



VETERANS FOR PEACE
HUMBOLDT BAY
CHAPTER 56

THE FOGHORN

OCTOBER
2013

“Cutting Through the Fog of War”

Chip Sharp's response to Alan Bigelow article published in the September 2013 Foghorn

Jim,

I'm sending this to honor the 1947 Freedom Riders. If you (or Harvard Magazine) want to lift anything from it for publication, that is more than fine with me.

Both lead articles in the September FOGHORN refer to the 1961 Freedom Riders as being the first.

From Steven Slosberg's Harvard Magazine article: One of the Golden Rule's crew members, James Peck '36, a union organizer, was also active in CORE projects and Bigelow later joined him in civil-rights causes, including that first Freedom Ride.

From Skip Oliver's Veterans For Peace article: Both Peck and Bigelow later were among the original 13 Freedom Riders who in 1961 risked their lives to desegregate interstate public transportation. Both Peck and Bigelow later were among the original 13 Freedom Riders who in 1961 risked their lives to desegregate interstate public transportation...

In 1947, James Peck was on the "first" freedom ride to challenge segregation of transportation facilities in the South. Jim Peck was the only 1947 Freedom Rider to also ride in 1961 (when he was so savagely beaten).

Freedom Riders of 1947:

Participants in the Congress of Racial Equality's Journey of Reconciliation: Worth Randle, Wallace Nelson, Ernest Bromley, James Peck, Igal Roodenko, Bayard Rustin, Joseph Felmet, George Houser and Andrew Johnson.

I met Jim Peck and Igal Roodenko at War Resisters League in NYC. I got to know Wally Nelson and Ernest Bromley by participating in two-week Peacemaker "Orientations" in 1968-70. I meet George Houser in San Francisco in 2011, at which time he and Andrew Johnson were the only surviving 1947 Freedom Riders.

Following is text of email from George (1/12/2011):

Dear Chip,

It was good to meet you at the Hartsough dinner. Thanks for your piece on Wally. He was a great comrade. The picture you allude to was taken outside the office of Spottswood Robinson, a famed civil rights lawyer, in Richmond, VA. Yes, I was 31 years old at the time. That was the only picture of our 1947 group. As a matter of policy we didn't have a photographer since we weren't trying to call attention to ourselves. We wanted to be just individuals traveling, not make it seem like a project.

At our reunion in 1993, there were quite a few photos taken by newspapers in Asheville, NC, for example. But of course we were getting old by then. Have you seen the documentary "You Don't Have To Ride Jim Crow" produced and aired by Public Television? It was about our reunion. Produced and played around the country in 1995...

My best to you, and Peace,

George Houser ghouser1@earthlink.net

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**Following is my tribute to Wally Nelson
(27 March 1909 – 23 May 2002)**

I first met Wally Nelson in 1968 in the North Carolina mountains, at a Peacemaker Orientation program outside Bryson City, NC. He and Juanita Nelson made such a deep and inspirational impression that they have remained guiding lights for me for over forty years.

[From internet sources: Wally Nelson was an African-American who grew up with Jim Crow. He refused military service in World War II; like many of the other CO's profiled in the PBS program *The Good War...And Those Who Refused to Fight It*, Nelson went to prison for his beliefs. He served 33 months of a five-year term, released in 1946. The next year, he was one of eight blacks participating in the first "freedom rides" (then called the "Journey of Reconciliation") in 1947, passing through Greensboro when I was but a year-and-a-half old.

In 1948, Wally and Juanita (who had met Wally as a journalist, interviewing him in jail) began resisting federal taxes and joined with others (including Ernest Bromley and Rev. Maurice McCracken) to create the Peacemakers organization. And Wally was the first national field organizer for the Congress of Racial Equality.]

Though I have often repeated a story told by Wally, I had delayed putting it in writing, stalled by a desire to fully describe my experiences at Peacemaker Orientation programs in North Carolina and Missouri. The imminent screening of a documentary about the 1961 Freedom Rides moved me to put it to paper. This story needs to be shared.

