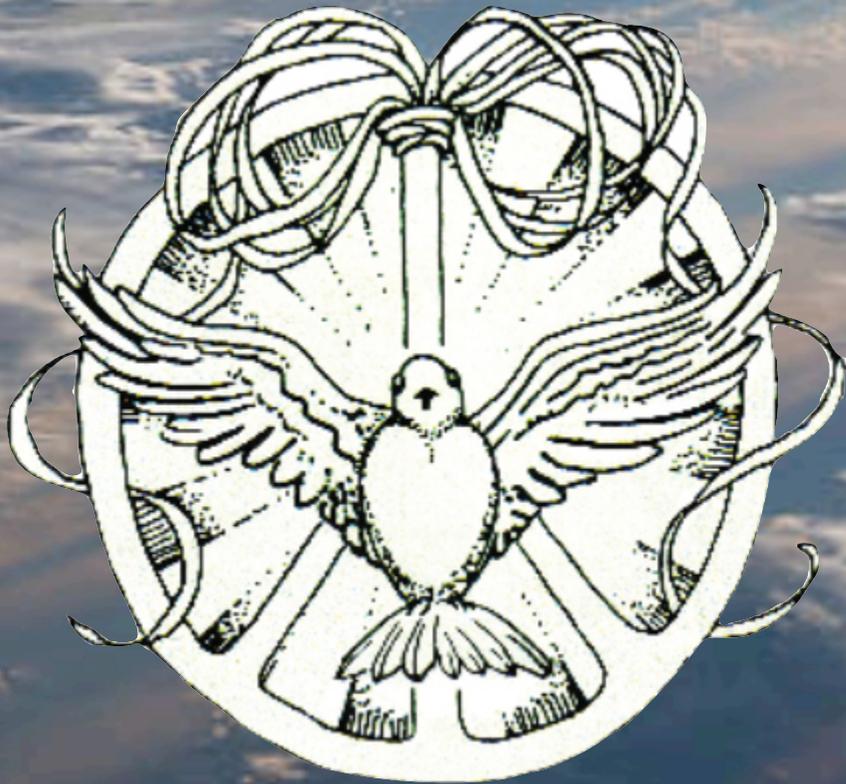


34th Annual  Winter Solstice

PEACE CONCERT

Music & Cheer
for Dark Hours



December 19th, 2020, 8:00 PM

Gainesville Veterans for Peace Activities in 2020

by Mary Bahr

Welcome to the 34th annual Winter Solstice Concert. It is hard to imagine more difficult circumstances in which to celebrate the ending of darkness and the beginning of a new year in 2021. But here we are, and although things have looked darker than usual this year, Vets For Peace has forged ahead to add a little light along the way.

We started the year marching and picketing. The Gainesville MLK march had Vets for Peace members in attendance carrying our banner and flags supporting and honoring Dr. King as we have done for many years. In addition to the march, we moved our Tuesday picket, which is entering its 17th year, since we invaded Iraq. The weekly picket is now on Tuesdays from 4:30 to 6:00 at 16th Blvd. and NW 43rd Street. When there was a threat of war with Iran, the Gainesville peace and justice community turned out with Vets for Peace to add to our regular antimilitarism, pro-peace and justice picket. About 60 people joined us on January 7th to protest the war. See photos of this demonstration [here](#).

At our January 15th meeting, members voted for the annual distribution of proceeds from this concert. Many local and a few national peace and justice organizations benefit from your generous donations starting each year in January. See the financial report on page [82](#). We also voted to produce a VFP version of "War is Not the Answer" yard signs. Doug Bernal came up with a design, and these signs are now available for purchase for \$5 from Vets for Peace. Here is a [sample of this sign](#) modeled by Big John Fullerton and associates at one of our pickets.

In February, preparations for our Spring events, including the Peace Poetry contest, Peace Scholarship awards, and Memorial Mile, began in earnest.

Our [Peace Poetry](#) Elves, Jessica Newman, and Sheila Payne, sent out letters and packets inviting K-12 students and their teachers to participate. Sheila met with Alachua County Schools Language Arts Chair Art Fitzpatrick, and he sent the announcement out to all the secondary schools and put information on the District website. We set a date for the awards ceremony in May. But by then, we were in our first lockdown, so Deborah Hendrix, videographer from the Oral History Program, along with Sheila Payne and Paul Ortiz, volunteered to produce a virtual version of the awards linked to our website. You can watch it [here](#).

The [Memorial Mile](#) also became a virtual celebration with a history of Vets For Peace's observance of Memorial Day on our website. It is a self-guided multimedia tour put together by yours truly, VFP webmistress. Scott put out signs along 8th Avenue for the Memorial Day weekend, reminding the public of our display and telling them we will see them next year.

And we all descended into a dark time. Our fellow veteran and activist Jack Price passed away from COVID-19 over the summer (see remembrance, page



[45](#)). Our meetings and pickets stopped, and we stayed home and learned how to order groceries online. Eventually, the picketers decided that if we wore masks and socially distanced outside on the corner, we could continue our pickets and have done so all year (with plans to return in January after a Christmas break). Many of our members also joined the Black Lives Matter march in Gainesville and often carried Black Lives Matter signs at our picket. Dr. King spoke of three evils: "the evil of racism, the evil of poverty, and the evil of war," and how they intertwine.

In September, the Harn Museum Japanese Garden invited Scott Camil and me to be part of an International Day of Peace celebration. A survivor of Hiroshima designed symbols of peace that were raked into Japanese Gardens' gravel across the US, including at the Harn Museum in Gainesville. Wearing VFP t-shirts and masks, we raked and then talked about our International Day of Peace experiences. Many of you have joined International Day of Peace events sponsored and organized by Vets for Peace and its partners, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Gainesville, Bahá'í Larry Schwandes, The Model UN, and the River Phoenix Center for Peacebuilding. Martin McKellar at the Harn Museum Japanese Garden was a lead organizer of this event. The resulting video shows this International Day of Peace ceremony at five gardens across the US. It is on our website, and you can watch it [here](#). See the article on International Day of Peace on page [80](#).

And that brings us to our Winter Solstice Concert offered virtually to help us celebrate the returning of the light in 2021. We at Vets for Peace wish all of you a safe and happy New Year and hope to be celebrating the fight for peace and justice with you in person by this time next year.

When the next generation asks us, "Why didn't you do something? Why didn't you speak up?" What are we going to say?

— Senator Jeff Flake

Tonight's Program:

(may include but is not limited to)

CHEROKEE PEACE CHANT

Georg Suzuki

OPENING RANT

Bob Treadwater

JOHN CHAMBERS

PEACE POETRY WINNERS

(Peace Poets Performing Periodically)

LAUREN ROBINSON

DAVID BEEDE

MARK BILLMAN

NANCY LUCA

SCOTT CAMIL

MEMORIES

BILL AND JENNIFER

MIKE ROBINSON

JANET AND CATHY

POLYPHONY

*Bob McPeck * Fay Baird * Fagan Arouh * Aaron Colverson*

OTHER VOICES

*Michelle Ott * Dan Tampas * Fagan Arouh
Alan Hill * Rob Rothschild * Brad Bangstad*

BOB AND ROB'S VIRTUAL ADVENTURE

WAR IS OVER

BOB AND ROB'S OTHER VIRTUAL ADVENTURE

IMAGINE

and Master of Ceremonies - Bob Treadwater

Peace Helmet Award



by Scott Camil

Over the last 33 years, Veterans for Peace has recognized people 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 33 years, these stained-glass Peace Helmets have been created for us exclusively by McIntyre Stained Glass Studio.

We started giving this award out publicly at the Solstice in 2008.

2020 Peace Helmet Award Recipients:

Greg Mullaley - All around help, whatever I need

Pablo Ortiz - Flies in from Washington State every year to help on Memorial Mile

Lisa McGaughran - Photographs all of our events & Volunteers for whatever we need

2019 Peace Helmet Award Recipients:

Janet Davies - Memorial Mile - Afghanistan 2001-2007

Jack Eisenfeld - All around help, whatever I need

David & Judy Gold - Keep track of visited tombstones and place a flag on each one on Memorial Mile

James Ingle - Brings IBEW 1205 every year to help on Memorial Mile

2018 Peace Helmet Award Recipients:

John and Jane Bishop - Special needs

Susan Hudgens - Great Ideas, Memorial Mile, Solstice

Rob Rothschild - Solstice Music, Setup and Takedown

2017 Peace Helmet Award Recipients:

Doug Bernal - VFP Vice President is an integral part of all of our projects

Ken Cornell - Memorial Mile, Winter Solstice and anything else that I need help with

Roberta Gastmeyer - Memorial Mile, Winter Solstice, Sierra Club and anything else that I need help with

2016 Peace Helmet Award Recipient:

Stefan Broadus - Memorial Mile

2015 Peace Helmet Award Recipients:

Deborah Hendrix - Our Videographer

Dianne Delage - Our Solstice Signer

2014 Peace Helmet Award Recipients:

Ruth Steiner - Memorial Mile

Sidney Wade - Peace Poetry Contest

2013 Peace Helmet Award Recipients:

Doris Nabuis - VFP

Gloria Summers - VFP

Paul Ortiz - Samuel Proctor Oral History Program

Richard Hudgens - VFP

Nic Vera - VFP

2012 Peace Helmet Award Recipients:

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Gainesville, Social

Justice Council - Alice Primack

David Pokorney - Website and Photography

2011 Peace Helmet Award Recipients:

Jessica Newman - Peace Poetry Contest, Penrod Award

Anne and Phil Haisley - Book Inc - Book Lover's Cafe

Virtual Peace Helmet to the Occupy Movement everywhere

2010 Peace Helmet Award Recipients:

Sheila Payne - Peace Poetry Contest, Penrod Award

Charlie Scales - Hyde and Zyke

2009 Peace Helmet Award Recipients:

Kirk Anthony - MFSSO

Jacque Betz - Code Pink

Sue Faulk - VFP

Craig Nikolaus - VFP

Peter Theoktisto - Everyman Sound - Solstice

Bob Tomashevsky - VFP

2008 Peace Helmet Award Recipients:

Denny Bellesheim - VFP

Dottie Burnham - VFP

Louis Clark - Bio-Graphix

Rob Hopkins - VFP

Gil Marshall - VFP

Ku Wang - VFP

Other Years:

Mary Bahr - Web Master

Norman Balabanian - VFP

Pierce Butler - Databases

Scott Camil - VFP

John Chambers - VFP

Joe Courter - *Gainesville Iguana*

Jim Creaven - VFP

John Fullerton - VFP

Bill Gilbert - VFP

John Hawkins - VFP

Dave Henderson - VFP

Stephen Hunter - VFP

Bill Hutchinson - Solstice

Marybeth Hyer - VFP

Bobby Ing - VFP

John Koch - VFP

Julie Netzer - VFP

Bill Salmon - VFP

Sherry Steiner - VFP

Bill Warrick - VFP

Charles Willett - VFP

Peace Helmet Award Recipients over the last 34 years:
(We did not have computer records in the beginning so we have done our best to remember all of the recipients. If you have received this award and are not listed, please let us know, we apologize.)



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Special Thanks to —

The Members & Supporters of Veterans for Peace

Rob Rothschild • Bill Hutchinson

Diane Delage • Ken Cornell

McIntyre Stained Glass • Deborah Hendrix • Linda Kemp

Samuel Proctor Oral History Program

WGOT • WUBA • Roberta Gastmeyer

Alivia Regan Hunter • Mary Bahr

Paul Ortiz & Sheila Payne • Sherry Steiner

Anita Sundaram • Jane & John Bishop • Jessica Newman

Tuesday afternoon peace picketers • Whistleblowers

*Veterans for Peace
thanks*

Linda Kemp

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

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☎ Doctors Without Borders: 1-888-392-0392

☎ Oxfam America: 1-800/OXFAM-US (693-2687)

PEACE

Thanks, Veterans for Peace

Rob & Lou Hyatt

Guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism.

— George Washington

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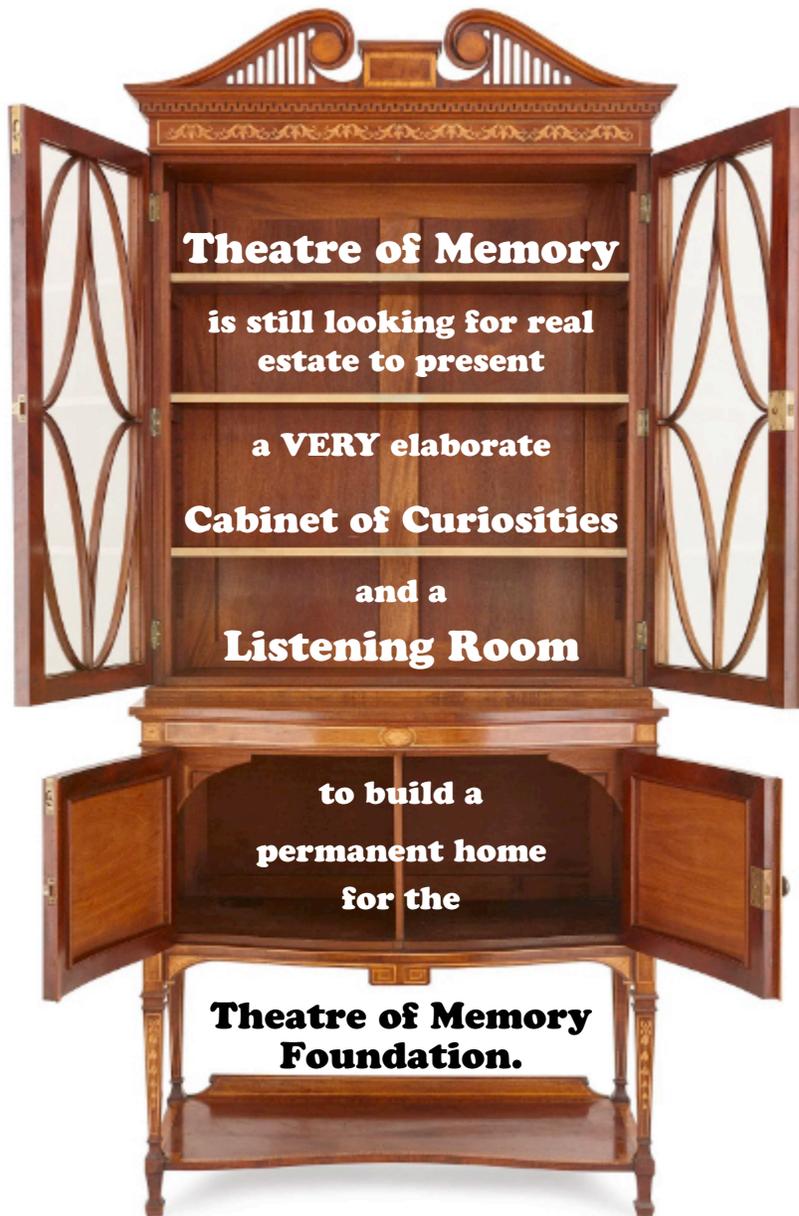
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THE BELTRAM PEACE CENTER

EMMANUEL MENNONITE CHURCH is a welcoming community in the Anabaptist tradition of radical discipleship and active peacemaking.

THE BELTRAM PEACE CENTER offers events and programs funded by a legacy from the estate of Fred Beltram, a member of the church whose service as a non-combatant in World War II strengthened his passion for peace.

