



## VFP Protests Seventh Anniversary of War

By Richard Chamberlin

The temperature was cold but the passions were hot as members of Madison Veterans for Peace and others marched up State Street on Saturday March 20 to protest the seventh anniversary of the Iraq war.

“Our participation was due to the continuing loss of life in Iraq and Afghanistan, the long term effects of war, and the economic drain that is a result,” said Craig Fabian, VFP president. “The toll of war goes beyond those killed. As one of the speakers noted - wars only benefit the multinational corporations. We gathered to continue to stand up for peace and justice.”

The march was part of a weekend of activities organized by the Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice and included a “teach-in” similar to those held during the Vietnam War.

On Friday night Matt Rothschild, editor of *The Progressive*, moderated a panel discussion at the Pyle Center on the UW campus.

Prof. Eli Schamiloglu, who teaches Asian languages and culture at the UW, said that Afghanistan isn’t actually a nation. Because of its’



mountainous geography many areas have their own regional culture and are “cut off” from the rest of the country. That plus a centuries old resistance to foreign occupation means American troops are often thought of as being an “irritative allergy.” He said spending money on schools would help the nation more than sending stinger missiles.

Prof. Alfred McCoy said the U.S. is “punching jello” in attempting to cut opium production which is fueling the Taliban resistance. Tree crops which could replace dependence on the high profit poppy fields have been destroyed and the ban on opium production has been ignored.

Afghanistan, which is the most weaponized region in the world, is in the middle of a classic geopolitical storm. Pakistan’s worst nightmare is for Afghanistan to become a modern state. He said that other allies are needed to help create a regional policy.

The death toll for American troops in Afghanistan recently passed the 1000 mark.

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**Our Statement of Purpose**

- Increase public awareness of the cost of war
- Restrain our government from intervening overtly or covertly in the internal affairs of other nations
- End the arms race and eliminate nuclear weapons
- Seek justice for veterans and victims of war
- Abolish war as an instrument of national policy

To achieve these goals, VFP members pledge to use non-violent means and 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.



**Chapter 25  
Board Members – 2010**

- Steve Books
- Todd Dennis
- David Giffey
- Dr. James Allen
- Craig Fabian
- John Carey
- Phil Fransen

Madison Veterans for Peace meets on the third Wednesday of each month at:  
Madison Public Library  
201 West Mifflin Street  
at 6 pm

**Broadside Editor**

Richard Chamberlin  
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**Editor’s  
Musings**  
by Richard Chamberlin

I’d like to welcome the reader to our first Vets for Peace newsletter. It’s been quite a challenge getting it out, especially for someone who used to dummy up pages using a scissors and gluestick. That was a long time ago.

We’ve got so much news this time that I’ve barely left enough space for my own column. But that’s all right. I’ve been with

VFP for about three years and am constantly amazed at the organizational skills and dedication of our members. We’ve been very busy.

I came to VFP because I’m a Vietnam Veteran who is tired of seeing the same lies and war profiteering going on as I did 40 years ago. I had to do something to keep from going crazy. So this is also a kind of therapy for me and I hope I can do my part to bring an end to this war.

Thanks to Cy Griffin for suggesting the name “The Broadside” for the newsletter.

**Essay Nets East High Student VFP Scholarship**

by Paul McMahan

Believing that many students might opt for military service because they cannot afford the cost of post-high school education, Madison Veterans for Peace has established several scholarships to encourage post-high school training and study. Through generous contributions from both members and community supporters, VFP is focusing not only on Madison schools but also on area schools.

In May 2009, Madison East High School senior Erick Fruehling became the first Madison peace scholarship recipient. His winning essay, entitled “Why a Peace Movement is Necessary,” earned him a \$1,200 scholarship to enroll at MATC in the fall of 2009 to study biology and zoology. This spring a major scholarship of \$1,200 will be awarded to a Madison LaFollette senior who intends to enroll at MATC. In addition, three scholarships of \$300 each will be awarded to winning seniors at River Valley, Richland Center, and Dodgeville high schools.