As Wally described this experience, I formed my own mental images of the street, the picketers, the twilight, the men exiting the tavern. I hope you, too, will make this your own story.

Wally stood with others, all bearing signs in protest of a business' refusal to serve "colored" people. From this sidewalk in front of the business (a motel or restaurant?), they could look across the street at a parking area in front of a tavern, filling as men stopped by after leaving work. As the afternoon turned to dusk, men began to exit the tavern. Some were quite inebriated, and several yelled at the picketers the kinds of obscenities they had learned to expect.

One tall man came out of the tavern, went to his pickup, and pulled a claw-hammer from the bed. As he strode across the street, he was glaring at Wally, apparently having selected him to be the object of his wrath. As he neared, he raised the hammer into the air, claw pointing down. Within striking distance, he said to Wally, "I'd just as soon kill a nigger as look at him."

Wally recounted that, in those short moments following this threat, he pictured what would happen to this man if he were to kill

someone: that he would be imprisoned, that he would lose his job and perhaps his family, that he'd be haunted by regret. With these concerns in mind, Wally looked up into his eyes and said, "Friend, you don't know what you're doing."

The man slowly lowered the hammer to his side. "No. I don't." He then turned and left.

Wally wanted us, students of nonviolence, to recognize the importance of heart. We must accept that, while nonviolent responses usually reduce the likelihood of violent reactions, nonviolence cannot always prevent further violence and guarantee our safety. Wally believed that this awareness could help us to be genuine in our concerns for those we confront.

He was convinced that, had he said, "Friend, you don't know what you're doing.," as a tactic, designed to surprise and disarm the aggressor in order to protect himself, it would have been ineffective. Wally's lessons on the importance of sincerity, as well as his examples of dedication and courage, have stayed with me all these years.

* *chipsharpe@sbcglobal.net* [Written December 9, 2010, before seeing "Freedom Riders" documentary.]

Chip Sharpe
chipsharpe@sbcglobal.net

REDWOOD PEACE POETRY/ART CELEBRATION

Upcoming air dates/times for "4th Annual Redwood Coast Peace Poetry Celebration" are listed below (The video will air more times than what is listed - this just reflects what is currently scheduled). The video can be found online here http://archive.org/details/AH-4th_annual_redwood_coast_peace_poetry. Please let me know if you have any questions - Thanks!

Play Date / Time Channel Program Title and Episode 4th Annual Redwood Coast Peace Poetry Celebration ID 1226

9/28/13 4:00 pm Sat AH 12 4th Annual Redwood Coast Peace Poetry Celebration

9/29/13 5:30 pm Sun AH 12 4th Annual Redwood Coast Peace Poetry Celebration

9/30/13 9:30 pm Mon AH 12 4th Annual Redwood Coast Peace Poetry Celebration



ELLIOT ADAMS VISIT?

Hello Humboldt VFP folks,

I am writing to alert you all to an opportunity for a speaking event and/or activist workshop being offered by Elliot Adams, former board president of national VFP, who is coming out to the West Coast this fall. He is scheduled to speak in Portland on November 7th, and may be able to get to Humboldt before or after that date...

If you are interested in exploring this opportunity further, please contact Elliot's tour organizer, Sherri, directly:

Sherri Maurin speakingtourwest@gmail.com
(415) 250-7986

Vietnam-era Fliers Buried Side-by-Side at Arlington

By Jennifer Griffin Published September 23, 2013
FoxNews.com

Buried for more than 40 years inside the plane they were flying when they were shot down over Laos in 1969, Major James Sizemore and his navigator Major Howard Andre made their final journey home Monday to Arlington National Cemetery, where they were laid to rest just the way they flew: side by side.

A single bugler played TAPS as the families of the airmen gathered and two horse drawn caissons made their way through the cemetery.

Overhead, eight civilian pilots performed a tribute flyover at their own expense after the Air Force said it couldn't perform a traditional flyover due to sequestration budget cuts.

"I would hope that somebody would have done the same for me had I not made it back home from my tours overseas," said retired Marine pilot Lieutenant Colonel Art Nalls, who flew an F-39 trainer over the cemetery.

