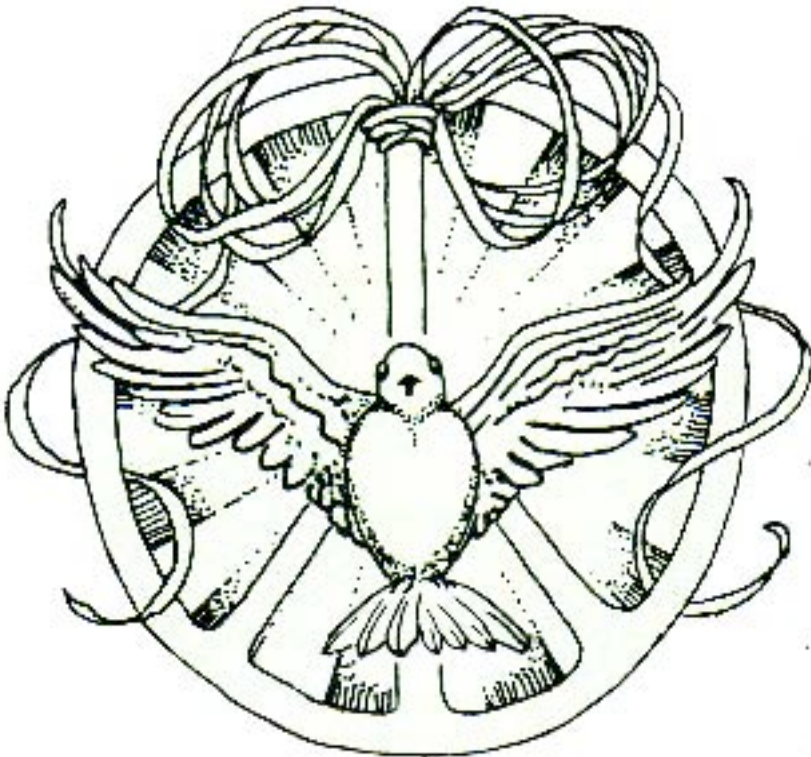


22nd Annual  Winter Solstice

PEACE CONCERT

Music & Cheer
for Dark Hours



December 19th, 2008, 8:00 PM
at and co-sponsored by the

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Gainesville Veterans for Peace Activities in 2008:

2008 has been a busy year for Gainesville Veterans for Peace (VFP). Our new coordinator Scott Camil, founder of Gainesville VFP in 1987, who returned in January 2007, has involved Chapter 14 in many important events and activities in 2008. We continue to work with the new Gainesville chapters of Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) and Military Families Speak Out (MFSO) formed in 2007 (see articles). We have picketed against the war together throughout the year from 4:00 p.m. to dark: 1st & 3rd Tuesdays on Archer Road & 34th St. and 2nd & 4th Tuesdays on University Ave. & 13th Street. These pickets have been led for many years by Gil Marshall and Ku Wang, as well as the Community Coalition Against War and Terrorism (CCAWT) and the student-based Peace Action. All members of the public are invited to join us. Veterans Day fell on a Tuesday this year and we had 12 vets plus their supporters picketing against the war on University and 13th including, according to Scott Camil, “a Marine on every corner”. What better way could VFP follow its mission and celebrate Veterans Day?

On Christmas Day last year, VFP members gave out 146 Working Assets phone cards at the Gainesville VA Hospital and Nursing Home. An additional 54 cards were given out at the Lake City VA.

In January, we participated in the Martin Luther King March in Gainesville and cosponsored Colonel Ann Wright, an Iraq War whistleblower who wrote *Dissent: Voices of Conscience*, as a speaker at UF on Jan. 29th. Colonel Wright is one of the few courageous diplomats who spoke truth to power by resigning their diplomatic posts when we invaded Iraq. She was the second American to resign. She and others like her have inspired VFP to begin a biographical series that will be used to produce a calendar of “Real Heroes”.

On Feb. 14th, in front of the National Guard recruiting office on NW 13th St., VFP enthusiastically endorsed and participated in a Valentine’s Day Kiss-A-Thon. The theme was: “Don’t Enlist, Stay and Kiss –That Way Everybody Makes Out.”

A number of VFP members attended “Winter Soldier Iraq and Afghanistan” in Silver Spring, MD, March 13th –16th. Local IVAW members participated on panels reporting their experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan and our webmaster attended as a blogger. You can see her reports and photographs on the VFP Gainesville blog at vfpainesville.blogspot.com (March 2008 archives).

About 250 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans and active duty military participated in panels with total attendance of the conference at about 1,000. It was an intense and unforgettable experience. It was the #1 news story internationally; video is available online on the national IVAW website (ivaw.org).

Following the national event, VFP Gainesville co-sponsored the second annual Iraq Vets’ Teach-In/Speak-Out at Santa Fe Community College on March 20th with CCAWT and the CMC. Seven vets spoke, including several who stepped out of the audience to volunteer their stories. The SFCC speak-out was followed on April 8th by “Winter Soldier: Iraq @ UF” at the UF Presbyterian Student Center with Scott Camil as moderator and several local IVAW members on the panel. A capacity crowd of over 200 attended this event, which was sponsored by Students Against War (SAW), Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), Campus Progress, Iraq Vets Against the War (IVAW) and Vets for Peace.

Also in April, VFP co-sponsored an important film *Taxi to the Dark Side*, and brought the co-producer, Blair Foster (originally from Gainesville), to town. This Academy Award-winning film was shown at the Hippodrome with generous community sponsorship. It addresses the issue of torture in US detention facilities.

VFP and the North Central Florida GI Rights Hotline helped advertise the new Vet Center, which does counseling and referral for veterans and their families. It had its grand opening on St. Patrick’s Day. The center currently has a receptionist and two counselors and is located at Tower Rd. and W. University Ave.