Eric Fruehling  
Photo: Paul McMahan

To become eligible, each applicant must write an original essay of 500-750 words that addresses an issue related to peace-building. At the rural districts the topic was “Why Peace Movements are Necessary.” LaFollette applications are due to VFP by May 1 and must include a 500-750 word essay on the question “Why Can’t Peace be Achieved through War?”

Guidance counselor Jenafer Acker is coordinating applications at Madison LaFollette. She states that there is strong interest.

By the publication of this newsletter, awards will have been made to the winners at River Valley, Richland Center, and Dodgeville high schools.

Members of the scholarship committee are David Giffey, Joel Garb and Paul McMahan. The committee publicizes the program, coordinates with the schools, reads the essays and determines the winners.

Application forms are available at the school guidance offices or from the VFP website: <http://www.madisonvfp.org>

## Facing War's Conflicts Are Part of Healing

By Lt. Col Fran Wiedenhoef

**Wiedenhoef, from Madison, is a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve and a member of**



**Veterans for Peace. She served in Desert Storm in 1991, Afghanistan in 2003 and Iraq from 2007 to 2008. She has been called up again for active duty this June. This article first appeared as a guest column in the Capital Times on May 24, 2009.**

It recently occurred to me—abruptly—that it is 2009. I am home again, and America has been at war in Iraq for six years.

America has been in Afghanistan for eight years to help stabilize the country and oust the terrorists who are becoming more obscure with each passing week.

I have been home from Iraq for a year, but this return has been a gradual one. The distraction of the previous year left me feeling weak and unavailable to those I love.

One of many tools I have been using to help clear my mind of the debris of my involvement in six years of war is a specific type of therapy at the Veteran's Administrations mental health clinic. The therapy is useful and helping me. But initially, I was quite skeptical.

The underlying principal on the therapy, as I understand it, is to confront and resolve our internal moral conflicts related to the war. It was difficult for me to grasp how this would work, because I believe that the fundamental nature of war is a moral conflict.

Our American wars, cynics aside, have been fought at least in principle, to defend or save a group of people, except to save this group of people we need to kill another group of people.

To those of us down on the ground, the picture becomes muddled, and our hearts and souls are the casualties. It doesn't surprise me that so many soldiers are committing suicide. It is a testament to the strength of our soldiers and their families that more are not doing so.

The fundamental moral conflict of war to each individual involved is that killing is meant to be disturbing, horrifying to the human soul. Killing the enemy can be intellectually justified, but war is not discrete, and we witness daily, hourly the civilian deaths of women, children and elders.

Everyone intimately involved in the process, killing and saving lives is wounded in ways that do not heal. This is the essence of the human cost of war on our soldiers. These moral conflicts are irresolvable, and not easy to make peace with.

So what do we, as a nation? We should take the instrument of war from our national tool bag only as an absolute last resort after all other measures have been exhausted, and with brutal appraisal of the human cost, including our own soldiers' psyches.

Fortunately, I have the enduring support of my family and community, and the benefit of friendship with older veterans of previous conflicts who have generously shared their experience and shown by example that we can learn to live with our ghosts and demons, and have a full life.

We return and try to pass on this tiny bit of hard-earned truth, that once we resort to war we have unleashed a tidal wave of consequences, most unintended, with damage that can't be undone.

We, the veterans, can be a voice supported by experience, adamantly maintaining the use of war is a last resort, and not as the primary means to carry out national policy. (In memory of Sid Powell)

## The Iconoclast: Commentary from VFP Member Joel Garb

There is in the minds of many a hierarchy of who may legitimately speak about war and peace. According to the hierarchy veterans' voices are more legitimate than non-veterans, and combat veterans' voices are more legitimate than those of non-combat veterans. Indeed, Veterans for Peace seeks to capitalize on this hierarchy. But wouldn't it be a better approach that all victims of war, potential and real, almost everyone in other words, have an equal voice in matters of war and peace? Perhaps, of course, real victims of war would rise to the top, to create a new hierarchy. Better the latter hierarchy than the former.