**The America that
we're fighting for is
loving, it is
accepting, it
actualizes potential.**

**— Alexandria
Ocasio-Cortez**



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2020 Alachua County Peace Poetry Contest

by Sheila Payne

This year, Veterans for Peace organized the Eleventh Annual Peace Poetry Contest, inviting all kindergarten to twelfth grade students in Alachua County schools to submit poems based on what peace and social justice means to them.

Veterans for Peace members believe that peace-making and hope for a peaceful world begin in our community, our homes and our schools. Peace is a uniquely human conception and affirms the human spirit. It is especially important to remember that peace is not merely a goal but a human right.

We want to honor the ideal of peace through the perspectives of young people and VFP believes that poetry is a prime and meaningful medium for creating a "culture of peace." Because of this, we believe the Peace Poetry Contest provides a positive avenue for children and young people to share feelings and craft their words creatively. That is why we invite students to participate in the Peace Poetry contest each year; a peaceful possibility lies in the younger generations of today who will be leading, transforming and inspiring the world tomorrow.

Veterans for Peace would first and foremost like to thank all the student poets who wrote poems and were interested in expressing their ideas about peace and social justice. Without the poetry submissions, there would be no Peace Poetry Contest and none of the dialogue that comes with it. Parents and teachers also play a large role in the Peace Poetry Contest every year by encouraging their children to participate. Thank you for helping make the Peace Poetry Contest a success.

The poems this year were again especially poignant because of the continuing school shootings and mandatory shooter classroom drills. Many students in the last three years focused on safety in the classroom and trauma associated with the fear of being shot at school. Some poets from the upper grades wrote horrific poems of hiding in closets, waking up to the sounds of bullets and other vivid imaginings of gun violence at school.

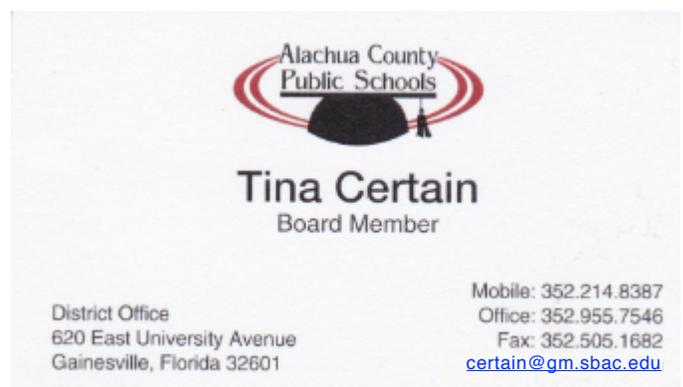
Many poets wrote about racism, bullying, and soldiers either not returning or returning forever changed both physically and emotionally by war. There are always many poems about climate change and peace being experienced in the natural world. Many of these environmental poems are shared electronically by the local Sierra Club chapter.

A new theme this year addressed Covid-19 and the belief that being a good citizen means observing the Shelter-In-Place regulations. We were encouraged by the maturity expressed in these poems and of course blown away by the beauty of all 200 of the poems submitted.

We received diverse poems from students of many different backgrounds. Many teachers and parents have told us that these poets have never won in other areas where students compete and many of the poets have never read their work to an audience. To hear them read their poetry is a very moving experience from the youngest poets to the incredibly wise and provocative words of the older students. The poetry is powerful, haunting and thought provoking.



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WHEN WE ALL THINK ALIKE, NO ONE THINKS VERY MUCH.

— WALTER LIPPMAN



Voices of the future: 20 2020 Peace Poetry Contest winners. (Match locations to numbers to names below.)

- | | | | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <u>1</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>8</u> | <u>11</u> | <u>14</u> | <u>18</u> |
| <u>2</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>9</u> | <u>12</u> | <u>15</u> | <u>19</u> |
| <u>3</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>10</u> | <u>13</u> | <u>16</u> | <u>20</u> |
| | <u>7</u> | | | <u>17</u> | <u>21</u> |

- | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Simka Cruz-Davis | 8. Stanley Jose Cruz-Davis | 15. Abby Hall |
| 2. Wyatt Dyke | 9. Marly Spicer | 16. Rianna Griffith |
| 3. Allison Waddle | 10. Julia Webster | 17. Noah Sorek |
| 4. Moses Shitama | 11. Miko Shitama | 18. Asher Case |
| 5. Boone Schroder | 12. Esmeralda Seda | 19. Kennedy Wade |
| 6. Geeta Pragash | 13. Seung Soo Baik | 20. Fisher Eakin |
| 7. Jacob Sandor McNamara | 14. Lindsay Jenkins | 21. Brindha Rathinasabapathi |

[*Click here to see the Peace Poetry Program on YouTube.*](#)

Poets were again judged by a panel of judges on their message and creativity, and issued first, second, third place or high honors awards by age group.

Because of the Shelter-In-Place regulations, we are especially grateful for the students and teachers who still felt inspired to submit Peace Poems under trying circumstances and distance learning.

We so appreciate the teachers who while having to manage new technology and while spending even more hours working to keep contact with their students who may have had less than ideal ability to stay engaged via the internet were still willing to take on more work prompting their students to write beautiful poetry.

... continued on next page →

Much of our contact with teachers this year was via email, phone calls and postal mail as the teachers were not located at their schools. Thank you to the teachers who were willing to stay engaged all the way through the months-long process of sending poems, helping to send out letters of winner/non-winner status and then helping us to get the winning poets to send in a video of themselves reading their poems on their phone or via YouTube. Deborah Hendrix from the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program sent the poets a tech app so they could upload their video to a video platform.

We really appreciate Deborah Hendrix for all her years of filming the Peace Poetry Reading and for receiving this year's poetry videos and weaving them into a Poetry Reading and celebration. You can find this year's Poetry Reading at the Veterans for Peace website.

We would also love to thank the so talented Alivia Regan Hunter for allowing us to use her wonderful original music and songs from past Poetry Readings at this year's Peace Poetry Reading.

The 29 winning poems were published in the 2020 Peace Poetry Contest booklet (download at vfp Gainesville.org). Poets were mailed a certificate of achievement and a gift card to a local bookstore.

For high-schoolers considering not registering for the Selective Service as is currently mandated: call 1-800-379-2679 or go to www.centeronconscience.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.



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In a powerful moment, The Tennessee National Guard lays down their shields at a protest that has made its way up the steps of the Tennessee Capitol

pic.twitter.com/oLy8rVTujP

5:47 PM - 1 Jun 2020
— Rebecca Cardenas



Memorial Mile 2020

by Mary Bahr

In the Spring of 2020, as the lockdown proceeded and COVID-19 cases and deaths in Alachua County began to rise, Vets for Peace decided we could not risk the health of the approximately 100 volunteers required to put up, take down and guard the Memorial Mile. And so, we canceled the physical memorial which we have worked on since 2006. Since the Memorial Mile began, many talented photographers have documented the display. As Vets for Peace webmaster, I have thousands of photographs in my archives. Hundreds are linked to the website.

I decided to try to make a Virtual Memorial Mile. It was an arduous process to find the software that would add a large slideshow to the website and then learn to use it, choose photos and put them into the story I was trying to tell. After many hours of work, as I searched for photographs and learned how to best format and annotate them I found myself on a journey through time as our community labored on the Memorial Mile over the years, and more families began to visit their loved ones.

As always, browsing the photos of my friends at work on the memorial and especially the family notes and gifts left behind at individual tombstones, I found myself entering a meditative state where the scale of the personal tragedy that is War became all too clear.

A story began to emerge of how the Memorial Mile started as something we were going to do for a few years, and then it would be over. But of course, the reality is we are still in the "forever wars", and people are still suffering and dying. In typical fashion, the present administration has claimed to bring troops home. In reality, they have shifted troops to other places in the Middle East and sent



more to serve. Of course, they have not bothered to report on or worry about climbing civilian losses from drone strikes and airstrikes.

The virtual slide show walks you through the Memorial Mile, but it also ends up telling a longer story of how our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have gone on and on and on as wars of the American Empire. As our map on the park fence tells us in "normal times", 700 plus military bases around the world and war in the Middle East that has dragged on for so long that our children have never known a time when the US was not at war.

If we could have had a physical Memorial Mile, there would have been 23 more tombstones for Afghanistan and 11 more for Iraq, plus a Solstice Concert program note of three additional deaths in Afghanistan and four in Iraq since Memorial Day (not including civilians).

The US has now lost 2,452 troops in Afghanistan and 4,586 in Iraq.

We still wish for Peace.

The link to the slideshow is at the top of our website at VFPgainesville.org and here at [Memorial Mile](#).



Certified lunatics are shut up because of their proneness to violence when their pretensions are questioned; the uncertified variety are given the control of powerful armies, and can inflict death and disaster upon all sane men within their reach.

— Bertrand Russell

BOLD Ideas, ESSENTIAL Reading

“The greatest of all myths about wars is that they come to an end. This deeply personal, very human book shows how ten, twenty, thirty, sixty years later their hurts and scars live on in those who fought them. Michael Messner has brought on stage some eloquent survivors whom our politicians should listen to before they dare even consider sending young men and women out to fight yet again.”

—Adam Hochschild, author of *To End All Wars: A Story of Loyalty and Rebellion, 1914-1918*

“There is a revelation on every page of Guys Like Me. The journey any man takes to transform his sense of his own manliness isn't direct or simple. And, as Michael Messner shows us in these five engaging life histories, each gendered journey will have added twists and turns when distorted by militarism. A truly humane book.”

—Cynthia Enloe, author of *The Big Push: Exposing and Challenging Persistent Patriarchy*

“With Guys Like Me, Michael Messner delivers an eloquent, passionate, and moving account of how war has sometimes moved veterans towards peace. Messner's interviewees give us hope that humanity might yet one day listen to the soldiers who have gone to war, the ones who tell us, again and again, that war's devastation is never worth it.”

—Viet Thanh Nguyen, author of *The Sympathizer*

“Messner's narrative points the way for other activists seeking to build popular opposition movements.”

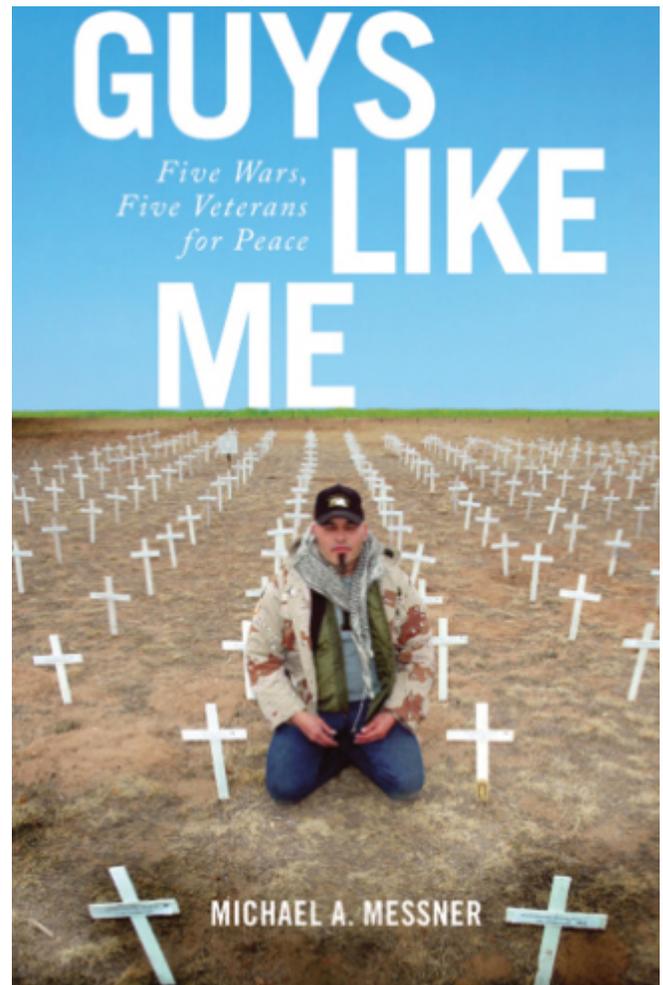
—*Kirkus Reviews*

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“Michael Messner is our new Studs Terkel. His five men speak with extraordinary eloquence about the psychic wounds they suffered in war, and the moral odyssey they undertook to break the silence that surrounds the human cost of war in the United States. Each man fought in a different war, but each tells a common story of exploitation by their own government and a descent into numbness, followed by redemption.”

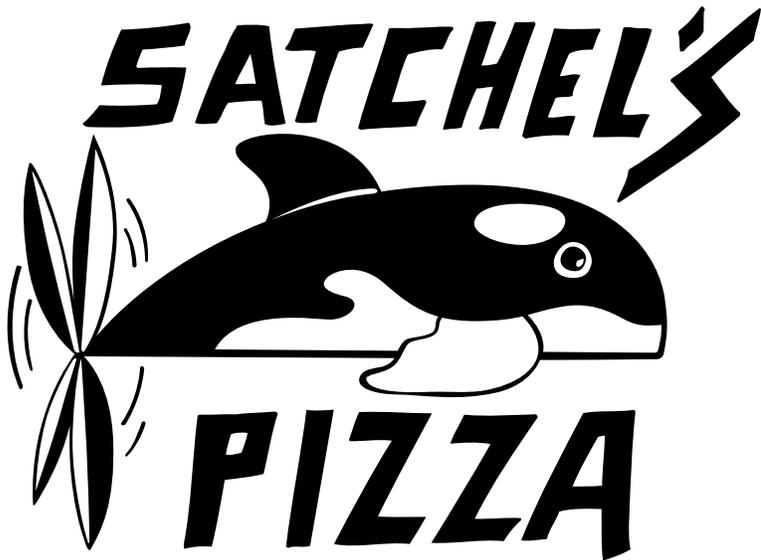
—Hugh Gusterson, author of *Drone: Remote Control Warfare*

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Solidarity with “Essential Workers”

In what has been a long and arduous year, in what should have been a time of national solidarity, we briefly remembered what critical roles so many of the often overlooked “essential workers” play in our society. People who toil away, unseen but in plain view, stocking our shelves, cooking our food, caring for our unwell. In an otherwise dark time, it was uplifting to see unappreciated and forgotten workers given some recognition. It is my earnest hope that moving forward people will remember what an important and indeed essential role regular working folks play in all of our lives.

As a member of an organization whose focus is the betterment of the lives of workers, I’m proud to see how often we have common interest with an organization whose focus is peace. Wiser people than me have said that if you want peace, work for justice. I’m hopeful that a push for a society that more justly treats its workers will yield the further benefit of being a society where all of us feel at peace, no longer harried by hunger, poverty, and injustice. It’s a long way off, but I am happy to see my union stand beside Vets for Peace, pushing in the right direction.

James Ingle,
President

International Brotherhood of Electrical
Workers local 1205



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*This moment in American
politics does not end in a
well-earned rest.*

— Lili Loofbourow

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Scott's Thoughts on 2020

by Scott Camil

The year 2020 started normally, with us finishing up our work on the Alachua County Charter Review Commission (CRC). The Charter Review Commission had 12 members appointed by the Alachua County Commission. Doug Bernal, the Veterans for Peace Vice-President, was also on the Commission and I knew most of the members.

The CRC's job was to look at the Alachua County Charter and decide if any changes were needed. We could add things to the Charter, take things out of the Charter, and any changes that we made to the Charter had to be ratified by the citizens of Alachua County during the November election.

The CRC had 16 meetings and three public hearings from September 26th, 2019 through June 24th, 2020. We had 80 submissions of proposed changes, more than any previous CRC. After significant public debate and discussion, the CRC advanced twelve submittals for legal analysis and six proposals to public hearings.

