



VETERANS FOR PEACE  
HUMBOLDT BAY  
CHAPTER 56

# THE FOGHORN

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2008

*“Cutting Through the Fog of War”*

## Local Veterans Honor Victims of Hiroshima; Nagasaki

*by Mashaw McGuinnis*

The participation of three members of Veterans For Peace seemed to add poignancy to Arcata’s lantern ceremony on August 9th, the anniversary of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, Japan. Sponsored by Arcata’s Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Committee, the annual event pays homage to the victims of the U.S. bombings of Nagasaki as well as Hiroshima. Topped off at dusk with illuminated hand made lanterns floating out across Klopp Lake, locals of all ages participate in the event which acknowledges the tragedies which changed our world forever.

Nagasaki was certainly a place that would change Carl Stancil’s world forever. A young Navy veteran, Carl had just been discharged from the military in 1967 after serving his country in the Viet Nam war. He was chosen as the featured speaker at the lantern ceremony because that is where his first awakening to war’s atrocities began. There, he came face-to-face with limbless children and harsh evidence of violence in the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum. Filled with photos of the city before and after the blast the museum included items like melted glass bottles and all too graphic pictures of the innocent victims of that day in 1945.

As Carl’s eyes registered the shocking images in the war museum, he was overcome with emotion and understanding of what war was really about. But even worse was the sinking awareness that he himself had been a part of equally horrendous acts in Viet Nam. That visit to Nagasaki was to be an epiphany for him, that as a veteran he had a special obligation to speak out against war.

Though it was not planned as part of the regular ceremonies, fellow Veteran For Peace, Nate Lomba rose from his chair as Carl was speaking, and almost as if on cue joined Carl in front of the audience. He shared that he too had visited Nagasaki, and remembered how the tram took tourists up high to get a bird’s eye view. Speaking with sincerity and frankness Nate recalled that seeing the city from so high up allowed the viewer an emotional distance from the reality of what had happened there when American planes dropped their atomic bomb. “From up there it looked like any other major city” Nate told the audience, “you would never know what had happened there”. Drawing a parallel between his tram ride and the distance often felt by the young men participating in violence, Nate explained that the military used that very strategy during war.

Making it possible to cause such devastation from a great distance, young men like Nate and Carl could do their jobs and still remain relatively unaware of the magnitude of their actions. Known for his sharp wit and quick humorous retorts, Nate was uncharacteristically somber that evening, saying simply that his own epiphany would come much later than Carl’s. With still many years of life experience ahead his awareness of what war really meant still had yet to be shaped. Ultimately however, his experience in Viet Nam would lead him to the same place that Carl’s had. As a member of Veterans For Peace who felt it was his duty to speak out against war.



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*Local Vets Honor Victims: Continued from page 1*

Offering a perspective which focused on peace rather than war, was long time Conscientious Objector and Veteran for Peace member Jon Reisdorf who recited a hauntingly beautiful poem titled "Metta Sutra". Used in Buddhist teachings, a short excerpt of the poem reads:



**Let none through anger or ill-will**

**Wish harm upon another.**

**Even as a mother protects with her life**

**Her child, her only child,**

**So with a boundless heart**

**Should one cherish all living beings:**

**Radiating kindness over the entire world.**

The simple words seemed to resonate with every audience member, whether military veteran or civilian. And within moments the ugliness of war felt far away.

**NEXT VFP 56  
MEETING WILL  
BE HELD ON  
SEPTEMBER 4th  
7:00 PM LABOR TEMPLE  
840 E St.  
Eureka, CA 95501**

## TORTUGA ADVENTURE

*by Linda & Jim Sorter*

Hola from beautiful Mexico where it is hot, humid and awash in dramatic tropical storms every afternoon. Thor resides here! We have been in San Pancho, 40 miles north of Puerto Vallarta, since August 8th volunteering at our annual sea turtle project, Grupo Ecological. It is a time of "spiritual" renewal for us. This is our eighth summer and we can certainly see the impact that this project, run by one full-time manager and volunteers from around the world, has had on the endangered Olive Ridley turtle population.