Sizemore and Andre first met at Georgia Tech before enlisting in the Air Force and being sent to Vietnam. They were killed in action while flying missions against truck convoys supplying the Viet

Cong.

Their remains were found a year ago and identified in April by the Pentagon's POW/MIA Accounting Command Task Force.

But once the burial was scheduled at Arlington, the Air Force told their families the U.S. government could not afford to honor the men with a traditional flyover due to budget cuts.

"Following numerous requests to volunteer units, the Air Force is unable to support the flyover request for Major Sizemore due to limited flying hours and budget constraints," Air Force spokesman Captain Rose Richeson wrote in a statement. "However, the Air Force is providing an Aerial Control Team to assist with the two civilian warbird flyovers planned for today's event."

That's when a group of volunteer pilots from the non-profit Warrior Flight Team (<http://www.warrioraviation.org/>) stepped in and agreed to fly in formation above the Arlington ceremony in their own planes, on their own dime.

Eight civilian pilots honored the veterans, arranging permission from the Department of Homeland Security, Secret Service, and FAA with an aerial tribute above Washington.

They even flew a Douglas A26 Invader - the same plane that the two friends from Georgia were flying when they were shot down 44 years ago. It was flanked by 2 P51 Mustangs.

The estimated fuel cost: of fuel alone for the ceremonial flyover is more than \$24,000.

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Next VFP56 meeting will be held
on Thursday, October 3rd at
7:00 PM.
Meeting will be held in the
Commons Room at 550 Union
Street in Arcata.
Veterans and non-veterans are
more than welcome to come and
help us dialogue about what we to-
gether can do to bring about peace
in this complex world.



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“We’re here today to honor some fallen veterans,” said retired Air Force Brigadier General Jeff Johnson, who flew over Arlington as part of the ceremony. “Do I feel like those two heroes deserved a flyover? Yes, I do, and that’s why we did what did today.”

“I would hope somebody would come after me,” said Nalls. That means a lot to the individual service member to know that you’re not going to be left behind.”

With a government shutdown looming, the military may have to rely increasingly on these volunteer airmen to honor the nation’s fallen.

Update: Arkley Draws Big Crowd to Talk about Homelessness

POSTED BY KACI POOR ON WED, SEP 18, 2013 AT 10:14 PM

Update: Arrest records posted this morning by the Lost Coast Outpost show that the Eureka Police Department did in fact make four arrests at around 6 p.m. Wednesday night. Kimberly Lauren Starr, Stephanie Nicole Bartlett, Elise Alcyone Gerhart and Chad Alan Kemp were arrested on suspicion of crimes against the public peace. Gerhart and Kemp face the additional suspected arresting charges of assault and battery.

Previously: If Rob Arkley was looking to stir the pot when he proclaimed last week that the homeless have overrun Humboldt County and are living high on the hog thanks to all those public benefits available to them — well, mission accomplished.

Turns out a lot of people have something to say about that.

Hundreds packed into the Wharfinger Building on Wednesday evening to take part in the Eureka businessman’s community forum to address the homelessness “crisis.”

At 5:35 p.m., cars were still streaming toward the meeting site from both directions, and drivers lurched over a curb to park in a dirt lot beside the building’s jammed parking lot. On the front walkway, frustrated people jostled as police held them back, and one man briefly made a grab for the door before it closed. Several in the crowd shouted that they had RSVP’d, as requested, but the door monitors said that didn’t matter. The building was past capacity.

The Wharfinger Building holds 299 people in both the designated meeting room and on the adjoining deck, according to Alex Bippus, who said he was a Eureka city employee who helps run the site. Gradually, as people left, others were allowed in.

Arkley started off the meeting by outlining his own plans. First, he

wants to form a committee — no, he said, he doesn’t have to be the chair — which will put a microscope on the Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services. The committee, he said, will tear apart the department’s budget, looking for the mandates, grants and obligations the county has to provide services to the homeless. And don’t worry Phillip Crandall, Arkley understands that being the department head is a big job — the committee will just be looking to help. It will do that, he said, by identifying — he didn’t explain how — which programs are drawing the homeless to the area.