In May, we had our second annual Memorial Day project, Memorial Mile (see article). This year, the Mixson family of Military Families Speak Out allowed VFP to use photographs of their son Catlin, who was severely injured in Iraq, as part of our “Cost of War” display. The Memorial Mile received wonderful support from the community and was organized so that volunteers could help you find any



continued on inside back cover...

Tonight's Program:

(may include but not limited to)

PROCESSIONAL WARM-UP

Mark Billman, Cathy Dewitt, George Tortorelli

CHEROKEE PEACE CHANT

Georg Suzuki

DRUMS OF PEACE

Julie Netzer, David Beede, Rob Rothschild, Paige Allison, Kim Ricks,

Bill Hutchinson, Bob McPeek, Jennin Khalsa, John Chambers,

Susan Marynowski, Robert Clark, Kim Ricks, Jackson

JOHN CHAMBERS and FRIENDS

Bob McPeek, Mark Billman, Bill Hutchinson, Lauren Robinson, Jennifer Johnson

SCRUB HILL BILLIES

Karl Miller, Chris Demers

KEVIN O'SULLIVAN

KEITH PETERS and TALKING STICK

SUZANNA HOUGH

QUARTERMOON

Raven, John Smith, Michael Peyton

INTERMISSION

OTHER VOICES

Fagan Arouh, Alan Hill, Michelle Ott, Dan Tampas

CALLIE THOMPSON

FURTHER ADO

Bob McPeek, David Ottenberg, Fagan Arouh, Rob Rothschild

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Peace Helmet Award



Over the years Veterans for Peace has recognized members whose service is integral to the work of VFP. This recognition is acknowledged with the presentation of the Peace Helmet Award.

The award is a beautiful stained glass replica of the VFP symbol of the Dove of Peace on a military helmet. For the past 22 years, these stained glass Peace Helmets have been created for us exclusively by McIntyre Stained Glass Studio.

We do not give this award out every year. Starting this year, we will give the Helmet Award publicly at the Winter Solstice.

This year five Peace Helmets will be awarded. The recipients' names are not printed here in order to keep the award a surprise.



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The UUFG Social Justice Council

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Veterans for Peace

thanks

Linda Pollini

*for the beautiful artwork
on the cover of this program.*

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Courage to Resist

Jessica Newman

Jorge Alvarez and Anthony Maroun, both members of Veterans for Peace and Iraq Veterans Against the War, are courageously refusing orders to return to active duty to fight in the “Global War on Terror.”

Both enlisted in the Marines in 2002 while seniors in high school, and eventually served in Iraq and the War on Terror. Jorge signed a four-year active duty contract, leaving him with four years of inactive duty, and Anthony signed a five-year active duty contract, leaving him with three years of inactive duty.

In August of 2008, Jorge and Anthony both received letters from the Marine Corps calling on them to report for screening for active duty eligibility, the first either of them had received since returning from Iraq.

Anthony and Jorge both immediately called Scott Camil, a GI Rights Hotline counselor, who consulted with its attorney. After confirming his information with the attorney, Scott called Anthony and Jorge and informed them that they didn’t have to go to their screening and they didn’t have to go back to war.

Because both are on inactive duty, the Uniform Code of Military Justice doesn’t apply to them.

“Basically, we’re civilians,” Anthony said. “Legally, there’s nothing they can do, according to the GI Rights Hotline.”

But after the first letter, Jorge received another letter ordering him to report in for activation, which he also ignored. Then the military started calling, but neither Jorge nor Anthony answered the phone.

“I called them back once,” Jorge said. “But as usual, I got an answering machine. I just told them I was refusing orders, and they never called me back.”

Now the two are standing up and making their statements public to inspire others to do the same. They want the world to know that they’ve seen the war, it’s wrong, and there is something people can do about it.

“When I was in Iraq, I only got one perspective and I only heard one voice,” Anthony said. “But I could read what things were supposed to be and I could see how things really were, and they weren’t adding up.”



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Jorge agrees with Anthony, and they think what they're doing and their ability to do it should be common knowledge.

"Part of why I'm doing this is because if people need or want a way out, they have one," Jorge said.

Anthony and Jorge both know what it's like to be willing to die in combat for their country. In fact, at the time of their enlistment, less than one year after September 11, both were very supportive of the war and believed in what they were fighting for.

"Back then, I didn't feel like the greatest threat to this country was itself," Jorge said. "But I now know



the War on Terror is a war on the American people, and the racism it has generated makes me sick."

The "War on Terror" is an endless war on an idea. American soldiers and civilians alike are dying for something that is undefined and has no end in sight.

With their public refusals to return to active duty, Anthony and Jorge hope to inspire veterans and civilians alike to resist the war, as well as educate people on the injustices that occur every day on the frontlines. But they especially want to reach veterans who may find themselves in the same position as they are. Their courage to resist will hopefully inspire countless others to do the same.

"A lot of people don't know their rights and are afraid of the government," Anthony said. "The government loves the fact that people don't know their rights. But we're not saying that maybe you won't go back, maybe you will if you do this. We're telling you that you won't be sent back!"

Now Anthony and Jorge are showing their patriotism by supporting and defending the Constitution against "all enemies, foreign and domestic."

"I will not be called back to serve in this illegal war that does more to harm the United States Constitution than it does to protect it," Anthony said.

If there is no struggle there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters. This struggle may be a moral one, or it may be a physical one, and it may be both moral and physical, but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress.

— Frederick Douglass

Iraq Veterans Against the War

(North Florida, Chapter # 31)

Would like to thank Veterans for Peace for their continued support and most valued friendship.



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understanding point of view
and acceptance
of the views of others is
paramount for the future.

Memorial Mile

This is the second year that Veterans For Peace has set up the tombstones that make up part of our Memorial Day project known as Memorial Mile. This year, the display was set up for three days along NW 10th Avenue running east from 34th Street.