At the March 11th meeting, I learned from Pradeep Kumar that the corona virus was coming here in about ten days. On the 12th, my wife Sherry and I went shopping for supplies and we went into self-quarantine on the 13th. We are still in self-quarantine.

On June 10th, the CRC approved four charter amendments for voters to consider on the November 3rd general election ballot: County Growth Management Area, Affordable Housing Trust Fund, "Cleanup" Amendment Removing Unconstitutional Provisions, and Candidate Treasurer Reports.

The voters approved all 4 amendments to the County Charter.

Later in the year, I received a phone call out of the blue from Pablo Fernandez. I met Pablo in 1972 when I went to Miami to meet with representatives from Alpha 66 and Abdullah.

The purpose of this meeting was to ensure that when we went to Miami to protest the Democratic and Republican conventions scheduled for Miami Beach, we would not have any confrontations with the right-wing Cubans.

Pablo was their representative. When I met with Pablo, he offered me machine guns, grenades and mortars. I was not expecting this and told him that I was not interested. I found out later that he was an informant for the FBI, hoping to provoke me into committing violent acts.

When Pablo called, I was very surprised, as we had not spoken since 1972.

He told me that he was dying of cancer and he was very sorry for what he did to me. He asked for my forgiveness.

I forgave him and asked him many questions. He agreed to allow Paul Ortiz, a member of VFP and Chair of the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program at UF, to come to Miami and do a recorded interview to answer other questions that I had. That interview can be found here: <https://spaces.hightail.com/space/Ugf9GIE2Os/files/fit-d91377fe-932e-4594-a51b-5aa053c08270/fv-597b577b-d3f3-4ab5-b0ba-f6a0ac789301/VWV%20168%20Pablo%20Fernandez%2010-4-2019.mp3>

... continued on second page following →



Do not get lost in a sea of despair. Be hopeful, be optimistic. Our struggle is not the struggle of a day, a week, a month, or a year, it is the struggle of a lifetime. Never, ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble. #goodtrouble

— John Lewis



REFUGEE FROM DAMASCUS

The heat of the sun warms the tattered plaid
that hangs from the back of that young lad,
who warbles to passersby like a desperate bird,
clutching the shoe polish and the brush that earns him his keep,
competing amid a cacophony of cries this side of the corniche

His brother was conscripted by insurgents to fight,
lured by promises of prosperity and justice
The screams of his sisters pierced the smoke in the street
and rubble rained down upon the masked men
who stuffed him into the hold of a diesel truck en route to Beirut,
fleeing the death and destruction in Damascus

His father told him not to return without bread,
so he lies on his side in an alley behind a restaurant in Hamra.
His ears bleed onto the concrete;
he watches as a trickle scales the slope of a sewage grate,
staining bronze a stray cigarette butt in its wake

The sun hangs in the sky like fruit, elusive
as sunset gives way to the hungry, bitter night.

Jacob Sandor McNamara, Grade 11, Eastside High School, Second Place, Grades 8-11

**The River Phoenix
Center for
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their constancy and dedication
to growing peace in
community, country and world.**



J. K. "Jess" Irby

Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller



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Pablo told me that he worked for the CIA in the Bay of Pigs operation and other operations outside of the US. Pablo worked for the FBI inside the US. What was really telling about this was his handler in the CIA and in the FBI was the same person.

Shortly after the interview with Paul, Pablo passed away.

The corona virus in the USA should be called the Trump Virus (TV).

Over 300,000 Americans have died from this virus on his watch.

This is more than all of the Americans killed in combat in WW1, WW2, Korea and Vietnam and the deaths are still coming.

At first it was "fake news," then a flu that would disappear.

This was very comforting to Trump's Archie Bunker supporters as they attended his Super Spreader events unmasked without any social distancing.

Trump corporate backers are making millions, profiting from the misery, pain, illness, suffering and misfortune of our citizens, especially the poor.

What a windfall for the pharmaceutical industry.

When Trump caught the fake virus, I had to laugh. I also crossed my fingers hoping for a little more karma for the fake human.

The harsh realities of the Trump presidency made 2020 seem like it would never end.

We should never forget who Trump's enablers were. At the top of the list were members of the American press who gave him as much time and publicity as he wanted. They were true propagandists that would have made Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's propaganda specialist, jealous. They never questioned his lies and gave him free rein. So much for the "4th Estate."

I would have found it hard to believe these things had I not lived through them: Demonizing Science, Denying Facts, Vilifying the poor and Separating immigrant children from their families.

Our life had changed. We no longer had Veterans for Peace meetings in person at my house. We have been conducting VFP business by phone, email and Zoom.

Thanks to Mary Bahr, Sheila Payne, Paul Ortiz, Sherry Steiner and Doug Bernal, we were able to do Memorial Mile, the Peace Poetry Contest and the Peace Scholarship awards all virtually online.

Now we are doing our first virtual Winter Solstice Celebration. Because of the corona virus, our advertisers are not doing as well as usual so we have changed our ad prices to a sliding scale allowing them to pay what they can afford.

... continued on next page →

Since 1975, while the U.S. population has risen from 216 million people to 331 million, the total number of hospital beds has declined from 1.5 million to 925,000. ... The United States currently has only 2.8 hospital beds per 1,000 residents, just a little over half the average of 5.4 beds per 1,000 residents in other wealthy countries.

— Margaret Flowers

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www.veteransforpeace.org

*When small men begin to cast
big shadows, it means that the
sun is about to set.*

— *Lin Yutang*

Thanks to Rob Rothschild's technical expertise, we are able to have the Winter Solstice virtually. Rob has performed at every Solstice and he received the Peace Helmet Award in 2018.

At this year's concert, we will not get to see our friends and share hugs. Hopefully we can get back to normal next year.

Trump recently offered to bring home 2,500 troops from Afghanistan and 2,500 from Iraq. All hell broke loose. The war industry said that this would be devastating.

We have been in Afghanistan since 2001 and Iraq since 2003.

What the hell have we accomplished if we can't bring 2,500 troops home after two decades in Afghanistan and after 18 years in Iraq? How many more years do they need to "Accomplish the Mission"?

The war in Afghanistan has cost the lives of 2,452 American service personnel so far. The war in Iraq has cost the lives of 4,586 American service personnel so far.

I did not support Trump, he definitely had to go. Unfortunately that meant that we ended up with Biden. Biden is a neoliberal. Yes, he's a lot better than the extremely despicable Trump but that is a very low bar. Biden does not support the Green New Deal, Medicare for All, or eliminating student debt.

It won't be easy for Biden, who will have to deal with a radically unethical Republican-

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controlled Senate made up of far right extremists. These bastards did not allow President Obama to fill a seat on the Supreme Court during the last ten months of his presidency but following the devastating loss of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, had no trouble confirming Amy Coney Barrett a week before the November election. They did not allow an honest trial in the impeachment of trump. Their goal was not to serve the American public but to do what was best for their party at the expense of our citizens.

Just like Obama, Biden says he will look forward, not back. This means that Trump's crimes, like Bush's crimes, will be covered up. This is how each president covers the ass of the president before him - no partisan politics here.

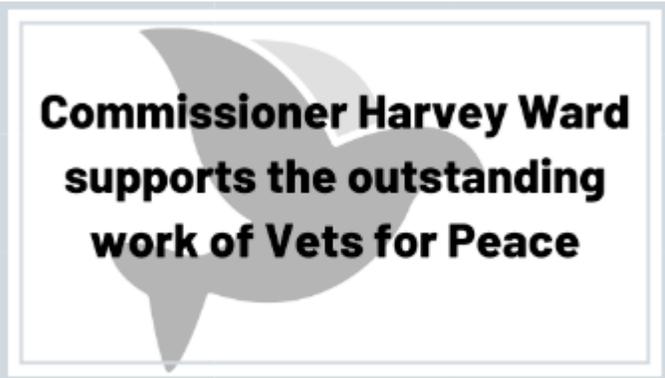
Biden will also have a weaker House of Representatives. The Democrats lost many seats because neoliberal Speaker Pelosi made war against the progressive Democrats rather than against the Republicans. She hates "The Squad," which is made up of progressive representatives. It's all about keeping the corporate donors happy and the cash coming in.

Biden's ability to do good things and repair some of the damage done by the trump gang of crooks depends on the outcome of the two Georgia Senate runoff elections in January.

These two seats will decide control of the Senate. If the Democrats take control of the Senate away from the criminals, then Biden can begin to restore some balance, especially in the courts.

In these races, Raphael Warnock, a Black minister is trying to unseat the appointed Republican Senator Kelly Loeffler. Loeffler, the wealthiest US Senator, is worth over 800 million dollars.

After learning about the corona virus in a private briefing before the public was told, Loeffler sold about three million dollars in stock



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to avoid losses and purchased stock in two companies that would benefit from the corona virus.

Reverend Raphael Warnock has come under attack for saying in a sermon, that "it is impossible to serve both God and the military". Wow!

You can learn more about Reverend Raphael Warnock here: <https://warnockforgeorgia.com/about/>

In the other Senate race, **Thomas Jonathan Ossoff**, an investigative journalist is trying to unseat Republican incumbent Senator David Perdue, one of Trump's closest personal allies.

Perdue has been under investigation for insider trading, related to selling millions of dollars worth of stock after learning about the corona virus in a private briefing before the public was told.

Ossoff is the CEO of Insight TWI, a 30-year old media production company that investigates corruption, organized crime and war crimes for international news organizations.

You can learn more about Thomas Jonathan Ossoff here: <https://election.com/bio/>

The key to Biden restoring some balance in our government is for both Reverend Raphael Warnock and Thomas Jonathan Ossoff to be seated in the US Senate.

If this does not happen, the Republicans will block Biden from making the changes that he was elected to do, the same way they did to Obama, as our country slides further into Fascism.

... continued on second page following →

**Please note the lack of Nazis at our marches.
— anonymous protest sign**

***The day the power of love overrules the love of power,
the world will know peace.***

— Mahatma Gandhi

SEASON'S GREETINGS AND WISHES FOR
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For this Special Election, Georgia has reduced polling places in the four largest counties as part of its voter suppression efforts.

Hell, trump and the Republicans have called for not recognizing the results of the election. 126 Republican federal Representatives called for not recognizing the results of the election. They want to throw out ballots that were mailed in.

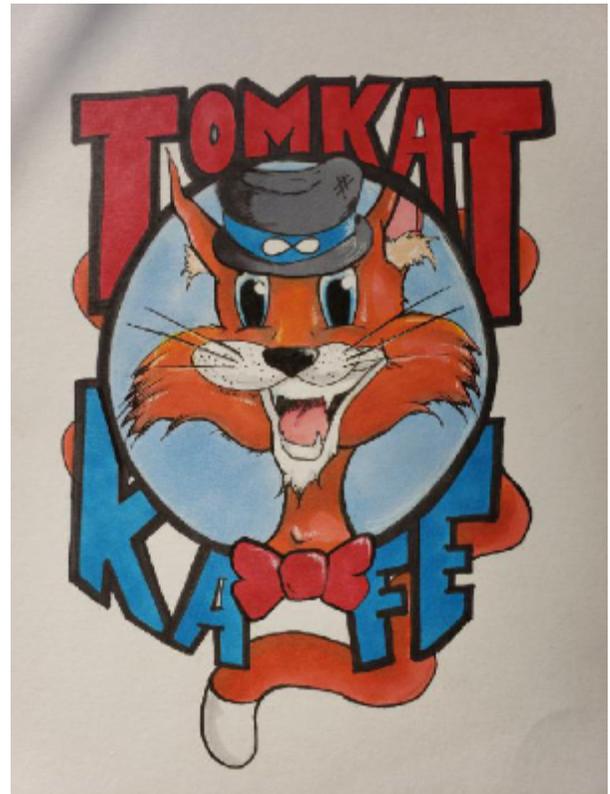
They claimed that there was fraud in the Georgia elections that are controlled by a Republican Governor and Secretary of State.

They know no shame. It's "The End Justifies the Means" and there are no limits to what they will do to maintain their power. It is an exercise in raw power.

The Republicans have worked as hard as they can to destroy our Democracy, its integrity, the people's faith in our system and our international standing.

The Republicans control the Supreme Court and the only chance we have to restore some semblance of integrity, honesty and fair play is to take away their control of the Senate.

This is where we are today. What are You going to do about it?



America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves.
— Abraham Lincoln

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A Very Happy
Winter Solstice

SOMEHOW -- AND THIS SHOULD BE TRULY UNNERVING -- AMERICANS HAVE GOTTEN TO A PLACE WHERE, IT SEEMS, THEY TRUST ONLY SOLDIERS.

— U.S. ARMY MAJOR DANNY SJURSEN



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Closed to protect public health during the pandemic, the Matheson History Museum continues to pursue historical education via Zoom Webinar.

Upcoming presentations include "Florida's Healing Waters" with Rick Kilby on Monday, January 21 (7 pm).

See mathesonmuseum.org/events for more programs.

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**“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.”
-John Lennon**



Thank You, Veterans for Peace, for all
you do to create a more peaceful world.

Happy Holidays,
Harvey Budd & Ilene Silverman

*Of all the illogical responses to great violence, the impulse to give
blood is perhaps the most sweetly symbolic. Terrified human animals
come forward to offer, quite literally, the contents of their hearts,
because they have no idea how else to help.*

— Laurie Penny

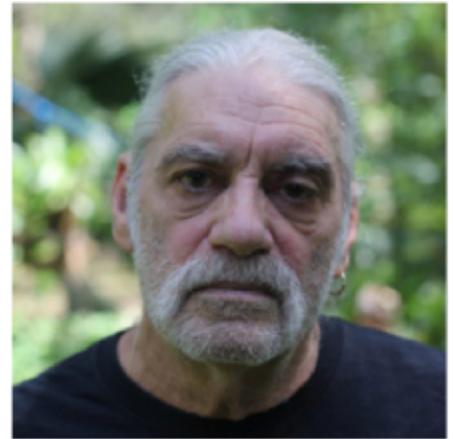
US Peace Memorial Foundation honors Scott Camil

The US Peace Memorial Foundation is pleased to honor Scott Camil for your antiwar work. Your entry has been approved by our Board of Directors and is now included in the [US Peace Registry](#). We are grateful for the opportunity to recognize you and to document some examples of your antiwar efforts. Your actions inspire others and will help to end wars.

The US Peace Memorial Foundation honors Americans who stand for peace by publishing the [US Peace Registry](#), awarding the [US Peace Prize](#), and fundraising for the [US Peace Memorial](#) in Washington, DC. We recognize thoughtful and courageous Americans and U.S. organizations that have taken a public stand against one or more U.S. wars or have devoted their time, energy, and other resources to finding peaceful solutions to international conflicts. We celebrate these role models to inspire other Americans to speak out against war and to work for peace.

Thank you for all that you do for peace and the planet.