From there, Arkley wants to see the committee put pressure on the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors. Specifically, he wants to see the board weigh each spending decision for its possible “negative impact” on the community.

“I get the upside,” Arkley said. “The homeless are getting a meal. The homeless are getting a bath. The homeless are getting a place to stay. I get all that. But what about the downside to the community? What are the taxes, the soft taxes, to the community?”

Lastly, Arkley wants the supes to vote on each action involving the homeless, one-by-one. Following that framework, Arkley said, he is confident that a year from now, Humboldt will be a better place. We all just need to work together and cut out the fluff.

“This is a case where our desire to do right has become wrong,” Arkley said. “Too much right has become wrong. We’ve become an absolute magnet for the homeless unlike other communities.”

Not everyone was quite on the same page. Although most in the room agreed that homelessness is a big issue, few agreed on what should be done about it.

One woman suggested that Arkley “check his privilege.” Not all of us are rich, white males, she said. Her words were quickly drowned out by boos and jeers from the crowds, and for a moment it appeared that the meeting would dissolve into a giant shouting match. Moderator Shirley Fuller quickly stepped in, calling for respect and issuing a three minute limit for each speaker.

Sylvia De Rooy was greeted with applause when she stepped up to the microphone and questioned Arkley’s facts. “Virtually every premise that Arkley has put forward is a false premise,” she said.

“What will guarantee more homeless on the streets, is to cut off any existing support services,” Derooy said. “It’s nonsense to say we are being too generous in our help to homeless people. The truth is that what is being offered is grossly inadequate and that is the major case of the numbers of homeless people in our area.”

Several business owners took the opportunity to voice their concerns. One woman said she was tired of cleaning up defecation off her front stoop. Another said he thought a neighboring soup kitchen was luring in the homeless and driving away his female clients.

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When you drive through Eureka on a Sunday, it looks like you are riding into a toilet, he said.

Beverley Wolfe, owner of Avalon in Old Town, said she understands the issues — she was once homeless on the streets of New York, she said. But Eureka has a problem and its programs need scrutiny. The homeless issue is one of the reasons she said she decided to move her business to Fortuna.

Many who spoke at the forum did so over the noise of a screeching horn and the sound of banging drums from outside. Eureka Police Chief Murl Harpham later said that four protesters were arrested on suspicion of disturbing an assembly, resisting arrest and assault. Explaining the assault, Harpham said he was doused with a bottle of water in the melee.

By the end of the night, a harangued-looking organizer estimated attendance at over 300. About 35 had stopped to add their names to a fast-growing list of would-be committee members.

Some speakers, like Berti Welty, voiced caution as the committee moves forward.

Ward said there isn't any one perfect answer. People should be held accountable for their behavior, but there should also be resources available to those looking to take control of their lives, she said. And some who suffer from mental conditions may not be able to seek out the help they need.

Eureka is not unique, Welty said.

"The real question is what are we as a town?" she said. "153 years ago, the good citizens of Eureka met to decide what was the problem with getting rid of the Indians. The result was a massacre. That community also drove all of the Chinese out of town and put them on barges. Is that the kind of community we want?"

Giving Homeless Veterans the Permanent Shelter they Need

L.A. County opens a \$480-million permanent supportive housing project for veterans called New Directions Sepulveda in North Hills.

By Gale Holland

Veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder and other psychological diagnoses end up living in the streets because they're too disabled to seek help, advocates have long argued.

The answer, they say, is permanent supportive housing, with medical, mental health and substance abuse treatment wrapped on-site around vets' residential complexes. Bureaucratic inertia and neighborhood opposition have stalled development of this type of housing, officials said.

Now Los Angeles County, which has the most homeless veterans in the nation, has taken a step forward with a \$48-million permanent supportive housing project called New Directions Sepulveda I and II in North Hills in the central San Fernando Valley. The project's grand opening was Friday.

Built with private, state and federal money, the project converted two earthquake-damaged buildings at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center into 147 light-filled studio apartments, a dining and event area, a computer lab, laundry facilities, TV rooms and other common areas.