Again, we received much support and many accolades from the community. Many more people attended this year than the first year because more people knew about it.

In 2007, the display consisted of 3843 tombstones representing 3457 American soldiers who died in Iraq and 386 who died in Afghanistan, and the Cost of War display on the opposite side of the street. This year, we put up 4077 tombstones from Iraq and 500 from Afghanistan for a total of 4577.

On the opposite side of the street, we had our Cost of War display and the Peace Ribbon, provided by Code Pink. People can view the photos on our website www.afn.org/~vetpeace/.


This year, two videos were also made, one by Denny Bellesheim and Alan Saperstein, with help from Linda Pollini, and one by Harold Saive. They can both be viewed on our website. We really appreciate the fifty-plus community volunteers who come out to assist with this project which would not be possible without their help.

We will be setting up Memorial mile again next year.



**Violence can only be concealed
by a Lie, and the Lie can only
be maintained by Violence.**

— Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn



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--William Faulkner*

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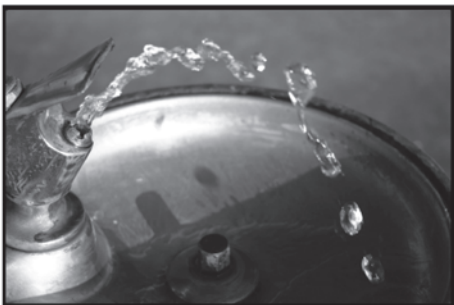
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— Ian Welsh

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VFP Statement of Purpose:

We, having dutifully served our nation, do hereby affirm our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace. To this end we will work with others:

- 1) Toward increasing public awareness of the costs of war;*
- 2) To restrain our government from intervening overtly or covertly in the internal affairs of other nations;*
- 3) To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons; and*
- 4) To abolish war as an instrument of international policy.*

To achieve these goals, members of VFP pledge to use non-violent means to maintain an organization that is both democratic and open with the understanding that all members are trusted to act in the best interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace.

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Those of us who are on the right side of freedom's divide have an obligation to those who are still on the wrong side of that divide.

— Condoleezza Rice

...sometimes it takes people a while to come to the sober realization of what forces create stability and which don't.

— G. W. Bush

Sarkis

AHIMSA

- Anonymous

**The time is
always right
to do
what is right.
— Martin
Luther King, Jr**

“We utterly deny all outward wars ... for any
end or under any pretence whatsoever.”

Friends Declaration of 1661

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of the**

**Religious Society
of Friends
(Quakers)**

Meeting Info:

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702 NW 38th St

Meeting for worship 11 a.m.

Firstday (Sunday)

Homenaje for John Penrod



December 8, 1913 - April 12, 2008

John Penrod's place in our lives
and the work before us.

Blind faith in bad leaders is not patriotism.

A patriot does not tell people who are intensely concerned about their country to just sit down and be quiet; to refrain from speaking out in the name of politeness or for the sake of being a good host; to show slavish, blind obedience and deference to a dishonest, war-mongering, human-rights-violating President.

— Ross C. "Rocky" Anderson

Who was John A. Penrod?

John A. Penrod, known to his friends as Jack, was a veteran of the MacKenzie-Papineau Battalion of the 15th International Brigade of the Spanish Republican Army during the Spanish Civil War. He was a true forever activist. Before Spain he had been a radical student leader at Penn, his alma mater. After he graduated from college he went to work with the Steel Workers Organizing Committee of the newly forming Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). He left union organizing to join the defenders of Spanish democracy in 1937.

Jack entered Spain, whose borders had been closed, by crossing the Pyrenees Mountains on foot by night with fellow volunteers. He led a sniper squadron in the MacKenzie-Papineau Battalion of the 15th International Brigade and saw action in major engagements including Teruel and Fuentes de Ebro. A high point was Smith's Maneuver where Jack and a handful of others held off advancing fascist armies for hours. Jack was wounded and when he recovered became an ambulance driver until he returned to the U.S.

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The John A. Penrod Award for Progressive Movement Activists

He was stationed in the Philippines during WWII where, when the war ended, he organized a cell within his army unit to work with the radical Philippine Huks (the Huks had fought the Japanese invaders in WWII and were leading the way on land reform) to agitate for U.S. withdrawal from the Philippines.

After WWII, Jack finished his doctorate on the G.I. Bill and became a professor of English. At the University of Florida, he won the Thomas Jefferson Award for excellence in teaching. In the 1950s, he worked against McCarthyist political repression of fellow professors. Later he helped to organize the faculty union at the University of Florida. He also helped to found a chapter of the United Nations Association and was a founder of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Gainesville.

He demonstrated against the war in Iraq, was a member of the Alachua County Labor Party, Veterans for Peace, organized for national health insurance (HR676), and wrote letters for political prisoners for Amnesty International. He was also a member of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and worked with the radical women's liberation groups Redstockings and Gainesville Women's Liberation. He volunteered as a reader for blind students, tutored ESL students, and served as a docent at the Harn museum in Gainesville, Florida. He was at it all the time.

John A. Penrod, live like him!

The point of public relations slogans like "Support our troops" is that they don't mean anything... That's the whole point of good propaganda. You want to create a slogan that nobody's going to be against, and everybody's going to be for. Nobody knows what it means, because it doesn't mean anything. Its crucial value is that it diverts your attention from a question that does mean something: Do you support our policy? That's the one you're not allowed to talk about.

— Noam Chomsky

The John A. Penrod award is to build upon the lessons of his legacy and help carry on the purpose of his life: the fight of people, and of the working class in particular, for dignity, freedom, security, and a democratic society in a peaceful world.

A nominee for this award will be a committed activist with track record of long-haul, responsible movement work.