Michael



Michael D. Knox, PhD, Chair
US Peace Memorial Foundation

DONATE: www.USPeaceMemorial.org/Donors.htm

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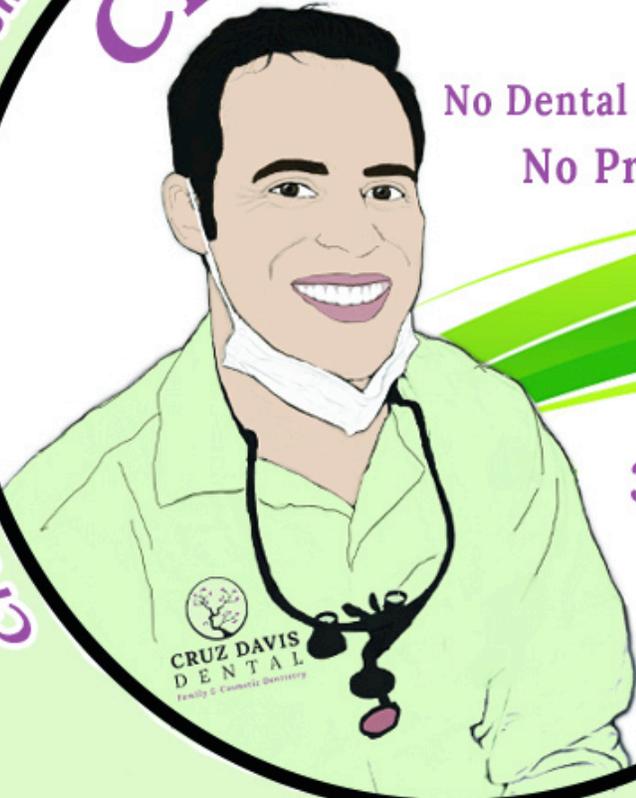
A Highwayman is as much a Robber when he plunders in a Gang as when single; and a Nation that makes an unjust War is only a great Gang.
- Benjamin Franklin

Consider how many adults are living their secret childhood gangster fantasy – walking into a bank wearing a mask. Ah, nostalgia. Who doesn't long for the good old days when PEOPLE robbed BANKS, instead of the other way around?

– Swami Beyondananda

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The advertisement is a composite image. The top portion shows a woman in a red sweater pointing her finger at soldiers in military gear behind a metal fence. Below this image is a red banner with the text "this holiday season" in white, followed by the word "BOYCOTT" in large, bold, white letters. Underneath "BOYCOTT" is the text "companies profiting from Israeli apartheid" in white. The bottom portion of the advertisement features a grid of logos for various companies: Volvo, GM, Hyundai, 3M, Ford, Ben & Jerry's, Sabra, HP, SodaStream, ExxonMobil, and Puma. At the very bottom, there are small logos for "Active Decisions" and "AHAVA".

Power
doesn't corrupt;
it reveals.
— Gabriel
Sherman

The Samuel Proctor Oral History Program

Wishing you peace and comfort
this holiday season



Our mission is to gather, preserve, and promote living histories of individuals from all walks of life.

The Samuel Proctor Oral History Program teaches students, independent scholars, and community organizations how to bring history to life. Our Veteran's History Project is a part of this commitment. Since 2000, volunteers and coordinators have been capturing the experiences of military veterans. With over 300 interviews in our collection, oral history interviews encompass a range of military conflicts, including veterans from World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, military operations in Central America, the Gulf War, the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, and more.

Would you like to add a voice to our collection? If you or someone you know is interested in donating an oral history to the Veterans History Project, please call SPOHP at (352) 392-7168 or email VHP Coordinator Ann Smith (asmith360@aol.com) for more information.



Alachua Audubon

Alachua Audubon Society's mission is to foster appreciation and knowledge of birds and other native wildlife, to protect and restore wildlife populations and their habitats, and to promote sustainable use of natural resources.

We fulfill our mission in the following ways:

To foster appreciation and knowledge of birds and other native wildlife, we offer more than 100 field trips yearly – all free and led by local experts. These include events tailored for beginners, families, and seasoned birding enthusiasts. We also offer free presentations to the public on a variety of bird and wildlife related topics, and a birding class through the Santa Fe College Community Education program. We offer a college internship program that provides students with a unique, hands-on learning experience that has been highly successful. (Unfortunately, many of these efforts are on hold while all of us deal with the COVID-19 precautions.)



To protect and restore wildlife populations and their habitats, we work with state agencies and other conservation groups to restore habitat, perform bird surveys, monitor and maintain over 100 Southeastern Kestrel nest boxes, support snail kite research, promote eagle nest monitoring efforts and many other projects.

To promote sustainable use of natural resources, we have a highly respected Conservation Committee with long-term experience in local efforts. This committee is often sought out to consult on important projects involving restoration, conservation, preservation and green energy.

The Alachua Audubon Society is an all-volunteer organization. Activities are free and open to one and all, but joining enables us to offer more to the community and a robust membership makes us stronger in our efforts to promote conservation initiatives in Alachua County. If you are not a member, please consider joining us at alachuaaudubon.org/membership/.

Birding is a peaceful pastime that can reduce stress and foster an appreciation of nature. Learn more at AlachuaAudubon.org and/or Facebook.com/AlachuaAudubon.

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— Michael
Winship



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2021 Veterans for Peace College Scholarship Program for Alachua County Students

by Paul Ortiz

Deadline for Application, April 23, 2021

Gainesville Veterans for Peace Chapter 14 is excited to announce our 7th annual Peace Scholarship Program for the spring of 2021. We are awarding three college scholarships of \$1,000 each for high school seniors, college students or adults with a commitment to activities including: social justice and peace, Black Lives Matter, conflict resolution and/or nonviolent social change.

Veterans for Peace created these scholarships to give financial support to students in Alachua County, Florida who are planning careers in pursuit of a world of social justice and equality.

The majority of Veterans for Peace scholarships awarded thus far have went to first-generation college students as well as to community college students. Students enrolled in vocational, apprenticeship and career training programs are eligible to apply.

Santa Fe College student Doug Bernal, a recipient of a 2016 Peace Scholarship, is an Iraq War veteran who explains the economic challenges facing student veterans: "Like many newly separated veterans, I struggled financially for quite some time after leaving the service. Unsure of where I wanted to go in life and lacking the confidence to pursue higher education, I found myself taking on more debt as time went on. When I finally decided to pursue school, it was difficult to purchase books and pay bills while waiting for my GI Bill benefits to come through. I didn't initially have the grades for financial aid, so the VFP scholarship was instrumental in getting me the books I so desperately needed and putting me on a path to a successful college experience."

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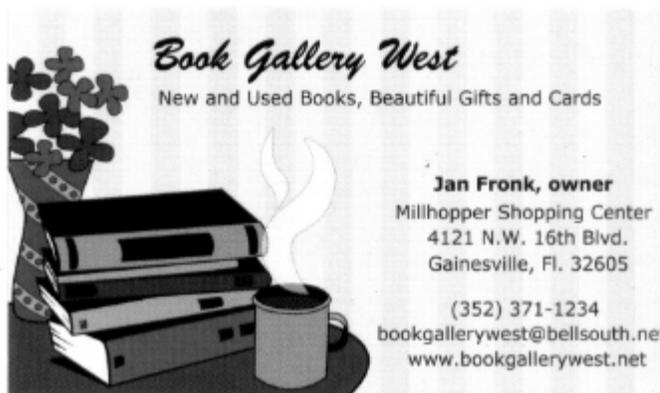
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Please help Gainesville Veterans for Peace spread the word about this scholarship program!

To be eligible to apply for the Peace Scholarship, the applicant must be: 1) a resident of Alachua County; 2) a high school senior planning to enroll in full-time undergraduate study at an accredited two- or four-year college, university or vocational-technical school or apprenticeship program in the United States for the 2021-2022 academic year. Or: 2) a student currently enrolled in one of these programs and in good standing; or: 3) an adult student enrolling in higher education who needs financial assistance.

Peace Scholarship applicants will also be asked to provide a brief personal statement and evidence of leadership and/or personal initiative in activities in an organization (including volunteer or paid work) relating to peace and social justice, conflict resolution and/or nonviolent social change. Applicants will also need to provide two letters of recommendation.

PEACE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE

The application (PDF file) must be downloaded from the Gainesville Veterans for Peace website, printed out, completed and postal mailed to:

Paul Ortiz
C/O Veterans for Peace Scholarship Program
2115 NW 7th Lane
Gainesville, Florida 32603

The postmarked deadline for the scholarship application is April 23, 2021.

Peace Scholarship recipients will be announced during the first week of May. For questions about the Peace Scholarship, contact Paul Ortiz at: ortizprof@gmail.com or 831-334-0131.

The full announcement and instructions for applying may be found on our web site, at <http://www.vfpgainesville.org>.

... continued on third page following →

China has not wasted a single penny on war, and that's why they're ahead of us. In almost every way.

— Jimmy Carter



— ★ ★ —
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*Thank You, Veterans for Peace
for working over 34 years to
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— ★ ★ ★ —
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Happy Holidays

from

**Adrián
Hayes-Santos**

**Outrage is exhausting,
but it's necessary.
— Amanda Marcotte**

Florida is projected to see the biggest increase in its extreme heat threat of any state by 2050 yet the state has not implemented any plans to prepare for its future heat risk.

...
1.5 million Floridians are at elevated risk for inland flooding but the state has not implemented any plans to address its future inland flooding risks.

...
Florida faces the largest coastal flooding threat nationwide.
— States at Risk Project

**Thank you, Veterans for Peace.
From Our Family to Yours.
Blessed are the Peacemakers!
Ken, Angela, Chris, Taylor and Connor**



(Continued from pg 31)

2020 Veterans for Peace Scholarship Recipients:

This past year, Gainesville Veterans for Peace organized our sixth annual Peace Scholarship Program. Due to generous support of our chapter, we were able to award three scholarships of \$1,000 each. These were the recipients of the 2020 Gainesville Veterans for Peace Scholarship:

Alera Gainey

Alera Gainey is a dual enrollment student at Santa Fe College and Gainesville High School's Academy of Health Professions Program. She is the president of the GHS Spanish Honors Society. She has used her position in leadership to speak out publicly against violence in schools including giving testimony about bullying at the Florida Department of Education. Alera was an Environmental Ambassador at the Cultural Arts Coalition in Gainesville in the summer of 2018. Ms. Gainey plans to earn her Associates of Science Degree in Nursing at Santa Fe College and to eventually become a doctor.

Bryanna Michel

Bryanna Michel is a dual enrollment student at Eastside High School and Santa Fe College. She is majoring in biology with a minor in agriculture. She plans to use her degree to "continue my research about the various disparities affecting our world [including] food, medical, nutrition, health and poverty." Bryanna has volunteered at Saint Francis & Grace Marketplace since 2015. She received a Gold Ward from the Girl Scouts for developing a tutoring program for youth in homeless shelters. In addition, Ms. Michel received a national Borlaug Scholarship in 2019 for bringing awareness to social disparities in Haiti.

Lily Orton

Lily Orton Is a senior at Buchholz High School. While holding down a part-time job, Lily has been active in student government as well as the Organization Days for Girls which supplies menstrual hygiene kits for girls. During her sophomore year she went on a medical mission trip to Guatemala. She also visits with senior citizens at nursing homes. She will be attending the University of South Florida to earn her degree in marine biology. Her goal is to become a marine biologist who works on the conservation and rehabilitation of Florida's ecosystems and the animals that live in them.




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- Disdain for human rights**
- Identification of enemies as a unifying cause**
- Rampant sexism**
- Controlled mass media**
- Obsession with national security**
- Religion and government intertwined**
- Corporate power protected**
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- Disdain for intellectuals and the arts**
- Obsession with crime and punishment**
- Rampant cronyism and corruption**

— U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum

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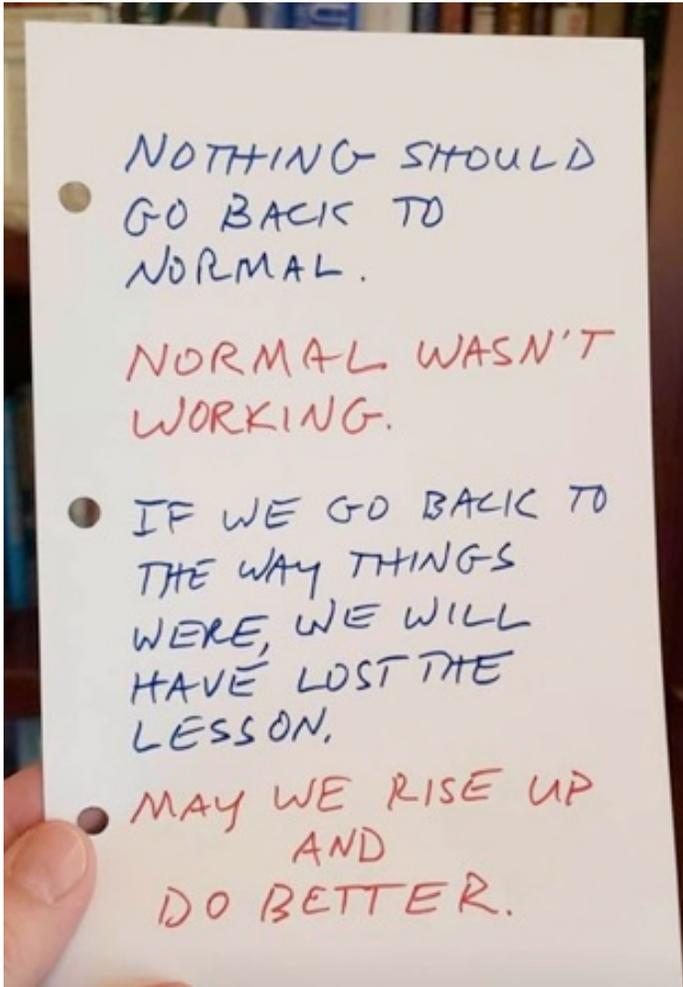
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The logo features a shield-shaped emblem. Inside the shield is a figure of a person sitting on a pedestal, holding two scales of justice aloft. The word "PUBLIC" is written above the figure, and "DEFENDER" is written below it. The entire emblem is set against a dark blue background with white text.

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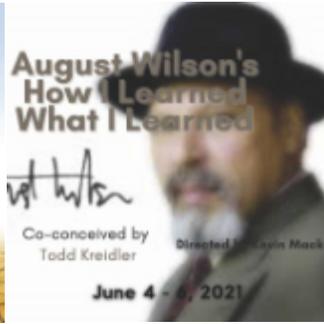
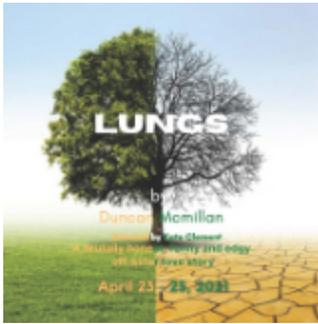
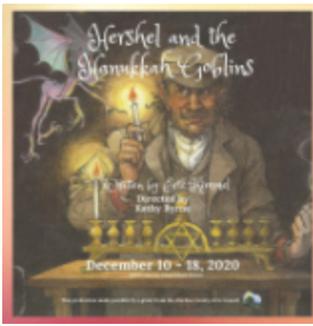
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ABOUT US

Star Center Theatre, Inc. is a non-profit organization providing arts education and performance opportunities to area youth, adults and their families since 2000. Our programs, classes, and workshops allow our participants to engage in all aspects of theatre production. Star Center program for children is rooted in education and promotes inclusion in the school curriculum.

Check out our 2020-2021 Season and please purchase your tickets on our website: www.starcentertheatre.org. Hit us up on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/starcentergainesville>.

2020, a year of change for local politics

by Doug Bernal

The end of 2020 brings with it the beginning of change for our community. Two long-term Alachua County Commissioners, Mike Byerly and Robert "Hutch" Hutchinson, are now looking ahead at a post-commission chapter in their lives. Their departure means the loss of decades of experience and institutional knowledge that will be hard to replace. Their advocacy for the environment, progressive votes on LGBTQIA+ issues, concern for their community, and consistency in policy-making deserve praise. We now have a woman-majority County Commission, and more citizens now have someone like themselves to look to in local office. The idea that even one person can see Marihelen Wheeler, Anna Prizzia or Mary Alford on Channel 12 and be inspired to run for office is something to treasure. Their service brings with it unique experiences in issues such as sustainable development and food security. Additionally, having a member of the LGBTQIA+ community serving offers a chance for lived experiences and empathy to direct policy-making going forward, hopefully improving upon the great strides made by their predecessors.