The slogan, "Support the Troops," is problematic. Not just because it has been cynically used by our war mongers to silence and co-opt opposition in the recent wars in the Middle East. But it also creates a dissonance for those who do not support the missions in Afghanistan and Iraq, for it is the troops who perform the mission. It may be reassuring as some suggest that support for the troops can somehow be separated from support for the wars. I am not able to do so. The best I can

say is that I don't want our troops hurt anymore than I want them hurting others.

There is a mindset that suggests that, while civilian casualties and deaths are morally abhorrent, somehow the death or injury of combatants is acceptable, even honorable and valorous. The idea underlying the difference is that civilians are innocent, while the troops have taken on the risk. While there is some force to this reasoning, as long as the general view holds sway that somehow the injuries and deaths of combatants are just another cost of war, it is one more support for militarism and the wars that militarism engenders.

It is often asked what comparisons can be made between the current wars and the war against Vietnam. The most fundamental similarity is that in all these cases our policy makers and those that supported them cared not a whit for the people of the countries subject to our intervention. Much of the harm and suffering of the people our leaders pretended to help was the direct or indirect result of this lack of care and respect.

The views of the Iconoclast are those of Joel Garb and not necessarily of Veterans for Peace.

## Chazen Museum Honors Vietnam Vets



Will Williams

The Chazen Museum in Madison held the exhibit, "Back in the World:

Portraits of Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans," October 31-January 3. James Gill created large format color photographs which imparted a powerful presence.

Will Williams of VFP was one of about 30 Wisconsin veterans participating. His photo is part of the permanent collection. Next to each photograph was a statement.

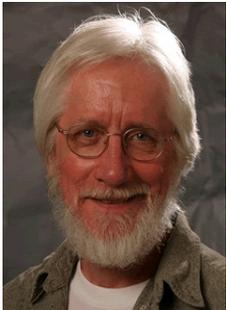
Will's read: "I don't know how you could make someone understand it, what it means to lose someone...to see them die. There's no way to explain where they are. I think you are in shock initially but you are able to function...I think it hits you more when you are out of the situation and you have time to reflect. [In] the event, there is no grieving. You don't have time for it. I don't think anyone can explain what it really feels like. At the time I felt like it's no feeling, like you're really just hollow for a moment... It was really painful to be in close proximity to a friend of yours who is with you no more."

Will was a sergeant with the Army's 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.

## Saving lives Through Counter Recruiting

By David Giffey

Teaching high school students, faculty, parents, and administrators about the realities of militarism is at the heart of our counter recruiting efforts. It's an uphill struggle.



The Army spent \$21,000 per "accession"

in 2007, according to the U.S. Army Accessions Command. Accession is the military term referring to a recruit who signs up and goes to basic training. In Standard English, accession is akin to an acquisition—eerily appropriate to the situation facing military recruits whose personal identities are erased and they are reduced to the status of a commodity in uniform. Some estimates placed costs as high as \$40,000 per recruit by 2009.

Consider further that the Obama administration planned to cut the Defense Department (DoD) recruiting budget for 2010 by about 10 percent, but the

recruitment budget remains at nearly \$8 billion per year. The DoD doubled its recruiting budget from 2004 to 2008 as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq put pressure on recruitment quotas.

It's politically simpler for the White House in 2010, with a recruitment budget filled to the brim and The Great Recession pulling the rug from under the high school graduate job market, to make a symbolic reduction in the recruitment budget, which remains mammoth.

"Historically, an increase in unemployment has resulted in an increase in Army enlistments," says the Support Army Recruiting website. In early 2009, the Army recruiting "mission" reached 100 percent for the first time in six years.

### "Every student we reach could be a life, or many lives, saved"

As we contact a growing number of high schools to schedule counter-recruiting visits, it's difficult to know what our reception will be. Since the No Child Left Behind Act gave recruiters access to student data in

Will Williams of VFP, a decorated Vietnam combat veteran, is often contacted by teachers to discuss the war with their students.