Prospective grantees are approved by Veterans for Peace, the Alachua County Labor Party, and the United Faculty of Florida, the award sponsors. The grantee will intern with one of the sponsoring organizations. During the internship, the grantee will follow guidelines to be agreed upon at the time of the award. The grantee's desire to learn to better serve the goals of progressive social change will be at heart of the agreement.

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at 375-2832.

War cannot be humanized. It can only be abolished.

— Albert Einstein

2008

Peace on Earth
Healing for All

Oregon Hunter, MD
Dorothy Clay Sims, JD

Stimulating Peace

Veterans For Peace wishes to acknowledge and thank Dottie Burnham and Rob Hopkins, members of the Gainesville peace and justice community, for their donation of \$1200 this year.

Dottie and Rob, after receiving their "economic stimulus" checks of \$600 each, decided that the best way to use the money was to donate it to Veterans For Peace.

One of our ongoing projects is counter recruitment. We believe that one of the ways to stop war as an acceptable means of conflict resolution is to deny the military the use of our children.

Military recruitment policy provides our children with an unrealistic and slanted view of what life in the military is like. To counter this propaganda, VFP publishes an Enlistment Guide. This Enlistment Guide is designed to give our children all of the information that they need when deciding whether or not they should join the military.

We decided the best way to spend this donation was to print 10,000 more guides and distribute them to the high schools in Alachua and Marion Counties.

Thank you, Dottie and Rob, we salute you for making this possible.



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As Irish revolutionary James Connolly said, "The great only appear great because we are on our knees. Stand up."

— Stan Goff

Save Alachua General Hospital

William Warrick, M.D.

Your hospital, Alachua General, is about to be shut down by the Board of Shands UF. This is a travesty and cannot be allowed to happen. It is being done by stealth and fabrication and it must be stopped.

Thirty years ago, when I began my residency at the UF Family Practice program, I learned that control/ownership of this county hospital was transferred to Santa Fe Healthcare, Inc., so they could manage it without interference. The implication here is that it was to be held in trust for the People of Alachua County. Over the next 18 years improvements were made in the hospital and it was held in high regard by Alachua County citizens. They consistently gave it the highest ratings in patient satisfaction surveys of the three hospitals in Alachua County.

Then in 1996 AGH was suddenly unloaded for hundreds of millions of dollars to the Shands UF system. This was a theft of your hospital and must not go unchallenged. It was challenged by a local surgeon, Dr. Delaney, and litigated by Prof. Joe Little of UF's law school, but it lost in court. It wasn't taken beyond that so there it lay, unprotected, for UF to do with as it pleased.

Since then various physician specialty groups have been run off and have left for NFRH. Although millions of dollars have been spent on it in the last two or three years, it is now claimed by the rulers of Shands UF system that it is falling apart and it needs

50,000,000 dollars of maintenance upgrades to pass the next Joint Commission inspection. \$50,000,000 could probably build a whole hospital. AGH just passed Joint Commission inspection with flying color, begging the question: What's going on here?

The citizens of Alachua County need to start asking questions of the County Commission. What are they going to do about our hospital being taken away from us? The remaining doctors on staff are very upset about this, the employees are upset and my and their patients are upset about it. Everyone I have spoken to is upset about it. I have spoken to many people I know about it and no one has thought it was a good idea to close the hospital.

The County Medical Society has held some meetings about it and they need input from you and the County Commission needs input from you to get to the bottom of this. Rep. Corrine Brown's office has looked into it as well and pressure is needed there.

No one that have talked to who is close to the situation believes this \$50,000,000 figure is credible knowing what we know about the hospital. All of you who are interested must urge the county Commissioners and the County Medical Society to demand an accounting of this figure and real answers as to why this hospital, which has been functioning at a high level for 85 years, is suddenly a wreck and must be closed.

Without you nothing will happen and it will be gone forever.



The notion that a radical is one who hates his country is naive and usually idiotic. He is, more likely, one who loves his country more than the rest of us, and is thus more disturbed than the rest of us when he sees it debauched. He is not a bad citizen turning to crime; he is a good citizen driven to despair.

- H.I. Mencken

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*Tonight's songs may include,
but are not limited to...*

HERE COMES THE SUN

George Harrison

Here Comes the Sun
Here Comes the Sun
And I say, it's all right

Little darlin' it's been a long cold lonely winter
Little darlin' it feels like years since it's been here

Here Comes the Sun
Here Comes the Sun
And I say, it's all right

Little darlin' the smiles returning to their faces
Little darlin' it seems like years since it's been
here

Here Comes the Sun
Here Comes the Sun
And I say, it's all right

Sun sun sun here it comes
Sun sun sun here it comes
Sun sun sun here it comes
Sun sun sun here it comes
Sun sun sun here it comes

Little darlin' I feel that ice is slowly melting
Little darlin' it seems like years since it's been
clear

Here Comes the Sun
Here Comes the Sun
And I say, it's alright

Here Comes the Sun
Here Comes the Sun
It's all right
It's all right

IMAGINE

John Lennon

Imagine there's no heaven
It's easy if you try
No hell below us
Above us only sky
Imagine all the people living for today
Imagine there's no countries
It isn't hard to do
Nothing to kill or die for
And no religion too
Imagine all the people living life in peace

Chorus:

You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will be as one

Imagine no possessions
I wonder if you can
No need for greed or hunger
A brotherhood of man
Imagine all the people sharing all the world

Chorus

I HOPE

Dixie Chicks

SPIRIT OF SPRING (the Joy Chant)

Cathy DeWitt

(And) All of the joy and the love
Come into my life today!

We cannot defend freedom abroad
by deserting it at home.