Changes have also happened with the Alachua County School Board. A historic African-American majority is now in office, and with that majority come the hopes and expectations of thousands of voices. With a new majority in place and the former superintendent no longer there, it is now up to the policy-makers to ensure that changes that have been advocated for begin to happen. And it is up to us as citizens to offer our support, encouragement and direction.

... continued on next page →

Anybody can become angry, that is easy; but to be angry with the right person, and to the right degree, and at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way, that is not within everybody's power and is not easy.

— Aristotle

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We live in capitalism, its power seems inescapable – but then, so did the divine right of kings. Any human power can be resisted and changed by human beings. Resistance and change often begin in art. Very often in our art, the art of words.

— Ursula K. Le Guin



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Similar strides were made in other offices. Ayesha Solomon is the new face for the Property Appraiser's Office, having handily defeated four other opponents for the position. Her message of experience, her advocacy for improving the office, and her promise to adopt new technology and create a more equitable tax roll clearly resonated with the majority of voters. The fact that she also spent the least amount of money in that race is a testament to her overwhelming support.

Similarly, our new sheriff, Clovis Watson, offered a message that focused on going back to community policing and fairness. His opponent, the outgoing Sheriff Sadie Darnell, had long come under criticism for how she and her officers interacted with citizens, especially citizens of color. Hiring officers who had been forced out of GPD due to allegations of sexual harassment, downplaying the killing of Robert Dentmond, gaslighting family members whose relatives had seen abuse at the hands of her guards at the jail, firing her political opponent only to pay \$400,000 in taxpayer dollars when sued, and saying that people of color were arrested due to their culture apparently did not help endear her to voters. Incoming Sheriff Watson's image of a sheriff who values citizen engagement, and of a sheriff who takes responsibility for failures, offered a contrast that voters appreciated, and one that our community desperately needed.

The changing face of progressive politics

Changes in 2020 weren't limited to elected office. One local group, the Suwannee-St. Johns (SSJ) Sierra Club, saw a mass resignation of its leadership. Years of underlying and systematic issues finally came to a head following a contemptuous decision by the Florida Sierra Club, the state-level overseer of the local Sierra Club group. The SSJ Sierra Club was tasked with the unenviable choice of whether to support a solar project in an unincorporated Archer community.

Recognizing the value of solar, but also noting that it was not the all-white board's place to tell a predominately African-American community what should and should not be accepted, they voted not to take a public position, mirroring the stance taken by the local NAACP Environment and Climate Justice Committee. Asked for guidance with this difficult decision, Florida Sierra Club instead took the unusual step of removing the decision from the SSJ Sierra Club and took a position against the location of the solar array.

Sierra Club Florida then ordered the SSJ group not to communicate with commissioners or to publicly disclose any conversations had about the issue, threatening members with expulsion from Sierra Club if they talked about the disagreement or disclosed any contents of previous meetings. Florida Sierra Club then issued a letter asking the commission to vote to indefinitely delay the proposal, effectively killing it. Members of the local group were muzzled, with Florida Sierra Club citing "a need for a unified front."

This was not the first time that the state chapter had created a rift with the local group. Multiple meetings between SSJ Sierra Club and the Florida chapter followed, with Florida Sierra Club continuing to demand compliance and seemingly taking on a view of African-Americans being a homogenous blob of people rather than independent communities.

HEARTWOOD
sounds stage

Years of not sending membership dues to Groups without clear policy direction explaining why, statements made in meetings with SSJ Sierra Club by Florida Sierra Club members questioning the financial situation and technological abilities of members of the African-American Archer community, tokenism in policy documents and statements made by members of Florida Sierra Club, and a failed campaign to get local groups to fundraise for Florida Sierra Club's PAC all came to a head. The local Sierra Club has now been dissolved as of the writing of this letter, with six of their nine Executive Committee members having resigned. Two of those who resigned are members of the local NAACP, with both being founding members of the NAACP Environment and Climate Justice Committee.

Sierra Club faces the same challenges many historically white organizations must face if they wish to remain prominent in the years ahead. Becoming more inclusive and being able to recognize years of discrimination, and pushing for equity and social justice, are admirable and necessary goals. But tokenism is not a solution, and Sierra Club should instead consider aggressively pursuing people-of-color

for paid positions versus hoping that sending letters will inspire change.

And while social justice and equity are issues that can never have a loud enough voice, the Sierra Club should consider complementing and assisting existing organizations who are already leading the charge, such as the NAACP or Dream Defenders, instead of trying to take the lead on an issue when others have actual lived experiences. This is something that former Executive Committee members have already been doing, and something that should be used as an example going forward.

Sierra Club as a whole should also heavily consider their actions in the social and racial justice space going forward, lest they become a part of what Teju Cole aptly called the "White Savior Industrial Complex." Problems cannot be solved by enthusiasm and sentiments alone, and Sierra Club should be cautious that their move away from John Muir does not turn into an embrace of Rudyard Kipling. Additionally, local groups should lead local issues. Having the state chapter step in for small, complicated issues begs the question of whether a local group is even needed (with SSJ Sierra's own recent dissolution further supporting such an idea), and the nuance behind local issues is best understood by the people who live there.

The more people continue to mistake "not as bad" for "good", the worse off we will be. Keep your standards high even if you do not believe they will be met. Do not let autocracy chip away at your expectations and values.

— Sarah Kendzior

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Only white people can do this. We're the ones who built this system and we're the ones who have to tear it down.
- Ed Brayton

The era when conservatives even pretend to care about things like hard work, merit or even basic competence is effectively over. They're not even trying to hide that being white and conservative and (preferably) male counts for more than intelligence, decency and work ethic ever could.

— Amanda Marcotte

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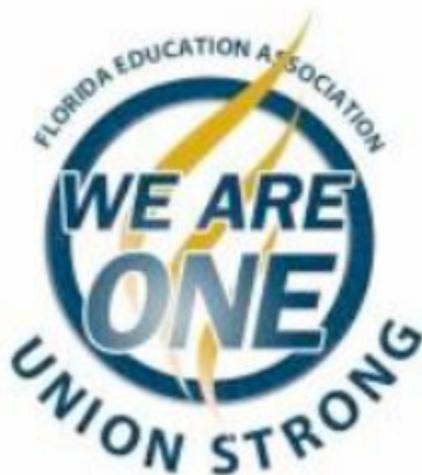
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*Tonight's songs may include,
but are not limited to...*

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John Lennon and
Yoko Ono

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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

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John and Yoko

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I've been in and around Washington for almost fifty years, including a stint in the cabinet, and I've learned that real change happens only when a substantial share of the American public is mobilized, organized, energized, and determined to make it happen.

— Robert Reich

Phillip S. Haisley

With sorrow we announce the death of Phil Haisley. Born Apr. 14, 1934, Phil grew up in Marion, Indiana. His first job was as Quaker minister to two small churches. At 19, he married his 16-year-old girlfriend. Two years later they had a son, Mark. Phil taught for a while in California, then when he and his first wife split up, Phil took Mark to Kenya where he taught in a Quaker school and initiated a program to integrate the school and encourage village children to enroll.

When Phil and Mark returned to the US, Phil pursued a PhD in African-American literature. He held a variety of jobs in this period: bodyguard, lifeguard, drive-in theater director, then teaching school while working second shift at GM's Fisher Body plant. His PhD advisor's sudden death derailed Phil's PhD. But his teaching career was extensive, including all levels from 1st grade to grad school, teaching English, French, Spanish, and teacher ed classes. He taught at Queens College and spent two years teaching in Australia.

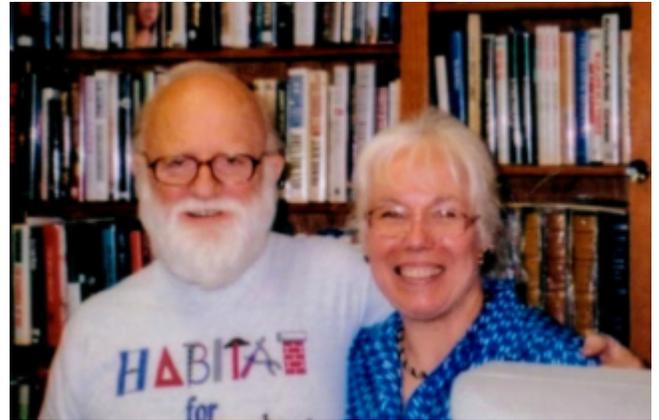
Phil met his second wife, Anne, in New York. They had a long relationship with Phil and Mark living in Indiana while Anne and her son Chris, from her first marriage, lived in Locust Valley, NY, where Anne taught school. Whenever possible, the two families enjoyed camping and traveling together.

In the mid-70's, Phil opened Redbeard's Books in Marion. (Back then Phil had a red beard and full head of red hair.) The bookstore hosted chess, D&D, and Scrabble tournaments, and Phil became an International Scrabble master.

In 1982, Phil & Anne married at Matinecock Friends Meeting in Locust Valley, and Anne joined Phil in Indiana.

During the Reagan Administration, Phil joined Witness for Peace (www.solidaritycollective.org) to stand with Nicaraguans being murdered, maimed, and intimidated by US-funded Contra death squads attempting to overthrow the democratically-elected Sandinista government and hinder its promotion of mass literacy, universal healthcare, gender equality, and nationalization of resources so wealth derived therefrom would flow more to the people and less to American corporations. Phil and other witnesses lived in war-zone villages to deter and bear witness to attacks. On Phil's return, he & Anne together continued to support this effort and offered sanctuary to refugees.

In 1989, Phil & Anne moved their bookstore to Gainesville, Florida, under the name Books, Inc. They added to the premises Book Lover's Cafe, the first all-vegetarian restaurant in Gainesville, and an art gallery featuring a local artist each month.



Recently, Phil & Anne caught CoViD. Their son Chris cared for them at home until Haven Hospice helped make Phil more comfortable during his final day. Anne also seemed to be losing the battle to CoViD, but after participating in the clinical trial of an antibody infusion, Anne is now virus-free.

Chris had volunteered in the trial of Moderna's RNA vaccine, and received vaccine rather than placebo, so was able to care for Phil & Anne without getting ill. Phil is survived by wife Anne, brother Jerry, son Chris Warren-Boulton, daughter-in-law Cathryn Albrecht, and granddaughter Wylie Warren-Boulton.

Anne requests that in memory of Phil you pray for world peace, and push to prevent and end wars and sanctions that are killing and immiserating our brothers and sisters around the world.



Saving your country isn't easy.

— Josh Marshall

Jack Price - Rest in Power

by John Fullerton

I met Jack Price at a Democratic meeting to introduce candidates for local office. I had such a fascinating conversation then that I gladly acceded to his suggestion that we meet for lunch, which was my first clue about how charming he could be. He met everybody for lunch. We would meet each week, alternating driving to our chosen place to eat. As time wore on his driving ceased but our luncheons continued practically until he was too ill. It would amaze me how much he knew about contemporary events and local government. I'm grateful for having so much time with Jack. He was a much larger man than many, while humble as well. I will remember our times together fondly and wonder that he spent time with me.

The following is Jack Price's obituary, written by his dear friend and guardian angel Terry Hamilton Wollin:

Lee Jay "Jack" Price



Lee Jay "Jack" Price, born in Vero Beach, Florida, on October 11, 1929 (a date he proudly shared with Eleanor Roosevelt), died in Lake City, Florida on July 15, 2020. He was predeceased by his parents, Robert Lee and Emma Rhodes Fugett Price, his sister Joyce Price Heufel Whitener, and his

nephews Charles and Terry Whitener. Although Jack had no living family at the time of his death, he leaves behind a host of friends too numerous to list. He was raised in Jacksonville, Florida, where he attended local schools prior to being drafted by the US Army during the Korean Conflict.

Following a chance meeting with Florida congressman Claude Pepper, he took his first bite of the progressive apple that shaped his life going forward. Pepper, a legendary member of the US House of Representatives, offered Jack employment as one of his aides. Jack went to Washington DC and found his true calling: he dedicated his life to the outcasts and the downtrodden. He then took a job with Southern Railways and traveled southwest Florida selling freight by day for the railroad and organizing quiet armies who would join him in his quest for social justice by night. From Ft. Lauderdale he moved to Atlanta, and later joined the staff of The National Conference of Christians and Jews (NCCJ). First an area representative in Tampa, he was later promoted to the organization's headquarters in New York City.

He could cite the times and places of our government's depredations in Latin America, matching evil deeds with evil doers. But he also took note of the brighter aspects of his times and identified with those took a stand for freedom.

With good humor, he went about the somber business of condemning the unrepentant. "What," he would ask "is an exact estimate?" Or a "compassionate conservative"? What was a "definite maybe," or a "genuine imitation"?

Jack persisted on his mission until the end. He revered the strength of the truly committed. Along the way he made life brighter for people from every walk of life.

He earned the nickname "Jack the Clipper" as he favored all of his friends (and they are many) as well as chance acquaintances with newspaper and magazine clippings he thought might be (or should be) of interest. He was once gifted a pair of electric scissors to help speed up the process. A proud Democratic Socialist, Jack embraced everyone he met, finding value in each and every one of us. He never married but said his family were the many friends he'd made over his long, and well-lived life. Based on the recommendation of his long-time Tampa friend Nancy Sever's having relocated to Gainesville, and the proximity to Jacksonville where his sister and nephews lived, Jack retired there. "Close, but not too close," he said. The ensuing years saw Jack integrated into the fabric of Gainesville politics, the Jewish community, the Labor Council, the Democratic Party, the Civic Media Center and everything progressive. He was embraced and welcomed by everyone lucky enough to meet him. "It was like coming home."

Robert Frost once wrote "I chose the road less traveled by. And that has made all the difference." And that's our Jack.

Lee Jay "Jack" Price will be laid to rest at Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery in a private burial. We will mourn our friend, and celebrate his life.

Honorary pall bearers are Dr. Roy Kaplan, Francisco Sanchez, Roger Williams, John Fullerton, Andrea Holbrook, Terry Hamilton Wollin, Lesley Friedsam Damisch, Rita Friedsam Shapiro and Jason Fultz.

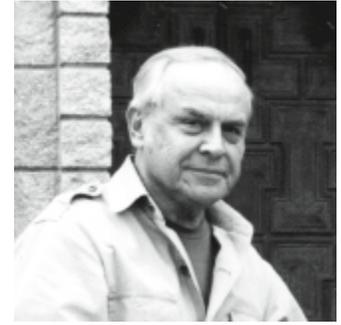
For those who wish to make donations in his name, Jack has selected Doctors Without Borders, <https://donate.doctorswithoutborders.org>.

We hear on every side that the American Way of Life is in danger. ... We ought to be afraid of some things. We ought to be afraid of being stupid and unjust.

— Robert Hutchins, 1950



Rest in power: David Chalmers, Hal Stahmer



October saw the passing of two men who made a great impact on both the UF community and the world. Both David Chalmers and Hal Stahmer led long, accomplished lives, each with strong ties to and inspiration from the struggle for the mid-twentieth-century civil rights movement. They wove that into their academic lives as nationally honored professors of history and religion, respectively, as well as in their lives outside the university in their longtime presence in Gainesville. They led full and rich lives that impacted countless people. Condolences to their life partners Jean Chalmers and Paula Stahmer, and their families and friends. The links to their obituaries/tributes from their families are at: <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1138> (David Chalmers) and <https://tinyurl.com/Iguana1139> (Hal Stahmer).