It's the first permanent supportive housing project on veterans' land in California, and one of the first in the nation, officials said.

In addition to medical services, the veterans will have access to tennis courts, a gym, a cafeteria and a general store on the grounds.

"People have difficulty stabilizing, they need wrap-around supportive services to help re-integrate into society," said Michelle Wildy, chief of community care for the VA's greater Los Angeles healthcare system.

The complex, which began filling up at the beginning of September, has 71 residents, mostly veterans of the Vietnam War, post-Vietnam service and the Gulf War. All have been homeless a year or more and most suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder **or a major depressive disorder**.

Willie Edward Turnipseed, 55, was a U.S. Air Force ejection seat mechanic between 1981 to 1983, serving in the Philippines, he said.

He later worked for the city of Los Angeles, but after a dispute over a work injury he lost his home and became "a rolling stone," staying on and off the streets before landing on skid row.

Turnipseed said he has a bipolar disorder and has struggled with substance abuse.

"I'm just so grateful for this," he said, choking up as he showed off his 400-square-foot apartment Thursday. A Dodgers pen set hung on the wall and his bed was neatly made with a fashionable blue-gray quilt cover and shams.

"Skid row was terrible," he said. "Everything I need is here."

The complex was developed by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; New Directions for Veterans, a residential treatment agency that will handle the on-site services, including case manage-

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ment; and a Community of Friends, a nonprofit affordable housing developer for homeless people with mental illness.

More permanent supportive housing for veterans is under construction in El Monte and Boyle Heights, but Wildy said more is needed.

“We really need to have project-based housing, but we also need landlords to participate, and communities to participate in making affordable housing,” she said.

Military And Veteran Suicides Rise Despite Aggressive Prevention Efforts

By David Wood

WASHINGTON -- The good news: most people with military service never consider suicide. Contrary to popular perception, there is no “epidemic” of military-related suicides -- even though President Barack Obama used the word in a speech this summer at the Disabled American Veterans Convention. Among those few whose lives do spiral down toward darkness and despair, the vast majority never take that irrevocable step.

The bad news: the number of military and veteran suicides is rising, and experts fear it will continue to rise despite aggressive suicide prevention campaigns by the government and private organizations.

The Pentagon and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), already struggling to meet an increasing demand from troops and veterans for mental health services, are watching the suicide rates, and the growing number of those considered “at risk” of suicide, with apprehension.

“It really is extremely concerning,” said Caitlin Thompson, a VA psychologist and clinical care coordinator at the national crisis line for the military and veterans.

The warning signs of an approaching wave of suicides are unmistakable.

-- While the rate of suicides has traditionally been lower for the military ranks than for civilians, that trend has begun to reverse.

-- The number of suicides among active-duty troops of all services remains relatively low, at 350 last year, Pentagon data show.

But that number has more than doubled since 2001, while in the Army’s active-duty ranks, suicides have tripled during the same period, from 52 soldiers in 2001 to 185 last year.

-- Roughly half of active-duty troops who die by suicide never served in Iraq or Afghanistan. But there is growing evidence that war trauma weighs heavily on those who did. In one indication of deep emotional stress, the suicide rate among U.S. troops deployed to Iraq between 2004 and 2007, a period of intensified fighting, jumped from 13.5 to 24.8 per 100,000, according to a report issued in 2009 by the Army surgeon general.

-- Some 8,000 veterans are thought to die by suicide each year, a toll of about 22 per day, according to a 2012 VA study. The VA acknowledged the numbers might be significantly underestimated because they’re based on incomplete data from 21 states, not including Texas or California. Even so, the data documents an increase of nearly 11 percent between 2007 and 2010, the most recent year of data in the study.

Fall 2013 Speaking Tour

Elliott Adams, CloseGitmo.net and Veterans for Peace (VFP)

An important goal of the tour is to motivate others to join us in this swelling social movement that will close GTMO. We welcome the participation of VFP Chapters, Peace and Justice Groups, churches, colleges, American Legion Posts or others you think might be interested. This conversation could be scheduled from 30 minutes to 2 hours.