— Edward R. Murrow

GET TOGETHER

Jesse Colin Young

Love is but the song we sing,
And fear's the way we die
You can make the mountains ring
Or make the angels cry
Know the dove is on the wing
And you need not know why

C'mon people now,
Smile on your brother
Ev'rybody get together
Try and love one another right now

Some will come and some will go
We shall surely pass
When the one that left us here
Returns for us at last
We are but a moment's sunlight
Fading in the grass

C'mon people now,
Smile on your brother
Ev'rybody get together
Try and love one another right now

If you hear the song I sing,
You must understand
You hold the key to love and fear
All in your trembling hand
Just one key unlocks them both
It's there at your command

C'mon people now,
Smile on your brother
Ev'rybody get together
Try and love one another right now
Right now
Right now!

WAR IS OVER

John and Yoko

A very Merry Christmas
And a Happy New Year
Let's hope it's a good one
Without any fear.
War is over if you want it...
War is over now.

TEACH YOUR CHILDREN

Graham Nash

You who are on the road
Must have a code
That you can live by
And so become yourself
Because the past is just a goodbye

Chorus:

Teach your children well
Their fathers' hell
Will slowly go by
And feed them on your dreams
The one they pick's
The one you'll know by
Don't you ever ask them why
If they told you you would cry
So just look at them and sigh
And know they love you

And you of tender years
Can't know the fears
That your elders grew by
So please help them with your youth
They seek the truth
Before they can die

Oh teach your parents well
Their children's hell
will slowly go by (*continue chorus*)

*A peace is of the nature of a conquest; for then both parties nobly are subdued,
and neither party loser.*

— William Shakespeare

GIVE YOURSELF TO LOVE

Kate Wolf

Kind friends all gathered 'round,
there's something I would say:
That what brings us together here
has blessed us all today.
Love has made a circle that holds
us all inside;
Where strangers are as family,
loneliness can't hide.

Chorus:

You must give yourself to love if
love is what you're after;
Open up your hearts to the tears
and laughter,
And give yourself to love, give
yourself to love.

I've walked these mountains in the
rain and learned to love the
wind;
I've been up before the sunrise to
watch the day begin.
I always knew I'd find you,
though I never did know how;
Like sunshine on a cloudy day, you
stand before me now.

Chorus

Love is born in fire; it's planted
like a seed.
Love can't give you everything,
but it gives you what you need.
And love comes when you're
ready, love comes when you're
afraid;
It'll be your greatest teacher, the
best friend you have made.

Chorus (x2)

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— Dwight D. Eisenhower

North Central Florida GI Rights Hotline 2008

Julie Netzer

Another year passes and, sadly, the Gainesville Chapter of Veterans for Peace must continue its support of our troops through its work with the North Central Florida GI Rights Hotline. We say sadly because we are still at war, because our economy and jobless rates continue to tank, because many still continue to be duped into thinking the military will solve their problems, and once they join the military find out there is little in the way of support for them if they find themselves in trouble or realize they've made a huge mistake.

The GI Rights Hotline is a nationwide effort by peace activists to provide active duty GIs, National Guardsmen (and women), and Reservists with telephone information and assistance on issues they are experiencing as a result of their military service.

In Gainesville, VFP partners with local Quakers and Unitarian Universalists to provide this service to GIs and their family members from the 727 (Pinellas County/St. Pete), 352, and 386 area codes. We first began the GI Rights Hotline in this area in February 2004 and were receiving calls from GIs and their family members almost immediately.

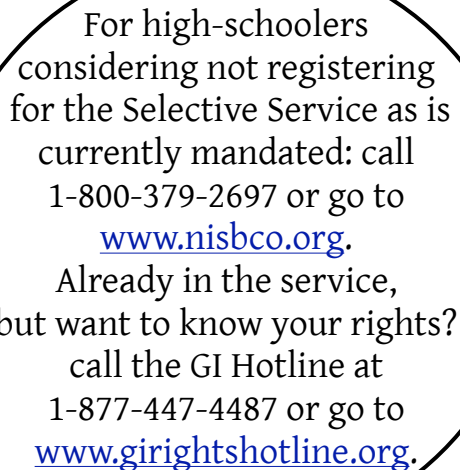
To date, we have handled approximately 360 calls. Our calls for 2008 are down to 60 calls, compared to the 90 calls we took in 2007, with most of the 2008 calls occurring between January and September.

We are guardedly optimistic and hopeful that maybe we are "putting ourselves out of a job" with our support and advocacy on behalf of our soldiers and their family members. Perhaps the message is getting out there that the military isn't all that it's cracked up to be (far from it!) and that not joining is the best way to stop the war machine.

This year, our cases on the North Central Florida GI Rights Hotline, again, have primarily been soldiers who are AWOL (absent without leave) and need information on their options and young people who have joined the military through the Delayed Enlistment/Entry Program and have decided the military way of life isn't for them.

We noticed this year the toll this war is taking, physically and mentally, on our soldiers. We are getting more calls this year from soldiers who have physical or mental (e.g., PTSD) injuries that are being ignored by the military and the military medical system.

We also worked with VFP this year in putting out an Enlistment Guide for north central Florida geared toward persons considering joining the military. We will get this guide into all local high schools in our



For high-schoolers considering not registering for the Selective Service as is currently mandated: call 1-800-379-2697 or go to www.nisbco.org. Already in the service, but want to know your rights? call the GI Hotline at 1-877-447-4487 or go to www.girightshotline.org.

area and it is available for download on the VFP website (www.afn.org/~vetpeace/). The guide is chock-full of good information on what people thinking of joining the military should know BEFORE they sign on that dotted line.

Please see our table during the intermission for further details and information on countering military recruiting and alternatives to the military. We also have our new Enlistment Guides available at the table. Stop by and pick up a copy or more if you can distribute them in your schools.

The GI Rights Hotline is available for workshop presentations on alternatives to the military, preparing conscientious objector files, and getting out of the military's Delayed Enlistment/Entry Program.

We are also looking for more GI Rights counselors for our Hotline. More counselors will allow us to take on more Florida area codes and provide more assistance to Florida soldiers and their families. If you are interested in becoming a GI Rights counselor, please stop by our table.