When we began our work here in the summer of 2000, during a nesting season, June through November, we were averaging approximately 140 to 180 nests. Last year, 2007, we nested over 700 turtles and released 75,000 hatchlings back to the sea. This year, 2008, we are 90% above our rate of nesting from last year. If the season continues as it is we will have nested over 1,200 Olive Ridelys and released over 120,000 hatchlings back into the Pacific Ocean by the end of November. It sounds like a lot, but only 1 in 500 hatchlings will survive to maturity to come back and lay her eggs. We have to save a lot to have a few.

We work at night from 9:00 PM until 6:00 AM. It is a reprieve from the heat of the day, the beaches quiet and backlit by an enormous moon or star-scattered skies, fireflies twinkling Christmas lights against the background jungle. The work consists of walking local beaches, or driving a continually modified vintage 1960's Volkswagen dune buggy, "El Diablo," looking for tortugas crawling from the sea to lay their eggs in the beach. Once discovered, we protect them while they nest and lay their eggs. After they return to the surf, we dig the eggs back up again to re-nest in our hatchery. By re-nesting them we can improve their chances of survival from predators, pollution and poachers—who sell them on the black market as an "aphrodisiac". If left in the beach they have only a 60% chance of surviving. By re-nesting the eggs and then releasing the hatchlings back to the sea, the chance of survival is 95%. It is very tiring

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*Tortuga Adventure: continued from page 2*

work, but extremely rewarding when you see the tiny hatchlings madly “flipping” down the sand to their ocean home. Once back in the water, they can swim for thousands of miles for approximately 10 years until reaching maturity, where they will then head back to their hatching beach to continue the process of succession of their species.

For the first time, our children and grandchildren will be joining us for a few weeks to help with this project. Why save sea turtles? For many reasons but certainly out of respect for their being among the oldest creatures on earth, and we want a world that nurtures and celebrates all life.

Hopefully all is well back in Humboldt County. We miss all of our friends and the important work you are doing to make this world a better place. We will be back home in October to help with the ongoing, continuous struggle. Until then via con Dios con amor,

Jim & Linda

This exhibit consists of 127,000 medium sized white flags representing the civilian casualties this war: many of whom are infants and children, mothers and fathers, and elderly people.

The mass public media of our nation has almost universally ignored these civilian deaths as if these people never existed. This death and suffering of the civilian population of Iraq is largely absent from our national conscience.

This is why we believe it is critical to bring the Iraq Body Count Exhibit to the US public to raise awareness to the real horrific costs of this war.

We will need \$600.00 for expenses and 100 volunteers to put the flags up. We plan on doing this in mid October.

We hope that Chapter 56 of Veterans For Peace will endorse us and be a vital presence at the Iraq Body Count Exhibit!

## COLLATERAL DAMAGE

by Rob Hepburn

The Pentagon calls it collateral damage.  
 The blood spattered children of Iraq call it murder,  
 lost from their mother's breasts.  
 Their fathers killed for being Ragheads.  
 The water filtering plants bombed,  
 and the agony of dysentery and death.  
 It's all collateral damage.  
 The blues for the people of Iraq,  
 and anywhere the US. goes.  
 It's the Empire after all!  
 Meanwhile people are upset about \$4.00 gas  
 and want drilling to keep this dinosaur going.  
 All the troops coming back with brain damage,  
 living on the streets - acting out.  
 Tell the truth!  
 Collateral Damage for us all!  
 Collateral Damage will get us all!

Live For Peace - Robert Hepburn

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## The Iraq Body Count Exhibit

by Rob Hepburn

Plans are being made to bring the Iraq Body Count Exhibit to Humboldt State University. The purpose of the Iraq Body Count Exhibit is to raise awareness of the human cost of the Iraq War.

At least 655,000 Iraqis (Durham et. al.) and 4,069 Americans(CNN. com) have died as a result of the March 2003 invasion of Iraq.