If there is interest, Elliott could also offer workshops on MAP (Movement Action Plan), which is designed to help activists choose the most effective tactics and strategies at each of the distinct stages that social movements’ always progress through. These workshops can last from 45 minutes to 2 hours +.

Here are some descriptions:

Guantanamo (GTMO) Talk -

We will be safer and stronger, not to mention morally better off, when we close Guantanamo.

Elliott believes we can win this one, and close Guantanamo, and has said, “It will not be easy, but this one is now within our reach. We need to get people of all stripes to support closing Guantanamo and giving it back to the rightful owners.”

He will discuss different messages about why we will be better off when Guantanamo is closed, from various perspectives: Christians, Muslims, Jews, the security minded, or those whose goals are cost containment. He believes that much of our message needs to shift from the evils of GTMO to why we are ALL better off with Guantanamo closed.



**MANY THANKS TO RICHARD BETOURNAY FOR THE BEAUTIFUL
ARTWORK ON THE TRANSOM OF THE GOLDEN RULE.
RICHARD PAINTED THE NAME AND HOME PORT OF THE
GOLDEN RULE PRO BONO. HIS TALENTS ARE VERY MUCH
APPRECIATED BY OUR VETERANS**





**Veterans For Peace
Chapter 56**

Phone 707-826-7124
Email: VFP56@aol.com
WE'RE ON THE WEB:
<http://www.vfp56.org>

COORDINATING COMMITTEE

**Rob Hepburn, Steve Stamnes
Steve Sottong, Jim Sorter,
John Schaefer, John Mulloy
Jane Riggan, Ernie Behm**

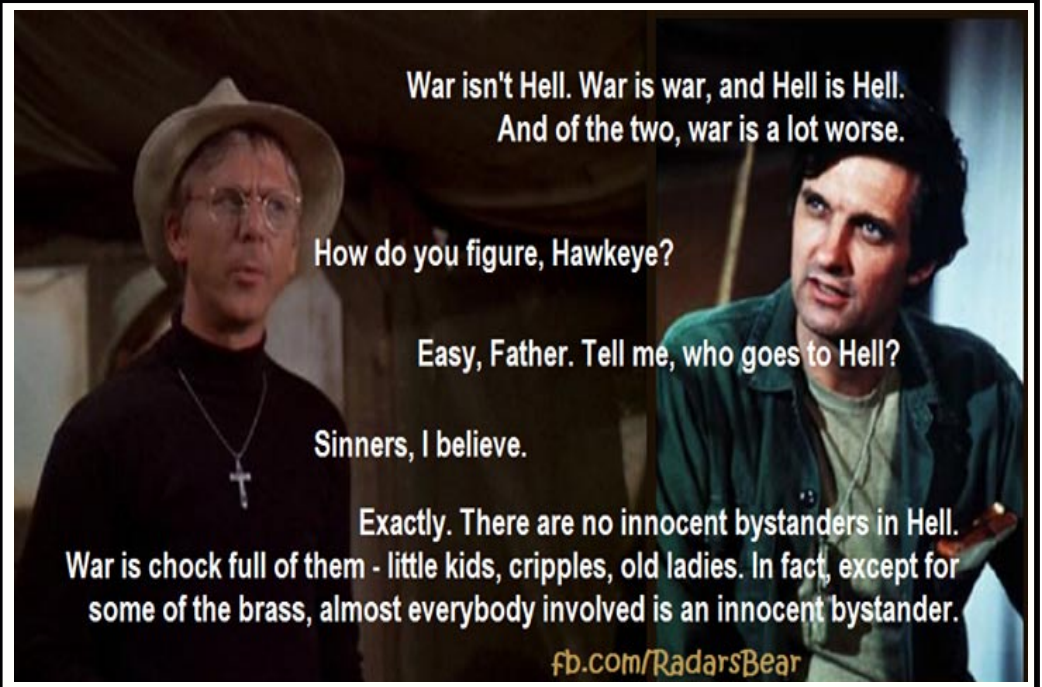
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LET US HEAR FROM YOU!

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 turtldnccer@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.



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