Be all you can be and work for peace!

Sometimes I wonder whether the world is being run by smart people who are putting us on, or by imbeciles who really mean it.

- Mark Twain

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happiness, respect, calmness,
clarity and tranquility
to all people of goodwill
this Hanukkah, Christmas and
Kwanzaa Season!!!

N. Albert Bacharach, Jr.

Obama & Afghanistan = Nixon & Vietnam?

Scott Camil

Most of the world seems to be very happy that the Bush era is finally coming to an end. They are expecting a more reasonable and intelligent foreign policy from President-elect Obama, and so are we. The problem is that Obama intends to escalate the war in Afghanistan.

This raises the question: why are we in Afghanistan anyway?

We are told that this is retaliation for the September 11th, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

The problem with this is that Afghanistan was not responsible for the 9/11 attacks. We must remember that those who attacked us on 9/11 did not come from Afghanistan. Fifteen of the hijackers were from Saudi Arabia, two from the United Arab Emirates, one from Egypt, and one from Lebanon. The funding came from Saudi Arabia, the training came from the Pakistani intelligence service known as the ISI.

We did not retaliate against Saudi Arabia or Pakistan. Even today, Pakistan remains the headquarters for Al Qaeda and the trails from Pakistan into Afghanistan serve the same purpose as the Ho Chi Minh Trail did in Vietnam. The ISI is still supporting those that we call the terrorists.

This kind of reminds me of the person who is looking for lost keys under the street light even though the keys were lost somewhere else. They are searching for terrorists in Afghanistan because that is easier than searching for them in Pakistan.

Pakistan has nukes and the US government would rather fight those who don't have nukes. Pakistan gave nuclear technology to Iran and North Korea and continues to harbor and aid Al Qaeda, yet we still give Pakistan foreign aid.

The reason that Iran and North Korea wanted that technology is that Bush named them both as part of the "axis of evil." They know that the US government believes that it has the right to unilaterally and preemptively attack who it wants.

They also know that if a nation can get nukes, that can serve as a deterrent to this policy of preemption and unilateralism.

Back to the main question: why are we in Afghanistan? Well, Afghanistan would not turn over to us terrorist suspects that we wanted.

Will escalating the war solve that problem? What is the mission, searching the mountains for terrorists? It reminds me of searching the jungles for Viet Cong. Is this really a viable plan?

What is the exit strategy?

U.S. commanders have asked for 20,000 more troops but because we still have 150,000 troops in Iraq we don't have more troops to send. Most people believe that the war in Iraq was an unnecessary diversion from the war on terror. In fact, the Taliban are now stronger than at any time since the US invaded Afghanistan.

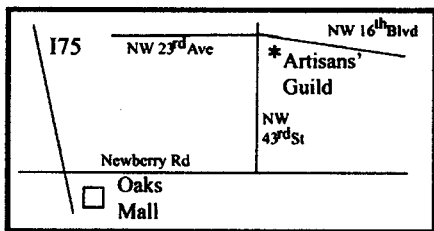
The US is now losing more troops per month in Afghanistan than in Iraq.

We might also remember that many of those terrorists that we are now fighting in Afghanistan were the "freedom fighters" that we trained and aided to fight the Soviets when they invaded Afghanistan. This is known as "blowback."



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The Soviets spent 9 years in Afghanistan losing 15,003 KIA, 53,753 wounded and 320 MIA. During this time their troop levels in Afghanistan were between 80,000 -104,000 at any one time. When the battered Soviets left Afghanistan, it was referred to as the "Soviet Vietnam."

The US intends to do with 32,000 troops (maybe an additional 20,000 if we can get them out of Iraq), what the Soviets could not do with 2 to 3 times more troops. There are about 23,000 allied troops to help the US in this goal.

Those allies have not agreed to send in more troops, so the weight falls on American families.

Gainesville Veterans for Peace do not believe that we belong in Afghanistan and we certainly don't believe that escalation will solve anything.

We must remember that in this war of occupation we are the foreign invaders. The Afghan people are not going to move to another country so this gives them a big edge in staying power.

Israel Winikor

If President-elect Obama fulfills his pledge to escalate the war in Afghanistan, it will become his war just as the Vietnam war became Johnson's war and then Nixon's war.

Veterans for Peace is committed to ending the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and putting a new person in the White House will not dampen our commitment or activities.

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**You should wake up every day looking
for the trouble you can get into.**

— Lawton Chiles

ALL MEN DREAM, but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity; but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dreams with open eyes, to make it possible.

— T. E. Lawrence



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By overlooking what we should have been overseeing, we have become enablers for the lowest common dominator. Whether's it's called globalization or gobble-ization, it's the same old mining operation - that's mine, that's mine, that's mine. Because we've allowed ourselves to imagine that someday that "mine" will be ours, we have agreed to a "don't ask, don't tell" policy with our government. We promise not to ask them what they are doing, and they promise not to tell us. That way, we can pretend to believe we are invading a country to keep the peace, when we are really there to keep the pieces.

- Swami Beyondananda, aka
Steve Bhaerman



**The World has a new president.
He has created a lot of expectations.**

**It's time for him to produce.
May The Force be with him.**

Bill Warrick

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When I do good, I feel good; when I do bad, I feel bad. That's my religion.

— *Abraham Lincoln*

To be hopeful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty, but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness. What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives. If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something. If we remember those times and places - and there are so many - where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act, and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction. And if we do act, in however small a way, we don't have to wait for some grand utopian future. The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live now as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvelous victory.

— Howard Zinn

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As man advances in civilization, and small tribes are united into larger communities, the simplest reason would tell each individual that he ought to extend his social instincts and sympathies to all the members of the same nation, though personally unknown to him. This point being once reached, there is only an artificial barrier to prevent his sympathies extending to the men of all nations and races. If, indeed, such men are separated from him by great differences in appearance or habits, experience unfortunately shews us how long it is, before we look at them as our fellow-creatures. Sympathy beyond the confines of man, that is, humanity to the lower animals, seems to be one of the latest moral acquisitions.