"Eventually they want to know more about the wars Iraq and Afghanistan," says Williams who encourages students to find alternatives to military service. Unfortunately jobs are sometimes hard to find. "What we've got now is poverty recruitment," he said.

On April 30 he plans to speak with students in Eagle River, WI at Northern Pines High where he will show the film "The Good Soldier" about Vietnam veterans who are still dealing with post traumatic stress. Williams was one of the veterans interviewed for the film. See:

[www.thegoodsoldier.com](http://www.thegoodsoldier.com) .

2001, unless parents opt out, the practice has generally been to let recruiters visit whenever they want to. However, Veterans for Peace and groups like Truth and Alternatives to Militarism in Education (TAME) have made inroads in some schools. The problems are obvious. First, there are 425 school districts in Wisconsin. And the policies vary greatly from one district to the

next. So everywhere we go, we are required to start anew.

In a rural district in my home Iowa County, it took almost two years and contact from a lawyer before we were allowed into the school. By that time, the administration decided to restrict military recruiters (and Veterans for Peace) to the guidance office. That seemed to reduce the number of students contacting recruiters. It had the same effect on our visits. In most schools we set up a display in the cafeteria and talk to students.

We have made multiple visits for counter recruiting, to hand out literature and talk to students during lunch hours, in rural high schools including Wisconsin Heights, River Valley, Dodgeville, Richland Center, Reedsburg and Baraboo. We hope to visit Boscobel this spring. Every student we reach could be a life, or many lives, saved. But we need to reach further. We are few in number and have limited resources. I'm willing to discuss counter recruitment possibilities with interested people who have contacts with high schools in Southwestern Wisconsin. My email is barnowl@mhtc.net.



Mark Foreman of Milwaukee Vets for Peace speaks supporting AB203. From left to right, Veteran Dennis Coyier, John Carey, Tom Contrestan  
Photo from WNPJ

## VFP Supports “Bring the Guard Home” Bill

Veterans for Peace members from Milwaukee, Madison, Sheboygan, Elkhorn, Belleville and Mt. Horeb were among 30 people attending a public hearing at the State Capitol on March 9 on Assembly Bill 203.

If enacted the “Safeguard the Guard” bill would require the governor to conduct a legal review of any federal request to deploy the Wisconsin National Guard overseas and to refuse any deployment determined to be unlawful.

The basis of the dispute is the section of the U.S. Constitution which gives Congress authority, “calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the union, suppress insurrections and repel invasions.” Congress also authorized the states to appoint officers and train the militia.

Over the years the militia evolved into the National Guard.

Supporters of the bill argue that America’s founders never intended for The Guard to become part of a standing army.

The bill is part of a national “Bring the Troops Home” campaign sponsored by the Madison Based Liberty Tree Foundation under the leadership of Madison attorney Ben Manski. It is being sponsored by state Rep. Spencer Black, D-Madison.

Currently the bill is in the Assembly’s Veterans and Military Affairs Committee. There will be two more hearings on the bill before it goes to the full legislature later this year.

Those interested in supporting the bill should contact their assembly representatives.

## In Memorium

**Sid Podell**, 88, member VFP, died February 22, 2010. Sid was a bombardier in the U.S. Air Force in the South Pacific during World War II. After the war he practiced law in Milwaukee representing labor unions and helped end discrimination against women in the workplace. He later moved to Madison where he was active in anti-war protests and demonstrations.

**Clarence Kailin**, 95, member VFP, died October 25, 2009. Clarence was one of 2800 Americans who volunteered to go to Spain with the Abraham Lincoln Brigade from 1936-1939 and fight against the fascists in the Spanish Civil War. Clarence was a lifelong socialist and civil rights advocate.

**Howard Zinn**, 87, member of VFP, died January 27, 2010. Howard was a bombardier in the U.S. Air Force in Europe during World War II. After the war he attended NYU on the GI-Bill and later Columbia University. A historian, he is best known for the classic 1980 history, "A Peoples History of the United States." He believed that the real lessons of history are taught by the people that lived it.