Scott Camil remembers Chalmers, Stahmer

I started UF in January of 1971 after graduating from Miami Dade with an AA degree in Pre-Law.

That month Jane Fonda came and spoke at UF. She was looking for patriotic veterans who served in Vietnam. She said that we needed to tell the American people the truth about the conduct of U.S. troops in Vietnam, and what was being done in their names with their money.

Jane's talk got me involved in the Winter Soldier Investigation, which got me involved with Vietnam Veterans Against the War.

Before this, I was a very serious student and my grades were really important to me. Professors were like gods, they had enormous power. I was asked to speak about the war, and I was encouraged by many of my professors.

One of them was Dr. David Chalmers who said that it was more important for me to speak out against the war than come to class. His words were very empowering

to me. I will never forget David's encouragement and how that changed my path.

I became a leader in Vietnam Veterans Against the War and worked hard to educate the public about the true nature of the Vietnam War. As a result, I missed classes.

The U.S. government was upset to find Vietnam Veterans leading anti-war marches, and it sicced the FBI on us. The FBI came after me. One of the first things they did was try to get me kicked out of UF.

They met with Dr. Harold Stahmer who at the time was an Assistant Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Stahmer told the FBI that until they convicted me of a crime, I would remain a student.

These two friends were responsible for encouraging me to speak out against the war and allowing me to remain a student. Without their encouragement and support, my life would be totally different.

I thank and salute Hal and David for helping me get to where I am today.

[Copied from the Nov-Dec 2020 issue of the *Gainesville Iguana*, with thanks.]

In Memory of Warren Lane

People are suffering,
people are dying, entire
ecosystems are
collapsing. We are in the
beginning of a mass
extinction and all you can
talk about is money and
fairytales of eternal
economic growth.

— Greta Thunberg

Terry Fleming: A big role to fill

by Doug Bernal



2020 was a year of loss for many in our community, with one of the most impactful losses being the unexpected passing of Terry Fleming. Terry's empathy and activism touched many people's lives, and I was no exception. What began as meeting him at a weekly lunch with a few mutual friends evolved into working alongside him at the Pride Community Center and the Alachua County Democratic Executive Committee

(the DEC). I say "working alongside," but it would be far more accurate to say that I was trying to keep up with him.

Terry seemed to take on everything. He was a prominent member of the DEC, serving there for years and offering candid direction and guidance when it was needed the most. He, alongside Linda Bassham and many others, helped make the Pride Center into a safe space for the LGBTQIA+ community, a meeting place for local progressive groups, a lending library, and even, at times, a crisis hotline for people on the edge of homelessness or experiencing abuse. Terry was also the rock behind the annual Pride Fest, helped with the Gainesville Area Aids Project, was an outspoken citizen at numerous commission and advisory board meetings, and much, much more. I can't possibly hope to accurately list everything Terry did or the many people he helped, and few can do all that Terry did. What we can do is preserve and honor his memory by taking on some of what he left behind, and I think that's exactly what he would have wanted.



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As many of us are getting up there in years, we may start thinking about our final destination. We are truly fortunate to have Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery here in the Gainesville area where one can be laid to rest in a beautiful natural area, nurturing the land rather than poisoning it as our final loving act for our planet. I've made my reservation at PCCC, solidifying my intention to be buried there.

But what happens between the time of death and arrival at the cemetery? Many people currently buried at Prairie Creek were cared for and then brought there by friends and family in their own private vehicles. This is referred to as having a "home funeral" and it bypasses the high cost of commercial funeral home services while allowing for a shared meaningful experience with the deceased and his/her surrounding community. This hands-on loving act by the community promotes acceptance and healing, and can be transformative for those present and potentially for the deceased as well.

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Dennis Shuman for Final Friends

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I STILL BELIEVE

Peace is a gift, that has not yet been given
Peace is a car, that has not yet been driven
Peace is what should end every war
Peace is what we're all looking for
Although we haven't succeeded just yet

I still believe
Peace is a contract, that has not yet been signed
Peace is a word, that has not yet been defined
Peace is what runs through you and a friend
Peace is what causes all of the suffering to end
Although peace has taken its time
I still believe

Asher Case, Grade 5, Jordan Glen School, First Place, Grade 5

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Happy Holidays & thank you to Veterans for Peace

Sheriff-elect Clovis Watson, Jr.



Office of the State Attorney
EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

On the occasion of the 2020 Solstice, with thanks to Veterans For Peace for all that you do for our community and world. As I prepare to leave office as your State Attorney, it is with appreciation for your friendship and dialog over the years.

It is and has been an honor to serve as your State Attorney since 2000.



William P. Cervone
State Attorney





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WAR

Jewish Ghettos, barbwire fences, Hitler's army,
The world's depressing, concentration camps,
Prisoners with clamps.

World War 2, that time was blue,
Whole countries crying, so much dying.

Now the world is a better place,
Back then Hitler wanted a single race.
Blond-haired, blue-eyed, gas chambers, broken pride.
We know better than this, but the list isn't done.
9/11 wasn't a war, but there still was plenty of gore.
We've been fighting since ancient times, Not just now.
Trojans, and Greeks sure had a row.

But I guess, it's just our nature, after fighting so long
We can't help it though; we know it's wrong.
I just hope someday, we'll all get along.
Because the last thing we need is another World War!

Averie Zappini, Grade 4, Jordan Glen School, Third Place, Grade 4

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true
revolutionary
is guided
by great feelings
of love.

— Ernesto "Che"
Guevara

Listen, here's the thing about politics: It's not an expression of your moral purity and your ethics and your probity and your fond dreams of some utopian future. Progressive people constantly fail to get this.

— Tony Kushner

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**AND
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The Kramer Family wishes Peace, Happiness and Joy
this Holiday season to all Veterans for Peace . . .

Thank you all for your service!



HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND THANK YOU

**VETERANS
FOR PEACE**

Electrify Everything

by Roberta Gastmeyer

I won't waste this space to try to convince you that climate change is real or that we must immediately change our ways if we are to save the planet as we know it. By now, reasonable people understand that we must not only reduce the burning of fossil fuels, but virtually eliminate it in the near future.

While the use of coal has dramatically declined in recent years, it has been replaced mostly by fracked gas which now supplies three-fourths of the electricity generation in Florida. Our second-largest source of electricity is nuclear power. Solar, the renewable energy source with the most potential for our state, currently generates about 2.4% of Florida's electricity.

Although fracked gas produces less carbon emissions than coal when burned, the production, processing, storage, transmission, and distribution of this gas leaks immense amounts of methane, which is much more destructive for our climate than carbon dioxide. Accounting for these leaks, fracked gas has climate impacts that rival those of coal. Do not fall for utility company declarations ([including GRU who even subsidizes the increased use - shame!](#)) that gas is an environmentally friendly option.

To meet our climate reduction goals, we must halt all new or expanded uses of fracked gas and then systematically retire existing gas plants. To address other climate emissions, we also must electrify as many vehicles as possible and replace gas appliances such as hot water heaters, dryers, ranges and furnaces with devices that are powered by a clean electricity grid. [We must ELECTRIFY EVERYTHING.](#)

Of course, to Electrify Everything with clean energy, we will need to vastly expand our production of solar energy. The City of Gainesville and Alachua County are committed to moving us in that direction. But now we are facing a dilemma about where these solar panels should go: on rooftops? on converted industrial sites? on agricultural land? The answer is all of the above.



Roof top solar is wonderful – for those who can afford it and/or whose roofs are not shaded by trees. But the quickest and cheapest route to solar energy right now is large scale, utility-owned solar installations on agricultural land along the current transmission lines. These installations do not produce water or air pollution, do not create excess heat or kill birds, require no public infrastructure, and have not been shown to devalue surrounding property. They DO increase the local tax base significantly, save rural property from development pressure, and provide the clean energy we desperately need to reduce carbon emissions. Done properly, [solar and agricultural land use CAN occur harmoniously.](#)

In the future, we may all be able to afford a mini-solar power station on our roof or share in our neighborhood solar array. But until battery technology improves, state and federal laws change to allow independent sales of energy, and economic incentives are provided for low-income households, utility scale solar provides a critical part of the solution to our climate crisis.

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YOU HURT, YOU CAN
ALWAYS BOUNCE BACK."
— SHERYL SWOOPES**

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I hate living in a satirical dystopia.
— Arthur Hlavaty



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ANNA PRIZZIA WISHES VETS FOR PEACE A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Why is it that, as a culture, we are more comfortable seeing two men holding guns than holding hands?

— Ernest Gaines



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Rest in power, Terry Fleming.

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*Love and
Peace on
Earth
from
Anne
Haisley*

Soldiers and veterans don't need priority boarding, 10% discounts at gimmicky chain restaurants, or a few crinkled bills stuffed into a charity's coffee can. What they need is a nation that can find the courage and conviction to stop misusing their service.

— Erik Edstrom

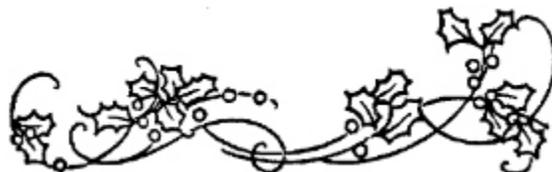
One of the great American tragedies is to have participated in a just war. It's been possible for politicians and movie-makers to encourage us we're always good guys. The Second World War absolutely had to be fought. I wouldn't have missed it for the world. But we never talk about the people we kill. This is never spoken of.

— Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

PEACE IN THE PANDEMIC

A global pandemic, more sick each day
In most countries people at home
Losing jobs
Scrambling to keep safe from COVID-19 that is quickly spreading across the Earth
But
In one country
Taiwan
A small nation, just 24 million
People go about their everyday
Like almost nothing changed
Hand sanitizer and temperature checks everywhere
Shop keepers and schools keep their doors open
Trains, planes, subways travel
People do what they do
“Welcome” they might say
Fever? You go into quarantine, tracked by phone
If you leave your house, the government will find you
To keep their country serene
To keep their economy strong
Take the USA for example
95 cases for every 100,000
Versus 1 case for every 100,000 in Taiwan
2 deaths for every 100,000
Compared to 0.02 death for every 100,000 in Taiwan
USA waited
Now it's out of control
Except in Taiwan
Taiwanese leading
the globe in protection by far
The communities work together
Production lines up months ago
Instead of hoarding masks, donating
Over ten million masks packed up and shipped
To places where they are most needed
While the rest of the world freaks out and panics
There is Taiwan
The peace in the pandemic

Jenna Petty, Grade 7, Jordan Glen School, First Place, Grade 7



FCPJ Weathers the Storm

by Kate Ellison

The Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice (FCPJ) has come through the pandemic re-organized and focused. We had great plans for meetings, social justice training, and an Earth Day celebration just as COVID stopped everyone in their tracks. We did not have the income we expected, but we turned inward to streamline, reorganize, and do major clearing and cleaning across the property.

Vets for Peace has weathered the storm too, and we are grateful for the important leadership they bring to our community and the peace movement. The last four years, culminating in an uncontrolled pandemic, have utterly changed the world we live in, all in the wrong direction. Our movement needs steady, experienced leaders who can listen, appreciate, and respond to these new needs and emergencies. The Gainesville Chapter remains crucial to the recovery and rebuilding we will attempt in 2021.

When the time comes, FCPJ looks forward to hosting peace and justice delegations and meetings from near and far in collaboration with Vets for Peace.

FCPJ remains true to our roots: creating a culture of peace and earth education. We move forward by deepening our understanding of justice. We are still holding space for adults and children to participate in teaching and learning this culture.

Check out our beautiful new website: <https://florida4peace.org>.

FCPJ welcomes you to consider holding your next COVID-safe retreat at our facility in neighboring Bradford County. You will find a beautiful outdoor setting with plenty of space for meetings in the fresh air, camping, and other outside activities. Indoors there is a large kitchen and meeting space as well. Call 352-603-3680 to get started.



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Reina Saco



Reina Saco wishes a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year to all who work for peace and justice

... this has been the safest country in the world forever, and the most frightened country in the world.

— Noam Chomsky



WISHING YOU AND YOURS A

*Happy Holidays and
Peace, Hope, and Joy in the New Year!*



Thank you
Veterans for Peace
for all your
Good Work!
The Banko Family -
John, Khanh-Lien,
Analise, Paul,
Jessica, and
John Reilly

Happy Holidays

and

Thank You

to

Veterans for Peace

from

Mike, Busy, &

Camille Byerly

WAR

I hear a loud bang, then I walk out the door,
I step into chaos, breathe in ash from the war.
Innocent people are fleeing from their homes,
People are being separated because of their skin tones.
People's hearts are turning charcoal black,
From the emotions that they lack.
Our wine, red blood is now being wasted,
We're throwing out food that hasn't been tasted.
We are wasting time holding grudges against friends.
When will this cruelty come to an end?
I am waiting for the day this will finally stop.
Social justice will be back on top!

Miko Shitama, Grade 3, Jordan Glen School, First Place, Grade 3

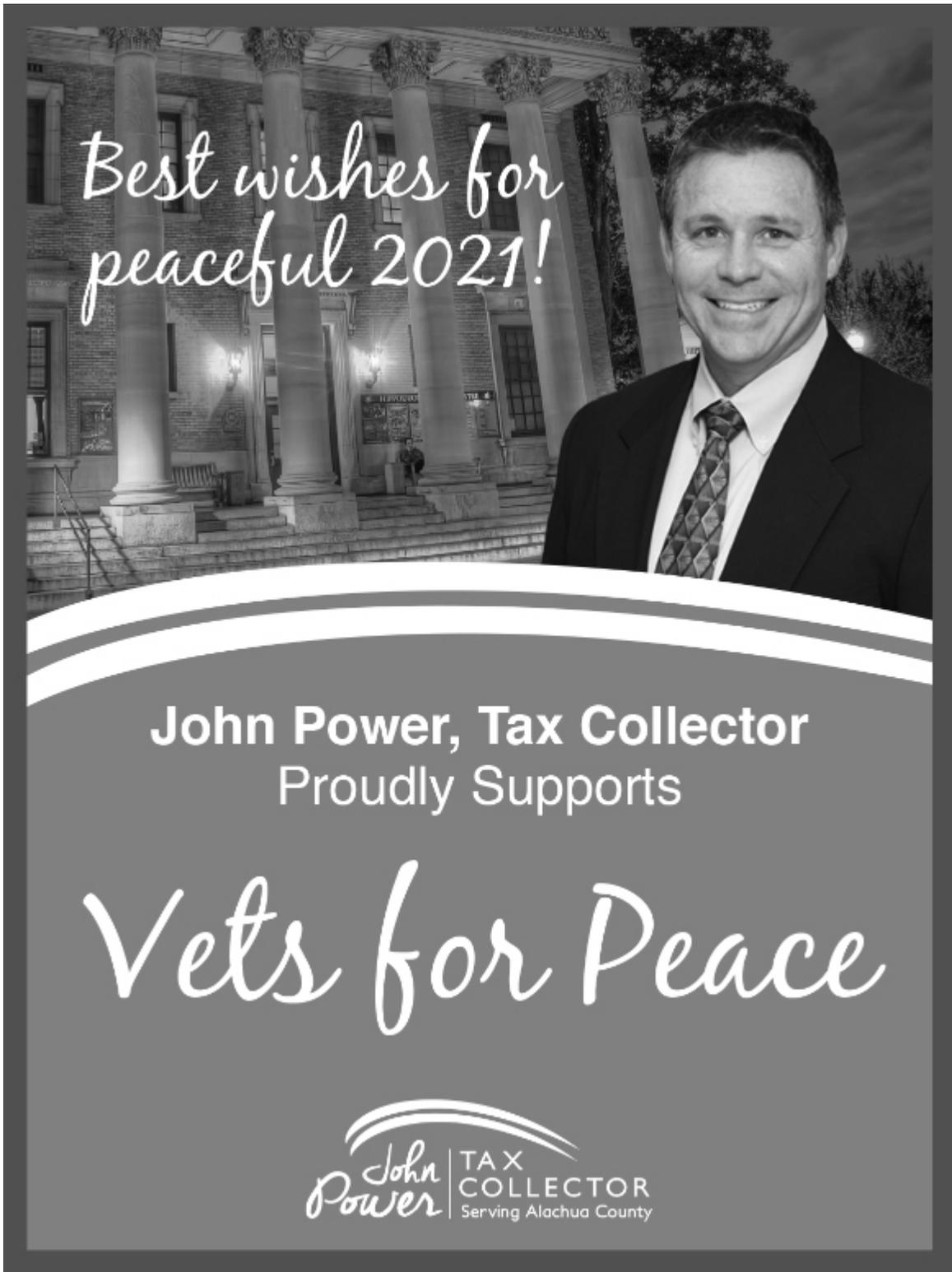


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The top 1 percent have the best houses, the best educations, the best doctors, and the best lifestyles, but there is one thing that money doesn't seem to have bought: an understanding that their fate is bound up with how the other 99 percent live. Throughout history, this is something that the top 1 percent eventually do learn. Too late.