IBCE. is not associated with Iraq Body Count, the organization that cites much lower casualty numbers. Iraq Body Count uses passive surveillance techniques, reporting data only when it is corroborated by at least two media reports. While this type of archiving is essential, it is important to note that passive surveillance techniques have historically captured less than 20% of actual deaths in war torn countries.

The College Democrats at Oregon State University hosted the Exhibit from May 6th-14th 2008. From May 25th thru May 31st. the Exhibit was hosted in front of the State Capitol by the “Sacramento Coalition to End the War.”

We the organizers of the Iraq Body Count Exhibit, plan this to be a coalition sponsored event by the Associated Students of HSU, the Campus Greens, and Chapter 56 of Veterans For Peace.

We have already got an enthusiastic response from the president of Humboldt State University Student Government.

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## VFP Peace Team

by Elliott Adams

Have you ever wanted to be an agent, or catalyst, that brings peace into conflict? Would you like to be part of a trained, carefully elected and drilled team of VFP members that goes into areas of conflict to make room for peace? Then contact me (elliottadams@juno.com).

This is an experiment -- can we in VFP put our military experi-  
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## HSU Veterans Enrollment Services Expanding Support System

*Donna Tam/The Times-Standard*

*Article Launched: 08/13/2008 01:24:20 AM PDT*

Fifteen years ago, Kim Hall started the Veterans Enrollment Services program at Humboldt State University because she saw a need.

The program helps veterans navigate through GI bill paperwork and college enrollment issues. Hall, the HSU veterans certification officer, said her hope was to provide veterans with resources during their transition into college life, and for many, back to civilian life.

"I started enrollment services with a goal of a more serious program for vets," she said. "It's a need for the population and in my mind it's a special population."

Hall said she sees the need now more than ever.

"There's a lot of barriers," Hall said about veterans who return to school after being on tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. She said veterans today not only have to face the transition back into civilian life, but also have to deal with multiple mental health issues and traumatic injuries.

In an effort to provide more extensive services to veterans interested in pursuing their education in Humboldt County, Hall and her office filled with work study veteran students are finalizing plans for a move to a new office space and the creation of a new community.

"That's really what we're trying to create foremost," Hall said, adding that just having the space for the veterans to meet will make a difference.

The new Veterans Enrollment and Transition Services program will provide tutoring, information exchange, housing opportunities and weekly on-campus liaisons with the Redwood Veterans Center, the North Coast Veterans Resource Center, California's Department of Employment Development, the Humboldt County Veterans Service Office and Dr. William Beegle, a private therapist. The service representatives will be volunteering their time.

While there are about 350 veterans currently attending HSU, the program will be accessible to any veteran who wants to return to school.

Hall said the new office space arrangements will be finalized today, and the program will soon be moving into their new head-

quarters in the basement of the HSU library, Room 58.

Travis Holt, the new program's veteran certification assistant, a former Marine and a HSU student, said the closing of the Veterans Upward Bound program last year, left the veteran population without a solid network. The program held remedial college courses for students to help them transition into college life as well as provided a space they could socialize in.

"To fill that void, we took what we already had, which deals with a lot of the administration of the GI bill and we're trying to provide more remedial programs, which we had with Veterans Upward Bound, and more of a community," Holt said.

John Howard, an industrial technology student finishing up his last semester at HSU, worked at VUB before it closed due to a loss of federal funding. He said he came to HSU because of the support services available and credited VUB's remedial courses for making his transition back to school an easy one. The classes ranged from advanced mathematics to composition to public speaking.

"These are things that you don't normally use in the military on a day-to-day basis," he said. Howard said while his first four years of his service in the Navy were on a nuclear submarine, he was able to serve his remaining five years on a base in Washington, D.C., and had time to transition back into civilian life before starting school full time.

But he has watched other younger veterans, some who have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or severe anxiety, have trouble adjusting to civilian life.

"It's very difficult. It's a completely different experience to be a civilian and also to be a student," Howard said. "Self management is not something you get to do all that much."

He said he doesn't want the new program to become a place to keep the veterans away from the rest of the world, just a place for them to get used to the civilian community again.

"You're not really feeling like you are a part of the community even though you want to be," he said.

