoning)!

Because of the established hazardous properties of uranium, its use in any form is closely regulated to protect the health and safety of the public and the environment. Strict regulations & laws apply to mining & refinement, production, transportation, storage, uses & sales by the NRC; EPA; FDA; DOE; & state governments.

All government workers are required to use protective clothing & comply with handling precautions. They must wear exposure monitoring devices & are mandated to complete safety training.

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Military Use and Abuse of DU: Continued from Page 4

There is a huge exception, another double standard that seems to go on unquestioned.

If a government worker happens to be a military employee – a soldier – none of these safety precautions apply!

- Safety training is not provided to soldiers, though active DoD regulations require this before deployment. Soldiers don't know about the risks of inhaled or ingested DUst or smoke from fires, DU damaged equipment, or cleanup work.

- There is no safety gear used, though regulations require it for certain activities.

- There is no monitoring for possible exposures while working with these materials.

- Regulations requiring screening & testing for exposure to DU are not complied with.

- The testing method available to the DVA is unable to support documentation of exposure to DU if the sample is received >6months after suspected exposure(s).

Why don't the same safety standards apply to the military as all other government workers? True combat scenarios offer a possible reason. But, as demonstrated many times before, this kind of exception is used beyond what it was intended for, & soldiers in general, all of them, are given a pass on safety regulations & standards.

Connecting the dots suggest another government whitewash, similar to that with Agent Orange. One may reasonably conclude the lack of compliance with regulations; the lack of knowledge of DU risks by soldiers & vets; the outdated DU testing method still in use despite better ones available; all protect the fact that DU is clearly a superior & coveted weapon – one the Pentagon & DoD has said it will not give up due to its superiority. Warfare trumps welfare, even our own!

The very same 'logic' applied to the A-Bombs on Hiroshima & Nagasaki - they saved American lives by shortening the conflict - is active today with DU. Military superiority trumps all if left to the Pentagon. Look at how the laws are ignored or bent with the 'new' napalm; cluster bombs; phosphorous, etc. When uranium is "ok" next are tactical nuclear weapons that only contaminate "local areas". DU is not THE problem. The way the DoD & Pentagon has rationalized its use (deny, delay, deceive) is the problem.

How fast would the Geneva Conventions & all other Humanitarian treaties surface if this rationale was used AGAINST us?!

The Government tells us "DU is safe", but this flies in the face of decades of their own studies concluding otherwise. They are content by playing dumb. They use statements like "from what we now know, DU is safe"...but they use flawed science & test data to conveniently keep them in their darkness. How convenient. How

similar the M.O.

To learn more about the health & safety of our deserving service members, & further evidence of another whitewash, look at the following resources. These are well documented references, not hyperbole. The use of uranium weapons, in our American names, represents yet another scandal and atrocity of war.

Recommended Sites:

1. For excellent reports on military policy; Government testing for DU; Testing problems; and DoD & DVA Documents: Dan Fahey Document Library, <http://www.danfahey.com/DanFahey/>

2. Review of Radioactivity, Military

Use and Health Effects of Depleted Uranium Compiled by Vladimir S. Zajic, Ph.D. (Nuclear Physics). <http://vzajic.tripod.com/contents.html#top>

3. Depleted Uranium: Ethics Of The Silver Bullet, Iliya Pesic A thorough overview of DU munitions use, with photos: <http://www.mindfully.org/Nucs/2005/Depleted-Uranium-Ethics9may05.htm>

4. For review of the uranium enrichment process; civilian & military uses of DU: World Information Service on Energy – Uranium Project (WISE) <http://www.wise-uranium.org/index.html>

5. For easy to understand tutorials on DU & International Law; Health Effects of DU; Ionizing Radiation & Health; & a treatise on DU weapons: International DU Study Team (IDUST) <http://www.IDUST.net>

6. CADU is a founding member of the International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW) – now comprising over 102 member organizations in 27 countries. CADU is a resource for action. Campaign Against Depleted Uranium (CADU) [http://www.cadu.org.uk/International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons \(ICBUW\)](http://www.cadu.org.uk/International%20Coalition%20to%20Ban%20Uranium%20Weapons%20(ICBUW)) <http://www.bandedpleteduranium.org/en/index.html>.

7. Humboldt Bay Chapter of Veterans For Peace. Click on DU section: www.vfp56.org

Save a Tree and \$10

By Stephen Sottong

The Foghorn is now available online. Each month, a link is sent to the membership informing them where to pick up this month's issue. When you opt to receive the Foghorn electronically, you save paper and save the chapter about \$10 per year in printing and postage expenses. To opt in to electronic delivery, send an email to Steve Sottong (ssotton@juno.com) and you'll help conserve the environment and our chapter funds.



Finding Community and Setting Records With a Solar Car

By John Schaefer

Because our VFP chapter includes several electric vehicle owners, and because we all realize that travel these days depends on war for oil under other people's countries, I thought this story would be of interest to the VFP.