— Joseph Stiglitz

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Ed & Sheila Crapo



This country has a habit of be-friending, training, and arming unsavory foreign leaders like Manuel Noreiga, Saddam Hussein, and Osama bin Laden, only to find itself fighting them later.

Son, I want you to always keep this list of our new allies in the war against terrorism.



So you'll know who our enemies will be when you grow up.

America is not unique in its sins as a country. We're not unique in our evils, to be honest with you. I think where we may be singular is our refusal to acknowledge them. We tell legends and myths about our inherent goodness to hide and cover and conceal so that we can maintain a kind of willful ignorance that protects our innocence.

— Eddie Claude, Jr.

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WHY CAN'T WE BE TOGETHER?

A bird circles the body of her dead mate
Her cries sound so forlorn
"Why? Why can't we be together?"
A polar bear mother stands over her dead cub's body
The mother bellows to the sky
"Why? Why can't we be together?"
A dog in a shelter is separated from her sister
She wines sadly
"Why? Why can't we be together?"
We are separated
By fences, barriers
Why be separated
When we are so much better together?
Separated countries, territories, continents
Separated by war
We are separated
Whether we realize it or not
We are separated
But
Why can't we be together?
That is the question the bird asks, the bear asks, the dog asks The question that I ask
Why can't we be together?
That is the question
Peace is the answer
Peace

Allison Waddle Grade 6, Fort Clarke Middle School, First Place, Grade 6



Leanetta McNealy, Ph.D.

**Peace
on
Earth!**



People of character do the right thing
not because they think it will change the
world, but because they refuse to be changed
by the world. —Michael Josephson

My sincerest thanks for your support in 2020. Warmest regards from my family to yours in this holiday season and coming new year. We have much work to do and I am looking forward to facing our challenges together.

Marihelen Wheeler

Q: What is QAnon?

A: A conspiracy theory that posits world leaders are secretly evil rather than openly so.
— The Onion



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**I'M SORRY I
DID THIS TO
YOU, BUT
YOU'RE
GOING TO
HAVE TO GET
USED TO IT.
IT'S ONE OF
THOSE LITTLE
PROBLEMS IN
LIFE.
— DONALD J.
TRUMP**

The "civilized" have created the wretched, quite coldly and deliberately, and do not intend to change the status quo; are responsible for their slaughter and enslavement; rain down bombs on defenseless children whenever and wherever they decide that their "vital interests" are menaced, and think nothing of torturing a man to death; these people are not to be taken seriously when they speak of the "sanctity" of human life, or the conscience of civilized world.

— James Baldwin



But William James questioned this dependency on war to prove manhood: "When we gravely ask ourselves whether this wholesale organization of irrationality and crime be our only bulwark against effeminacy, we stand aghast at the thought."

— Captain James Jeffrey (British Army, ret.)



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Supporting ICE Detainees in the Baker County Jail

by Greg Mullaley

Beginning in May of 2019 and until the beginning of the pandemic in March of this year, I've had the privilege of being associate with a group of people who've been visiting the ICE detainees in the Baker County Jail which is located an hour north of Gainesville. ICE, part of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, has contracted with the jail to hold people they've taken into custody, often for the simple crime of being in the United States without legal status.

Twice a month, on the 2nd and 4th Mondays, this group traveled to Baker to visit with men and women who are locked away 24 hours a day. These detainees are never allowed outside and the only sunshine they see is from a single large window located in the recreation room some 12 feet above the floor. These men and women are desperate to see and to speak to anyone from outside the jail as they are not allowed an attorney, unless they or someone else pays for one. And since the jail is located in a remote area, it's difficult for their families to travel several hours just for a short visit, so we are a welcome sight for them.

Once our group arrives at the jail, we are given a list of anywhere from 25-40 names and we divide them up among ourselves. Several of us speak Spanish, which is the most commonly spoken language, but certainly not the only one by the various detainees, at times, there have been over a dozen different languages represented there in the jail. Many of the detainees speak English to one degree or another, but not all of them.

Once we get the list of names of those who wish to speak to one of us, we work quickly as the list is broken up into four to five 15-minute sessions. The lists contain the name of the detainee, a booth number, and a dial-in number. We do not get to speak to the detainees face-to-face; we chat over a video-phone as must all visitors. As soon as we dial in and the detainee picks up a clock starts ticking at the bottom of the screen. Once the clock gets to zero, the screen cuts off and the visit is over for that detainee and we must move onto the next person.

Our main purpose is to let the detainees know that they are not forgotten, that there are people outside who care about their welfare. In those short 15 minutes we let the detainees tell us their stories however they wish to tell them. We try not to ask too many personal questions, but it's sometimes difficult



when you see another human being who is worried and afraid. We are neither professional counselors nor legal experts, but we are good listeners, and oftentimes, that's enough.

We offer to contact family members to let them know that they've been seen. We find out when their next court date is and if they've been able to obtain any legal help. At times, we've also sent small amounts of money to the detainee's account which allows them to buy extra food, or to make phone calls which are very expensive. At other times we've even bought them clothes because when they're released, which is rare or deported, they often don't have adequate clothing or shoes for the journey.

The name of this wonderful Daygroup of visitors is the Baker Interfaith Friends and it is part of the Lutheran Immigrant and Refugee Service. We have folks from all backgrounds, both religious and non-religious and from all walks of life. What we provide is a friendly face and a good ear to those who are foreign born and incarcerated in our country. We believe everyone needs a friend. To learn more, or to participate in some way, contact BakerInterfaithFriends@gmail.com or the Gainesville Interfaith Alliance for Immigrant Justice via Richard MacMaster, rkmacmaster@aol.com.

Since the pandemic, we've been very limited and have had to adjust and severely limit our meetings via Zoom.

Practice corporeal politics. Power wants your body softening in your chair and your emotions dissipating on the screen. Get outside. Put your body in unfamiliar places with unfamiliar people. Make new friends and march with them.

— Timothy Snyder, Yale historian and Holocaust expert



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North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System Update

by Philip Pitts

November 25, 2020

Thank you for this opportunity to share information about North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System (NF/SGVHS) and our efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, a special thank you to Veterans for Peace for their continued support for VA through your organization's advocacy. Veterans choosing whether to receive care at our facilities or not is an important matter. For instance, research finds VA health care performs similar to, or better than, non-VA systems on most measures of inpatient and outpatient care quality with significant positive difference in the quality of outpatient care provided by VA. In addition, research highlights the excellent care in specialty services like Cardiology where death rates are significantly lower for Veterans who received some common invasive cardiovascular procedures at VA facilities than those being treated at a community hospital. In fact, researchers determined that patients having some cardiovascular procedures outside of the VA system had a 143% increased hazard of death within the first month! Finally, research consistently states how Veterans who seek care within the VA health system have more positive health outcomes over the course of their lifespan when compared to those Veterans who receive care outside of the VA. We want our Veterans to receive care at VA. We believe we provide care, which is just as good, and in most instances, better than care available in the community, and the health care provided by VA is something Veterans earned and are entitled to.

NF/SGVHS is one of the largest medical systems in Veterans Health Administration (VHA) with two medical centers, a 45 bed Domiciliary (in Gainesville), three large multi-specialty outpatient clinics, and nine community-based outpatient clinics and we are the third most complex VA health

system. We employ over 5,800 staff, of which 29% are Veteran employees. Our budget for FY2020 (October 2019 – September 30, 2020) was \$1.4 billion. In FY2020, NF/SGVHS provided care to more than 137,000 patients. Of these, greater than 9,600 completed appointments were new patient Primary Care appointments – Primary Care often being the gateway to the other services and specialties we offer.

Of these patients, 469 are homeless Veterans and approximately 126 of these homeless Veterans reside in the Gainesville/Alachua and Putnam County area. In efforts to house homeless Veterans, we have 1,720 Housing and Urban Development- VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) vouchers for our health system and 1,486 Veterans under lease. In addition, Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) funding during FY2020 totaled \$19,948,921. Emergency Housing funds were increased through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding: These funds allow for Veterans who are homeless to be housed in a motel on a short-term basis while working towards permanent housing. The reasoning for this is that it was safer during the pandemic for Veterans to be housed rather than staying in programs with little physical distancing. NF/SGVHS has a large funded Research and Development Program with over 190 active funded research projects and more than \$7 million in funds during FY2020. Moreover, we have two Centers of Excellence: The Center of Innovation on Disability and Rehabilitation Research and Brain Rehabilitation Research Center, and an on-site Geriatric Research Education Clinical Center. Our health system also plays a vital role in health education. In fact, our system funds 204 graduate medical education positions for training in VA facilities and are filled by a rotating pool of over 700 residents and fellows from the University of Florida and Florida State University. Overall, NF/SGVHS health system is large, complex, and offers Veterans excellent and safe care. We strive for zero harm and to be the place where Veterans choose to receive their care.



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Military power is as corrupting to the man who possesses it as it is pitiless to its victims. Violence is just as devastating to the soul of the perpetrator as it is to the body and souls of those who are victims of it.

— American Friends Service Committee

Our health system works very hard to be trusted partners within the communities we are located. For instance, our health system collaborated with the city, county, and Veteran Service Organizations to “welcome home” Vietnam Veterans while providing resources, entertainment, and kinship with other Veterans during the “Vietnam Veterans 1st Annual Honor Ride.”



Picture from 1st Annual Honor Ride.

We are also proud of working with local Gold Star Mothers and the Gainesville Garden Club to provide a location to have a Gold Star Memorial and garden installed across the Bed Tower front entrance of Malcom Randall VA Medical Center. The memorial for Gold Star families honors those who have lost a son or daughter in service to our country and the servicemen and women themselves who lost their lives. The medical center wanted to have a sacred and solemn area on the grounds for patients and families to come in remembrance of those lost.

NF/SGVHS’ efforts to be a place where Veterans choose to have their care is reflected in Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services’ Hospital Compare “Survey of patients’ experiences” report. We received 4 stars in “Survey of patients’ experiences,” higher than the other two major health systems in our community. This star rating highlights the hard work we do, not only in the care delivered, but with how it is delivered, cleanliness of facilities, and customer service.

The current COVID-19 pandemic has presented many challenges. Our health system has taken a lot of actions, planning, and adapting to ensure a safe environment for our Veterans and employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the actions and good work are as follows:

- Assisted Florida State Veteran Homes by admitting over 57 COVID-19 positive Residents and trained over 90 VA staff to assist with testing, education, and care.
- As of September 1, 2020, there have been 887 days worked by health system employees on State mission assignments.
- We implemented focused messaging to protect all stakeholders and limit spread of COVID-19. Updates sent to 104,000 Veterans on services, COVID testing, visitation, screening process, and more. A “prepare for your visit” webpage was created with media releases on virtual care, check-in, and screening tool as part of reopen plan. Virtual meetings held with community partners and congressional delegates and maintained communication with service organizations.

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Gold Star Families Memorial and garden across from Bed Tower front entrance at Malcom Randall VA Medical Center. Unveiled on October 20, 2018.

SAVE OUR VA



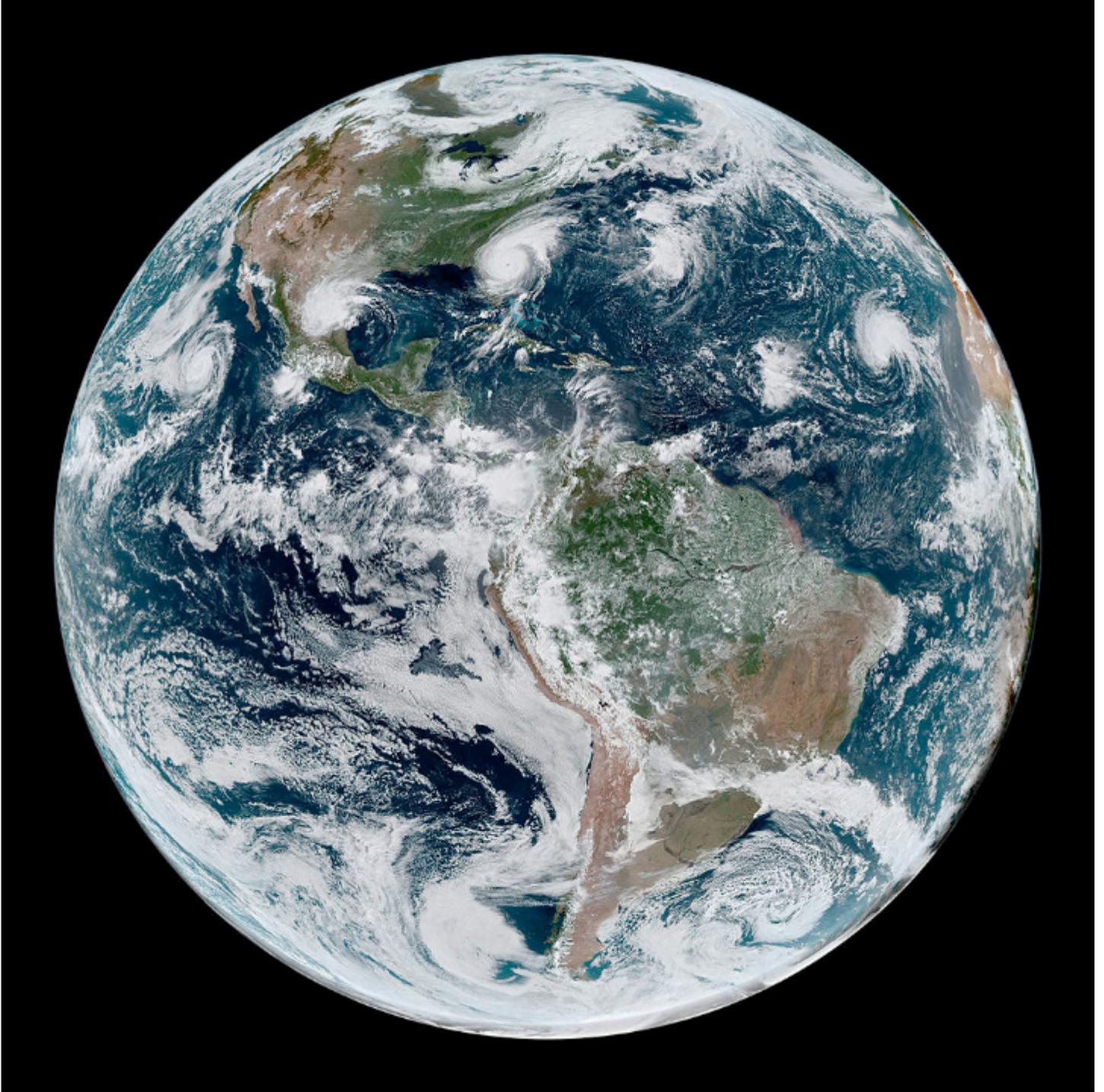
Vets Say
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***ONE PEOPLE
ONE PLANET***