When Hall started the original program, she said she thought the laid back pace of life in Humboldt, and lack of city noises and smaller classrooms, was a good environment for veterans to return to school. And, she still believes it. Hall said she hopes the new V.E.T.S. program will give veterans even more of the support they deserve.

"Humboldt County is a great place for vets," she said.

Donna Tam can be reached at 441-0532 or dtam@times-standard.com.

*Submitted by: John Schaefer*



VFP Team: continued from page 3

ence to work breaking the cycle of violence others are caught in, rather than being the source of violence as we once were? While this is new to VFP, there are several groups around the world we can look to for working models and support as we prepare to deploy domestic peace teams. Some of the concepts and groups we can look to for both fielding peace teams as well as, training in active nonviolence and third party nonviolent intervention or nonviolent conflict intervention are: Creating a Culture of Peace, Nonviolent Peaceforce, Michigan Peace Team, Peace Brigade International, Training for Change, Christian Peacemaker Teams, and other organizations that practice third party nonviolent intervention and conflict intervention.

For those not familiar with this type of work, these teams, commonly uses techniques such as: accompanying people to protect them (an opposition figure is less likely to be killed when accompanied by an international team member), physically inserting themselves between warring parties to create space for other solutions, shadowing people and groups to inhibit their ability to be violent, arranging meetings between warring parties, helping mediate solutions and using de-escalation techniques, depending on the situation. These groups often use 2 weeks of intense training to prepare team members for this work.

Where would such a team deploy? The team is still just an idea so the early members will mold what it looks like. But probably it will work through out the US, at high conflict demonstrations and areas of on going high conflict. For example the Mexican Boarder where there are immigrants, Minutemen, and the Boarder patrol locked in an ongoing conflict ripe with the potential for violence. Overlaying that is the conflict the landowners and Native Americans have with the US government as it builds a massive wall right through their lands.

If you are interested in being on the ground floor of training to become a team member or of organizing and team building, please contact me.

Elliott D S Adams  
 President  
 Veterans For Peace  
 518-284-2048  
 518-441-2697  
 elliottadams@juno.com

## This Is Not the Change We Hoped For: House Concurrent Resolution 362

by Camillo “Mac” Bica, *t r u t h o u t* | Perspective

Congressman Robert Wexler originally supported H. Con. Res. 362, but withdrew his sponsorship, citing loopholes that could result in aggression against Iran. (Photo: Getty Images)

Though America voted for change in 2006, the subsequent two years have demonstrated that the Democrats in Congress, while avowing a “new direction for America,” are as willing and as skilled as their Republican/neocon counterparts at utilizing half-truths, innuendo, deceit and scare tactics to mislead the American public along the path to another devastating and unnecessary war. Consider, as a case in point, H. Con. Res. 362, introduced by Representative Gary Ackerman (D-New York) and co-sponsored by 261 members of Congress (at this writing), many of them Democrats. This bipartisan resolution is flawed - perhaps even suspect - for a number of reasons.

First, it asserts as fact that Iran is pursuing nuclear weapons and intimates that it would share its nuclear material and technology with terrorists and “rogue” states. The reality is that as of the end of July 2008, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) had conducted over 3,000 man-days of scrupulous inspections, including nine visits that were unannounced.

In a report to the IAEA Board of Governors dated May 26, 2008, Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei affirms, “The Agency has been able to continue to verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear materials in Iran. Iran has provided the Agency with access to declared nuclear material and has provided the required nuclear material accountancy reports in connection with declared nuclear material and activities.” The National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) corroborates the IAEA’s findings. “We judge with high confidence that in fall 2003, Tehran halted its nuclear weapons program.... We assess with moderate confidence Tehran has not restarted its nuclear weapons program as of mid-2007” (November 2007).

Credible evidence exists, therefore, to refute H. Con. Res. 362’s claim that Iran is pursuing nuclear weapons and engaged in “illicit nuclear activities,” the primary premise upon which this resolution builds its argument for sanctions and a blockade. The fact that this evidence is readily available to members of Congress raises concerns regarding their intent and motivation in sponsoring a resolution that exaggerates, if not fabricates, a “threat” posed by Iran to stability in the Middle East, the survival of Israel and the vital security interests of the United States.