## “Memorial Mile” For “LZ Lambeau” Shot Down

The plan for VFP to set up over 5413 tombstone replicas honoring troops killed in the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars outside Lambeau Field has been shot down.



The “Memorial Mile” installation was to have been part of “LZ Lambeau,” a welcome home extravaganza for Vietnam Veterans that is being held at Lambeau Stadium in Green Bay the weekend of May 21-23

VFP received word from LZ Lambeau co-coordinator Don Jones on March 26 that due to “safety concerns” and prohibitions of “obstructions of any kind” VFP would be restricted to a “very short distance.”

Jones had approached Madison VFP late last year and asked us to consider erecting the Memorial Mile for “LZ Lambeau.”

Vets for Peace still plans to have a presence there but we are

not yet certain what form it will take.

Instead VFP will set up the “Memorial Mile” display at Olbrich Park along Atwood Avenue for May 29-June 5.

The public is invited to help us erect the 5413+ tombstones Saturday morning May 29.

This will be the third time for Olbrich (Veterans Day 2007, Memorial Day 2008) as well as twice at Forest Hill Cemetery (Veterans Day 2008, Memorial Day 2009).

We also plan to observe Memorial Day with a ceremony on May 31 in James Madison Park as VFP has traditionally done with live music, speeches and a reading of the names of Wisconsin soldiers killed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

## Books Appointed WNPJ Intern

Congratulations go to Steve Books who was recently appointed executive secretary of our local chapter of VFP. A grant from Dr. James Allen through the Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice made it possible.

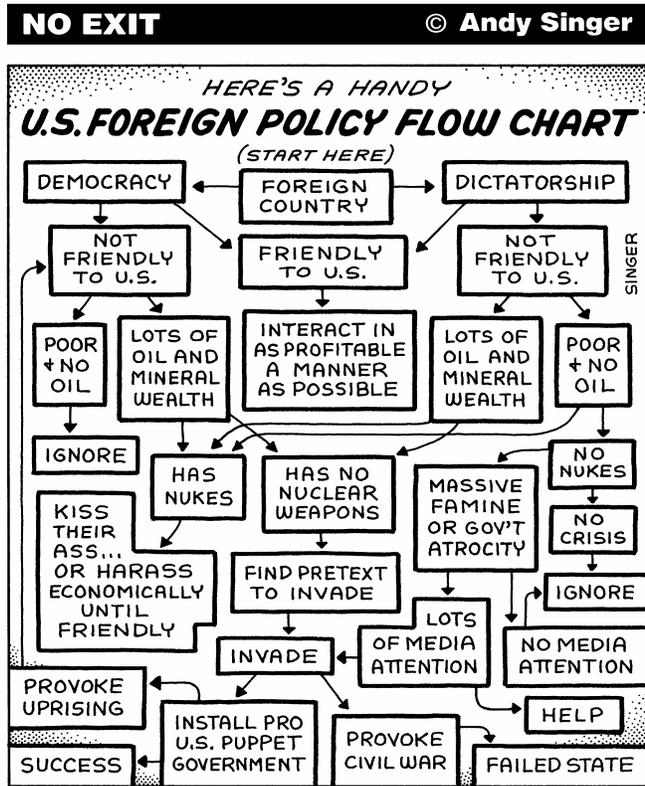
Steve will be responsible taking and distributing the minutes, planning special events, assisting the treasurer and working with WNPJ. His number at WNPJ offices is 608-250-9240.

### Upcoming Events

“The Toxic Nature of Modern Warfare-From Agent Orange to Depleted Uranium” a presentation by John LaFarge (Nukewatch) and Doug Rokke (former U.S. Army Depleted Uranium Project Director) on Friday April 16, 7 pm at the Capitol Lakes Retirement Center, 330 W Main, Madison, WI.

Wisconsin Peace and Justice Network’s 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on April 29, 5-7 pm at Mitchell Park in Milwaukee on the lagoon next to The Dome.

“The Good Soldier” a showing of the film May 8, 2 pm at the Orpheum Theater, 216 State St., Madison, WI



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