Moreover, in these days of evolving high-tech, high-priced electric cars from multinational corporations, it's heartening for me to see one adventurous soul build a car that's truly revolutionary and then drive it to a world record.

I came upon this adventure when our electric vehicle association, HEVA, notified members that a solar car would be in town one Friday morning. Looking like a giant three-wheel cockroach, the solar car rolled into the parking lot on schedule at Arcata Elementary School. Emerging from beneath its solar canopy, the driver engaged students right away, telling them not only how it works but also why he is on this mission.

Marcelo's Challenge

Canadian Marcelo da Luz basically built the car himself in Toronto, with assistance from a long list of sponsors and helpers.

"It's an electric car that plugs into the sun rather than into an outlet," he explained. Marcelo began the odyssey not only to show that even as individuals we can effect big changes, but also to set some world records. By now every mile he drives the car is a new world record, now almost 11,000 miles using only energy from the sun. It never plugs in.

His objective as he passes through towns and cities is to visit schools and encourage students there to realize their dreams. He particularly likes elementary schools, and I am surprised at how enthusiastic students have been.

Marcelo needed someone to drive the support vehicle for a while, so I volunteered. After repairs to the voltage-current sensor with three Radio Shack zener diodes, we left David Katz' house on Saturday morning for Redway.

Part way there, we pulled off to fill the thirsty GMC van and trailer I drove as support vehicle, and after gassing up in Miranda we experienced the only negative reaction I can recall. Out on the freeway, a Dodge Neon screeched between me and the solar car, almost hitting Marcelo, and then zoomed away. I imagine it was full of laughing, drunk teenagers who got some sick thrill by frightening someone that everyone else in town admired. What is the need that such foolishness satisfies? Whatever it is, do we see it in national institutions?

No Tow Truck Needed

Dodging that bullet, our first mishap occurred after dark as we pulled in to the AEE parking lot in Redway. Because the solar car

headlights are a bit feeble, Marcelo didn't see that the portion of driveway he approached was really a curb. He hit it too hard and broke a tie rod end, leaving the car with only two wheels turning. Despite the late hour, people appeared and helped carry the car to the KMUD parking lot across the street. There's some advantage to having a car that weighs only 470 pounds: it takes only two people to move it on two wheels.

Noteworthy in this brief mishap is how folks gather round and try to help when they see something happening that they identify with. It turns out that this theme has been repeated again and again throughout Marcelo's journey. But first, what is the means by which the journey is taking place?

The Car

Marcelo's vehicle, dubbed xof1 or power of one, is built on a light weight polystyrene frame covered with fiberglass epoxy. Custom built suspension parts from Europe, Japanese tires, a recumbent seat, and lithium ion polymer batteries from Korea comprise the running gear.

To charge the batteries, modified photovoltaic cells from a German company were mounted on an aerodynamically shaped body in eight electrically separate strings. Because that surface is curved, no protective glass could be installed; instead a polymer is coated over the cells. It protects against water intruding into the electrical connections, but doesn't offer much physical protection; pushing too hard can break a cell and disable the series string. Each of the eight strings charges the batteries through its own maximum power point tracking circuit. The total of four batteries weighs only 66 pounds.

The solar array lifts up on struts to allow the driver in and out of the car. The array can also be tilted to the right at any angle, so maximum charging current is possible when the sun is low in the sky.

A small video display inside the car shows Marcelo his current drain and battery voltage, so he knows when to stop and charge. A transparent bubble projecting up through the solar array body allows him to see where he is going, and a backwards-facing micro camera provides the equivalent of a rear view mirror.

Standing less than three feet high, the car's short stature renders it less visible than highway safety might demand. While traveling on the highway, therefore, the support vehicle follows as closely as possible to keep errant drivers from getting too close.

Starting with a full charge on his best sunny day, Marcelo has driven 285 miles. The car can attain 70 miles per hour and does zero to 50 in 6 seconds. By contrast, my own electric car has a range of only 25 miles and operates with batteries that weigh about three times what Marcelo's entire car weighs.

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Solar Car & Community: Continued from Page 6

On the other hand, Marcelo's solar car has no room for groceries or passengers; it was designed to demonstrate how much better new technology can perform and to set a world record.

The car and the journey are described with illustrations at [HYPERLINK "http://www.xof1.com"](http://www.xof1.com) www.xof1.com.

The Journey

Marcelo began his odyssey in June of 2008 from Buffalo, New York, not from Toronto where the car was built and tested. That's because the province of Ontario banned solar cars after one previously suffered a fatal accident. Ontario's loss was the US' gain, because he traveled west through the northern Midwest (passing my alma mater, Oberlin, in Ohio) and into Canada through Manitoba. From there he traveled north through Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon and Northwest Territories to Inuvik, north of the Arctic Circle and the furthest north any car can go on a road.

Throughout the trip, Marcelo picked up volunteers to drive the support vehicle, and in some cases had a van full of volunteers.