Second, the argument as presented in the resolution is of questionable construction. Initially, it speaks of “prevent

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**“In the End, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.”**  
**Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968)**

*Resolution 362: continued from page 5*

ing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability” - a concern, perhaps, if true, which many Americans can at least sympathize with and understand. It then, however, resolves to accomplish this end - to deal with this threat - by compelling Iran to “verifiably suspend its nuclear enrichment activities.” That is, it ignores and/or conflates the critical legal distinction between enriching uranium for weapons production and enriching uranium for peaceful purposes which is Iran’s sovereign right under Article IV of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty of which it is signatory. Now, this is not just careless language, but is integral to the basic purpose of this resolution. By conflating the two uses of uranium enrichment, the resolution misleads the American public into believing that since Iran has admitted to enriching uranium for peaceful purposes, despite evidence to the contrary it must also be guilty of enriching uranium for weapons production.

Third, H. Con. Res. 362 demands that the president immediately impose “stringent inspection requirements on all persons, vehicles, ships, planes, trains, and cargo entering or departing Iran.” Such a land, sea and air blockade, with no mention of seeking a Security Council Resolution, is more than mere provocation; it constitutes an act of war. In fact, the International Criminal Court will include blockade in its list of acts of war in 2009. It doesn’t require a degree from the War College to understand that the effectiveness of a blockade hinges upon a credible threat of military action.

A resolution that demands a blockade, therefore, is also authorizing inter alia the use of military force should, for example, ships bound for or leaving Iran refuse to be boarded and stringently inspected. But yet, when confronted with the concern of many of their constituents that the resolution is not an alternative but a prelude to war, sponsors are quick to note that H. Con. Res. 362 includes the disclaimer that “nothing in this resolution shall be construed as an authorization of the use of force against Iran.”

Clearly, this proviso indicates that the sponsors of this resolution are either unfamiliar with the nature of blockade or have learned a lesson from their ill-fated support for the Iraq resolution. If the former, then they are negligent in their responsibility to familiarize themselves with how blockades function before sponsoring a resolution that could quite easily lead to violent confrontation and war. If the latter, then sadly, the lesson they learned from the Iraq debacle was not that they should avoid supporting resolutions based upon lies and deceptions, but, rather, that they should prepare beforehand the means for escaping responsibility and culpability for involving our nation in a another tragic and devastating conflict.

If we are to believe that the Democratic Party and its candidate truly offer hope, change and an alternative to the politics of fear, lies and deception, then members of Congress must, for one thing, follow the lead of Tom Allen, Danny Davis, Steve Cohen, William Clay, Barney Frank and Robert Wexler and withdraw their

sponsorship and support for H. Con. Res. 362. If the Democrats truly wish to distinguish themselves from the Republicans and offer a “new direction for America,” as Representative Ackerman claims on his web site, they must draft a new resolution - one that demands not threats of violence but diplomacy, not blockade but face-to-face negotiations with no preconditions, not sanctions but the exchange of ambassadors, not embargo but the opening of embassies, not covert operations intended at inciting unrest, ethnic conflict and regime change, but a nonaggression pact - all with the condition, of course, that both nations abide by the terms of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). That is, in return for an Iranian guarantee that its nuclear program is intended only for peaceful purposes and its cooperation in ensuring scrupulous inspections, the United States must end its bellicose posturing, sanctions and embargo, and abide by Articles I, II and VI of the NPT and reduce its nuclear arsenal, cease its development of a new generation of tactical nuclear weapons, and end its deployment of nuclear weapons around the world. This is the change we hope for; this is the new direction for America we must demand.