— Charles Darwin



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*I believe I found the missing link
between animal and civilized man.
It is us.*

— Konrad Lorenz

Alachua County Greens

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Your VFP Donations at Work

Gainesville Veterans for Peace (VFP) considers that part of our responsibility is to help other groups who share our goals. In that capacity, we make donations of time, materials and funding to other Peace and Justice organizations.

The Winter Solstice Celebration is the annual event from which we derive our operating funds. Last year, we raised \$6,500 from the Solstice and then, over the year, we donated \$4,587 of that money to groups we support. The following is a description of how those funds were used.

We gave \$300 to *The Gainesville Iguana* for its excellent coverage of alternative news stories often not reported by the mainstream media. The *Iguana* also serves as an information resource for the Peace and Justice community. We gave \$300 to the **Civic Media Center**, which provides an alternative library and a space for progressive speakers, groups and events. We gave \$300 to the **Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice**, of which our VFP chapter is a member.

We gave \$300 to the **Home Van** for its service to our area's homeless (25 – 30% of the homeless are veterans).

We gave \$500 to **IVAW National** to support Winter Soldier Iraq & Afghanistan.

We gave \$300 to support **Jenny Brown's trip to Venezuela**. We gave \$265 to the **Alachua County Labor Party's Committee of 100** to help their efforts to get universal health care enacted through bill HR676.

We gave \$500 to the **Hippodrome State Theater** to bring the Academy Award-winning documentary, *Taxi To The Dark Side*, and its co-producer, Gainesville's own **Blair Foster**, to the Hipp. We gave \$100 to the **Acrosstown Repertory Theater** to sponsor the play *Waiting for the Parade*.

We gave \$630 to help sponsor the 1st annual downtown **Peace Concert**. We gave \$100 to **Thomas Barton**, who publishes the daily **GI Special** (archived at www.militaryproject.org).

We gave \$292 to **IVAW Gainesville** for signs, and donated \$700 worth of signs to **National VFP**.

We could not do this without the money that we raise from you, our guests, our supporters and our sponsors.

We thank you.

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Nothing America could have done would have provided Al Qaeda and its new generation of cloned groups a better recruitment device than our unprovoked invasion of an oil-rich Arab country. Nothing else could have so well negated all our other positive acts and so closed Muslim eyes and ears to our subsequent calls for reform in their region. It was if Osama bin Laden, hidden in some high mountain redoubt, were engaging in long-range mind control of George Bush, chanting "invade Iraq, you must invade Iraq."

— Richard Clarke

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Pennie Diann Foster

The following tribute is excerpted from the *Gainesville Iguana*. Pennie's spirit and love of working people will be missed.

We've lost a dear friend and women's liberation movement sister.

It is with sad hearts that we tell you of the passing of Pennie Foster. She had long been a feminist activist, and a strong advocate for women's and workers' rights, national health care, and against racism. Her generous spirit and unflagging dedication, not to mention her fabulous cooking skills, will be missed by all of us.

Pennie passed away Thursday evening, October 2nd, at Shands, where she battled a highly aggressive untreatable cancer. She was surrounded by her close family, friends, and co-workers from her workplace, Alachua County Court Services.

All her life, whether in an organization or not, Pennie was outspoken about how women were treated. In the early 1980s, recently separated from her husband and raising her young daughter Erika, she became active in Minnesota in NOW and



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women's liberation. She often recalled to friends the power she felt marching with thousands of women down Hennepin Avenue, in the red light district of Minneapolis, demanding dignity and freedom for womankind.

In 1991, shortly after moving to Gainesville, she went to a meeting of the University of Florida/SFC Campus National Organization for Women, attracted by Campus NOW's fight against Michael Katsonis, a UF Infirmary pharmacist who refused to dispense the Morning After Pill. It was one of the early political battles around this reproductive rights issue. Pennie helped in the campaign to get Katsonis fired from UF. It was the beginning of a long record of contributions to feminism in Gainesville.

Together with Francie Hunt, Pennie started Campus NOW's Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action Team. She organized consciousness-raising meetings, speakouts, and attended state and national marches for abortion rights. She put skills she gained in Santa Fe Community College's Graphics Design program to use making sharp-looking posters. Many more women joined the fight as a result. She worked on the chapter's annual beauty pageant protest, the more than 5-year battle for a UF Women's Student Center (now established!), and on the chapter's Rape Action Committee. In addition to her leadership in Campus NOW, she was also a strong supporter of Gainesville Women's Liberation.

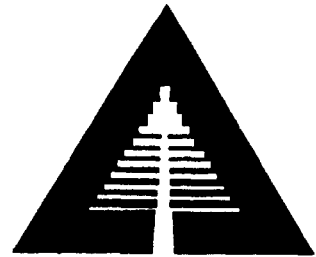
Pennie led in a victorious fight in 1996 with three north Florida NOW chapters to protest UF's new policy preventing UF medical residents from performing abortions on their own time. In a time when many doctors won't perform abortions due to fear of retaliation, this limitation jeopardized Florida women's access to abortions. Just weeks later, UF President Lombardi announced it was dropping its restrictive policy, "but NOT due to the protest." Certainly not!

Francie Hunt testified at Pennie's memorial: "Her special skills were truth-telling, consciousness-raising personal testimony. She was a southern anti-racist; her picture was featured on the cover of the book, *Whites Fighting Racism*." Francie said Pennie was like part of her family.