Traveling on Arctic roads is no piece of cake for a delicate vehicle. With trucks thundering along these gravel roads, most local windshields show cracks from flying gravel. Flying gravel is an even greater threat for delicate solar cells, so how could Marcelo protect the cells on which the journey depends? To the rescue came truck drivers themselves, using their radios to inform each other when the solar car was coming so they knew to slow down. As a result, no gravel damage occurred. This was one of many instances when people unconnected with the project offered essential support.

Encounters with a bear and even a friendly wolf in Yukon Territory kept Marcelo from lapsing into boredom. Other encounters included a cycling team from Texas, motorcyclists, a mama moose and calf, and an orange electric Pinto in Anchorage.

In Palmer, Alaska, the solar car was identified as a UFO, prompting a call to police who dispatched two cruisers to investigate. This was not the first time of course, as there have heretofore been eleven car stops by curious police agencies.

Nor were we immune from such curiosity. Rolling down 101 in sunny weather north of Hopland, we had our own encounter with the California Highway Patrol. Noting our peculiar appearance, a patrolman with lights flashing pulled Marcelo over and demanded documents. He had them: registration and license from Barbados, one of only two countries where this space craft could be registered. "It doesn't look like it meets California standards," said the officer, and of course he was right: no bumpers to meet California standards and in fact no bumpers at all. But did that matter?

Marcelo countered that operation was protected by a 1949 Ge-

neva treaty that permits cars registered in any signatory country to operate for a year in any other signatory's territory. This assertion worked in Minnesota, where the officers actually checked and found what the treaty said. However, called to our location on 101 a CHP supervisor phoned Sacramento but failed to get confirmation. "You can't operate this car here," he said.

"How about an escort to Hopland?" I asked. Accommodating us, they gave us a flashing red light entry to the Solar Living Center, where we settled down in the Real John Schaeffer's office (at Real Goods) and downloaded a copy of the treaty.

Thus protected, and hoping to get into the next CHP district as inconspicuously as possible, we set out for Santa Rosa. There, my son Chris' neighborhood, including parents and children, turned out in force. Among the neighbors was the Press Democrat's publisher, so early next day a reporter and a photographer turned out for an interview on a neighbor's lawn, with the array tilted up for a morning of charging. All this resulted in a nice video and a good story in the paper.

Subsequent stops included Davis and then Sacramento, where we were welcomed by SMUD, the local electric utility, even by Fox News, and by the Towe Auto Museum. The Towe displays all kinds of old cars, staffed by docents from a generation (like me) that grew up with flat-head Fords. To a person, they opened their hearts and minds to the idea of a new kind of car, hosting us at a docents' luncheon and Sacramento's Museum Day with hundreds of attendees. We even got a ride in a Stanley Steamer.

"Inspired by the sun, motivated by the environment" has become Marcelo's motto, as he shares his experience with anybody that will listen. One message he has conveyed to students is that we can use new ways to protect the earth.

It's been a struggle for Marcelo to finance this dream he began years ago. He's had help from suppliers, but there's been no big sponsor to pay the considerable expenses of his travels. Basically he has financed it himself. Therefore, current plans extend no further than Los Angeles.

Despite the financial strain, Marcelo is the first to say that he has realized his dream, and offers his experience as an example to young and old alike that they can realize their dreams as well.

Are We There Yet?

The Bush years might lead us to think that we're stuck in a Nineteenth Century mentality, or perhaps an Old Testament mentality, but Marcelo's experience leads me to believe that there's hope for us as a people. Most of us rallied round a good man with a good idea, and found community that I find very encouraging. We have a ways to go, but with examples from our friends we may yet arrive at the Twenty-First Century.





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Chapter 56**

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LEADERSHIP TEAM

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STANDING COMMITTEES

**WU/WMD: Peter Aronson
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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.

VFP Member Unveils His Photographs At Arts Alive!

By Mashaw McGinnis

VFP member Nate Lomba presented his first public exhibit of his photographs in February as part of Arts Alive! in Old Town. "Opportunography: Images of an Accidental Traveler" brought in a full house at Ramone's Café and Bakery (a preferred gallery for local artists) where guests were treated to Nate's beautiful photographs of Death Valley, the Arcata Marsh and other local spots. Many members of VFP came out to support Nate at the official opening and were pleasantly surprised by the quality of his work.

Having no formal photographic schooling Nate describes himself as "accidentally-taught". Getting his first camera (a Minolta) in 1966 when he was stationed at NAS Atsugi, Japan, it began a lifelong hobby. When he was stationed at NAS Miramar in San Diego County two years later, the photographer received his only taste of real training while playing with the B&W developing and printing at the squadron photo lab. Naturally curious he asked a lot of questions but that solitary experience 40 years ago has long been forgotten.

Though photography has been a pastime of his all these years, Nate never considered his art anything other than taking pictures for personal/family use. But that was before the exhibit. Obviously the public recognizes good work when they see it because the exhibit was an immediate commercial success. The artist received some print orders on the spot at the opening and several indicated interest in obtaining future prints. A self-titled "opportunistic photographer" he prefers to discover subjects while out and about rather than pursuing a project. "Otherwise" he says smiling "it would feel too much like work".