*Submitted by: Jim Sorter*

## FOGHORN SUBMISSIONS

**Thanks to all who contributed articles to the September issue of the Foghorn.**

**We do need to encourage members however, to continue to write or submit articles of interest they have read. Remember, the Foghorn is your publication. We would like VFP 56 members to continue to voice their opinions or concerns regarding issues which they feel need to be shared.**



## Afghans Protest Amid Claims 76 Killed in Military Strikes

HERAT, Afghanistan - Afghan villagers staged an angry protest Saturday amid claims that 76 civilians were killed in coalition air strikes against Taliban rebels, as the US military launched an investigation.

President Hamid Karzai condemned civilian casualties from Friday's clashes in the western province of Herat but there were conflicting claims about the death toll, with the US-led coalition saying only 30 rebels were killed.

If the toll of 76 is confirmed, it would be one of the highest for civilians in the battle against the extremist Taliban, who were ousted from power in Afghanistan during a US-led invasion in late 2001.

It was difficult to independently verify what happened near the village of Azizabad, about 120 kilometres (75 miles) south of the city of Herat, as the area is a stronghold of Taliban and other militants, and considered dangerous.

About 250 villagers staged an angry protest on Saturday, hurling stones at Afghan troops, the police chief for western Afghanistan, General Akram Yawar, told AFP.

Shots were fired into the air to disperse the crowd and four people were wounded, he said.

The troops were forced back into their compound, he said by telephone, with the crowd's chants against the government and the international troops heard in the background.

Reporters who later went to the area with a police escort could see around 15 houses reduced to rubble and fresh graves that locals said contained the bodies of the victims.

Demonstrators had torched a police car and checkpoint and blocked the main road to Herat for several hours, an AFP correspondent said. They had also overturned a food delivery truck, he said.

The US military, which has been accused of killing scores of other civilians in action against insurgents, including around 50 at a wedding party in July, said it would investigate.

But it insisted only 30 militants were killed in the fighting and air strikes, which followed an ambush on troops going to arrest a "known" Taliban commander.

"We are very confident of the information that we have because we physically went into that compound and identified the people," coalition spokeswoman Lieutenant Colonel Rumi Nielson-Green told AFP Saturday.

On Friday, the Afghan interior ministry said: "Seventy-six people, all civilians and most of them women and children, were martyred."

The dead were "19 women, seven men and the rest children all under 15 years of age," it said.

In a statement, Karzai accused the troops of acting without coordinating with local authorities and "innocently martyring at least 70 people, most of them women and children."

He appointed a delegation headed by religious affairs minister Nehmatullah Shahrani to visit the area, with the protection of security forces, and report back to him within a week.

The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission said it had also sent a team to go to the area to look into "allegations of breach of international humanitarian law and excessive use of force."

It said in a statement that more than 900 civilians had been killed in insurgent attacks and military operations against rebels in Afghanistan this year.

Karzai has regularly met international troops to urge them to increase efforts to avoid civilian deaths.

These efforts "have not yet brought a fruitful conclusion and our civilians are victims of anti-terrorist operations," his statement said.

UN Special Representative Kai Eide meanwhile warned against "jumping to conclusions" but called for a thorough and quick investigation.

Insurgency-linked unrest has spiralled in Afghanistan, despite the presence of 70,000 international soldiers, with incidents said to be up by 50 percent in parts of the country this year.

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*Submitted by: Jim Sorter*





Veterans For Peace  
Chapter 56  
Phone 707-826-7124  
Email: VFP56@aol.com  
WE'RE ON THE WEB:  
<http://www.vfp56.org>

**LEADERSHIP TEAM**  
Rob Hepburn, Steve Stamnes  
Steve Sottong, Linda Sorter  
Jim Sorter, John Schaefer  
Gordon Anderson

**STANDING COMMITTEES**  
WU/WMD: Peter Aronson  
General Store: Doug Smith  
Media: Becky Luening  
VEOP: Carl Stancil  
Jon Reisdorf  
VSC: Marc Knipper

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

# 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](mailto: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.

## REMEMBER GIANT YARD SALE

Remember VFP 56 giant yard sale to be held on the weekend of September 20th and 21st on 15th, between G and H Streets, in Arcata.

We need items to be donated!!!  
Please contact Gordy Anderson (707) 498-5889 for more information on where to bring items for sale.