Alex Leader testified about Pennie: "Pennie loved to really give it to whoever was the problem—whether it was the police, University of Florida President, or UF Housing Services—which barred all women from a 'Men's Only Rape Forum'. Pennie and I physically pushed through a housing official barring the door. Pennie loved to fight injustice. Pennie was born in 1954 in Eden, Georgia. Upon graduating from high school, she began a military tour with the Air Force, serving for 4 years from 1973 to 1977. She was stationed in Iceland, where she had high level clearance to work on plane navigational systems. She was one of the first women to do this type of work.

Since 1994, Pennie worked as a Community Service Officer of Alachua County Court Services. The Community Services Program gives people with

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court-ordered community service the opportunity to do service hours with non profits or governmental organizations rather than have to pay fines. She recruited women and men into the freedom movement by encouraging them to do their community service assignment with the National Organization for Women and the Civic Media Center.

Pennie was a supporter of the union representing Alachua County employees, the Northeast Public Employees' Local 630 of the Laborers' International Union. She was an active member of the Alachua County branch of the Labor Party, which she joined not long after it was founded. Pennie actively organized in 2000 for the Alachua County Labor Party-sponsored ballot referendum for single payer health care and bravely testified at meetings about her own struggles with the for-profit health insurance system.

Pennie is survived by her mother, Nancy Beasley of Eden, Ga.; her sister Susan Canney and brother-in-law Leslie Canney; daughter Erika Olsen; and her brother Prinston Hammond. At Pennie's memorial service, many testified that raising Erika was Pennie's greatest pride.

Leslie Canney opened up the October 4, 2008 memorial service for Pennie by calling her "a true populist; wherever she went, she asked people what they thought, because she really wanted to know.

"The thing I remember most about Pennie was—whenever she was in a queue, whether at the movies, the drugstore or McDonald's—she would turn to whatever complete stranger she was standing next to and say, 'Hi, I'm Pennie, how are you?,' and start a conversation. This was embarrassing the first few times you were with her when it happened but we all got used to it. It sounded like she was just being overfriendly, but I think there was more to it than that. I believe there was a political/activist aspect to her behavior. You see, Pennie was a true populist/progressive, and she believed to be effective, activism needed a personal touch. . . .

"Another aspect to her impromptu conversations was that she really did care about the people she was talking to. She used these talks to both learn about the lives of others and as opportunities to raise awareness and enlighten others as to the true state of the world. For her, whether oppression took the form of misogyny, racism, classism, or just corporatism, she believed her activism could make a difference for the better. . . ."

All spoke about Pennie's love for and pride in her daughter Erika. Others said how they will miss Pennie's culinary skills, and her love of swimming in Florida springs and snorkeling down Florida's Ichetucknee River. "Now this is living!" Pennie would always say, after jumping into the cool spring water.



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- ✓ **Say good-bye to 2008 and ring in 2009.**
- ✓ **Participate in the Midnight Candlelight Vigil at Florida's Death Chamber**
- ✓ **Renew and re-energize ourselves, each other and our local groups**
- ✓ **Plan to make 2009 a year of positive accomplishments toward a more just, less violent society and a sustainable planet.**

Browse fcj.org or contact Bob Tancig: 352-468-3295, bob@fcj.org

Celebrate with us the peace we all know is our birthright.

Support the people who support Veterans for Peace!

Wear your VFP t-shirt, button, or cap while doing business with:

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IN A TIME OF UNIVERSAL DECEIT, TELLING THE TRUTH BECOMES A REVOLUTIONARY ACT.
—GEORGE ORWELL

...continued from inside front cover

of the over 4,577 grave markers (4,077 from Iraq and 500 from Afghanistan) in the display.

On July 4th, VFP had a booth at the festivities in the city of Alachua.

Norman Balabanian, World War II veteran, turned 86 and attended his last Vets for Peace meeting in July of 2008, saying he was planning on "fading away". Norman started a Veterans for Peace group back in 1968 and immediately organized a 1,000 strong demonstration against the Vietnam War in Syracuse, New York.

In September, VFP helped fund and sponsor the 1st Annual International Day of Peace Concert on the Plaza in downtown Gainesville. Organizers reported that 250 – 300 people attended. The concert included a number of videos and multimedia pieces including a Memorial Mile video which moved many people.

A project that VFP and the North Central Florida GI Rights Hotline has worked on all year is the "Enlistment Guide: Advice from Veterans on Military Services and Recruiting Practices – A Resource Guide for Young People Considering Enlistment." We plan to use this publication in our counter recruitment efforts. We have produced 10,000 copies of this free guide which is geared towards young people in the SE United States who are considering a career in the military. We want to thank Dottie Burnham and Rob Hopkins, who each donated their "economic stimulus" check to VFP. Their \$1200 contribution was used to pay for this project.

VFP also participated as a community partner in StoryCorps with three members doing interviews. The interviews will be preserved in the Library of Congress.

Members of VFP are invited to speak on a regular basis at local high schools, community colleges and UF.

For more information, see the VFP website and blog where you will find many great photos, film clips, speeches and articles contributed by our members. Check out our calendar, blog and merchandise page where people can order T-shirts and other VFP merchandise.

We are deeply opposed to U.S. intervention in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran and will continue to protest wars of occupation for as long as our nation continues to oppress those abroad while it attacks the constitutional freedoms at home that we have sworn to protect.



Veterans from all services and all nations (including those on active duty or in training programs) and veterans' family members are invited to join Veterans for Peace.

For more information, contact Scott Camil at 375-2563, visit www.afn.org/~vetpeace, write to PO Box 142562, G'ville 32614, or come to our regular meetings (7 PM on the first Wednesday of each month) at Scott & Sherry's house - call 352-375-2563 for directions.

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**OUR BOYS NEED
SOX
KNIT YOUR BIT**

The greatest weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.
— Stephen Biko



**Happy Holidays
to All!**

**Other veterans
for peace:**

Mazzeo Brundage

Roy Coleman

Joseph P. Cousineau

Jessie Gainey, Jr.

Wayne Pace

Roland Roberts

Ray Welling

Tim Wyer