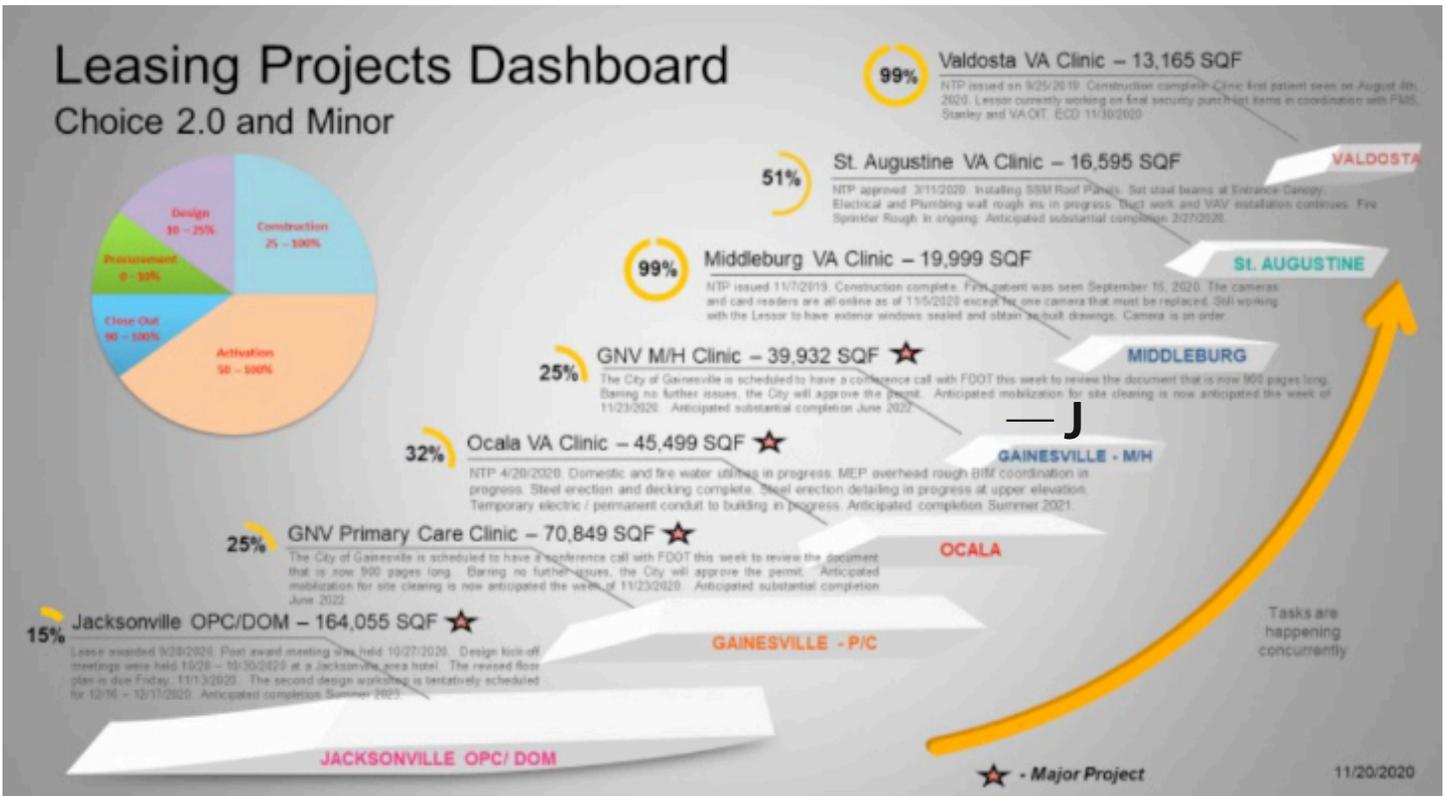


ONE FUTURE

- Developed and implemented inpatient surge plan in response to COVID-19. During our peak, we had 47 COVID-positive inpatients at one time in our hospitals and activated 30 beds in our Lake City CLC for State Veteran Home geriatric residents.
- Led efforts and championed VA Video Connect (VVC) to conduct virtual visits during COVID-19 pandemic contributing enormously to having 54,412 Veterans (46%) in our health system now having received at least one telehealth appointment!
- We developed 48 COVID-19 Best Practices such as creation and deployment of a protective barrier for use during airway management which is being

replicated at other sites. We implemented Drive Through Testing for COVID-19 and other drive through services such as prescription pick up, Prosthetic device pick up, Cardiology clinic, and more.

- Spearheading research as one of the clinical research sites for Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies' COVID-19 vaccine trail. Efforts include recruiting and enrolling volunteers into the research trial and staffing a study group. The graph below depicts our new clinic construction and replacement clinic construction in our health system.



As one of the nation's leaders in health research, we're working to find ways to prevent and treat the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). We're recruiting participants for vaccine clinical trials and other COVID-19 research studies now. Anyone over age 18 can sign up, including Veterans, friends and family of Veterans, and VA staff.

VOLUNTEERING DOESN'T MEAN YOU'RE COMMITTING TO JOIN A RESEARCH STUDY
If you appear eligible for a study, we'll contact you to make sure you're a good match. Then the study team will give you all the information you need to decide if you want to join. And you can leave a study at any time. If you're a Veteran, your decision to join a study or not won't affect your VA health care or any of your VA benefits or services in any way.

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Make sure vaccines and treatments are safe and effective in people of all ages, genders, races, and ethnicities
As a research participant, you may also:
Learn more about your own health
Receive more regular health check-ins as part of your study visits
Get early access to a new vaccine or treatment

The International Day of Peace and Vets for Peace

by Mary Bahr

Vets for Peace started to help organize International Day of Peace celebrations in 2013. The theme was “May Peace Prevail on Earth.” The ceremony involved an eight-sided Peace Pole with that phrase printed in a different language on each side. Mary Bahr from Vets for Peace and Larry Schwandes from the Bahá’í Temple in Gainesville planned that first celebration. The River Phoenix Center for Peace Building, whose executive director, Dot Maver, knew some of the United Nations staff that coordinated the International Day of Peace around the globe advised and participated. Dot once told Mary that the ceremony held at Noon on September 21st caused the peace poles worldwide to vibrate in sympathy with each other. Mary Bahr, ever the scientist, was already musing about datelines and time zones while still liking the idea of worldwide sympathetic vibrations for peace.

That ceremony held on the downtown Plaza consisted of VFP member and Winter Solstice Master of Ceremonies Bill Hutchinson calling out a country. Whoever had the flag of that country stepped forward and called out “May Peace Prevail on Earth.” With the participation of UF’s Model UN, we often heard the phrase in the native language of that country.

The following years saw the ceremony move to the Unitarian Fellowship with continued participation by members of the Bahá’í Temple, United Nations Association, and Vets for Peace. Here is a link to a [photo album](#) of those first celebrations and a video of that [first ceremony](#)

Honoring peace on a special day has grown from its beginnings in the 1980s spearheaded by survivors of Hiroshima to take many forms worldwide, from ringing Peace Bells to planting Peace Poles. In 1981 the United Nations General Assembly, by unanimous vote, adopted Resolution 36/67, establishing the International Day of Peace (IDP). The resolution pledged in part, “to devote a specific time to concentrate the efforts of the United Nations and its Member States, as well as the whole of mankind, to promoting the ideals of peace and to giving positive evidence of their commitment to peace in all viable ways.” In 2001 the United Nations followed up this resolution-making September 21st a permanent Day for honoring world peace in ceremonies and good works.

In this pandemic year, Harn Museum Japanese Garden invited Vets for Peace to be part of an International Day of Peace ceremony. Five U.S. Japanese gardens raked “patterns for peace” into their Karesansuis dry gardens to celebrate the United Nations International Day of Peace. The patterns were designed by Hiroshima artist and A-bomb survivor, Toshiko Tanaka, an advocate for peace. A video of the raking done at each garden, interviews with garden representatives involved in the project, and with Mrs. Tanaka is on the Vets for Peace website and linked [here](#).

The International Day of Peace ceremony is an inspiring way to pause and think about peace. It invites connections between community organizations locally, nationally, and internationally. How can we ever have a peaceful world if we do not stop and visualize what it could be like?



UNA USA

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**United Nations Association*USA
Congratulates Veterans for Peace on Your
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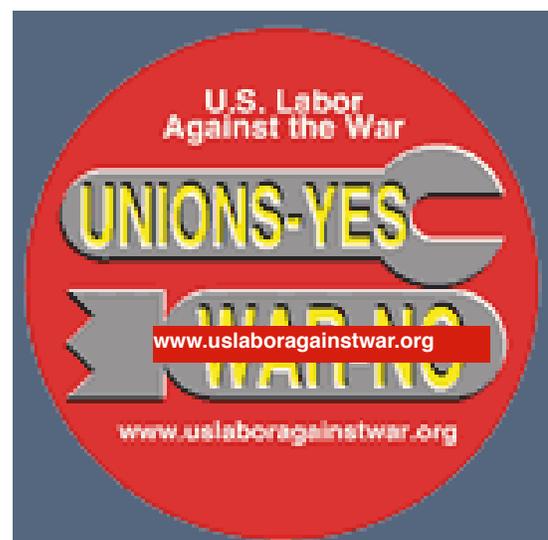
*We who believe in freedom cannot rest
We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes
— Bernice Johnson Reagon*

The North Central Florida Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO represents workers from all fields and professions in Gainesville, Florida and the surrounding regions in North Florida. We fight for justice, equality, work place democracy, and a decent life for working families.

Come join us and organize now! We are proud members of US Labor Against the War.

For more information, contact 352-372-6888.

“Solidarity knows no borders nor boundaries.”



VFP Financial Report 2020

Gainesville Veterans for Peace (VFP) believes that part of our responsibility is to support and mentor 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 primary event from which we derive our operating funds.

Last year, we raised \$15,891 from the Solstice and over the year, we have donated \$6150 of that money to groups we support.

Because of the pandemic, we have had less interaction with the public this year and that has impacted what we have been able to do.

We include this financial report each year so that we have full transparency with you, the people whose support makes our work possible.

We Thank You.

Our donation list for 2020:

\$750 to the *Alachua County Labor Coalition* to help their efforts to get universal health care enacted through House Bill HR676 -

www.floridalaborparty.org/alachua

\$750 to the *Civic Media Center*, an alternative library and space for progressive speakers, groups and events - www.civicmediacenter.org

\$750 to *The Gainesville Iguana*, Gainesville's progressive calendar and newsletter

www.gainesvilleiguana.org

\$750 to the *Samuel Proctor Oral History Project* - oral.history.ufl.edu

\$500 to *Cinema Verde* - www.cinemaverde.org

\$500 to *Citizens For Social Justice Inc.* - for Arupa and Bob's work

\$500 to *Courage to Resist* - couragetoresent.org

\$200 to *Rose Garden Angels* -

www.RoseGardenAngels.org

\$500 to *About Face, formerly Iraq Veterans Against the War*, www.aboutfaceveterans.org

\$500 to *Chelsea Manning* - www.couragetoresent.org

\$50 to *UN Association* - [www.una-](http://www.una-usagainesvillefl.org)

[usagainesvillefl.org](http://www.una-usagainesvillefl.org)

Total Donations = \$6,150

HISTORY TEACHES THAT WARS
BEGIN WHEN GOVERNMENTS
BELIEVE THE PRICE OF
AGGRESSION IS CHEAP.
— RONALD REAGAN

VFP Projects

Winter Solstice Concert: 1st Virtual Solstice, costs are unknown at this time.

The Peace Poetry Contest: - \$1,046 (see [article](#))

The Peace Scholarship Award - \$3,000 (see [article](#))

Memorial Mile - \$634.84 (see [article](#))

Total cost of VFP Projects = \$ 4,680.80

Other:

Veterans For Peace National - \$480 Dues,

www.veteransforpeace.org

PO Box - \$106

PCCNCS ad - \$80

Signs FVCS \$250

Other Costs: Total - \$916

Total spent for 2020 = \$11,746.80

Income:

Solstice 2019: \$15,891

Books: \$160

Donations: - \$2,235

Total income for 2019 = \$18,286

Balance = \$6,539.20

If you care to make a special donation for any of these projects, that would be greatly appreciated.

We could not do this without the money that we raise from you, our Friends, our Guests, our Supporters and our Sponsors.



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The sky over the White House is black with chickens coming home to roost.

— Joe Conason

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When we have these fits of hysteria, we are like the person who has a fit of nerves in public; when he recovers, he is very much ashamed... and so are we as a nation when sanity returns.

— Harry Truman

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.*

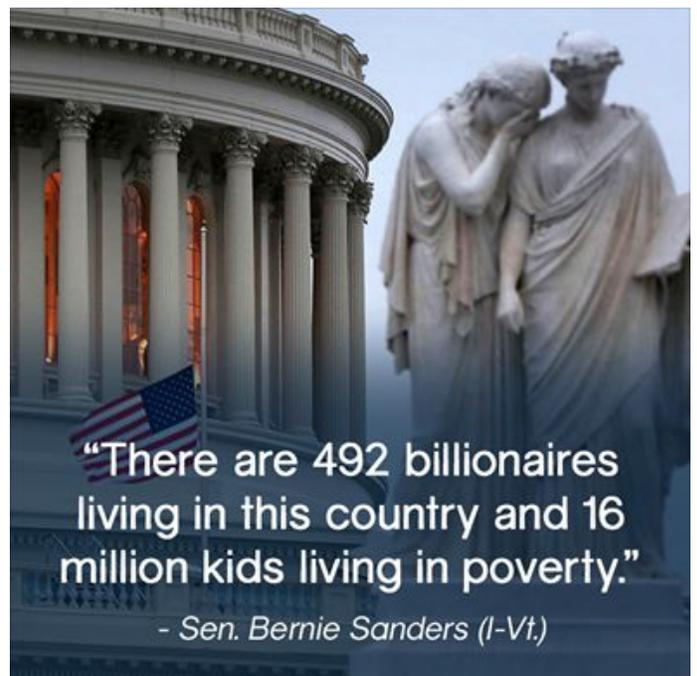
To achieve these goals, members of VFP pledge to use non-violent means to maintain an organization that is both democratic and open with the understanding that all members are trusted to act in the best interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace.



EMILY FRANCK HOON PhD

Licensed
Clinical Psychologist

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"There are 492 billionaires living in this country and 16 million kids living in poverty."

- Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.)

Support the people who support Veterans for Peace!

We've lost several sponsors in the last few years - not because they've given up on working for peace, but as a result of our kleptocratic war economy that preys on all of the 99%. So, **please buy local** whenever possible, and remember the good people and organizations who help out with the life-and-death issues that matter to us all.

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... above all we need to acknowledge that what ultimately matters is not what a foreign power did to America, but what America did to itself.

— Ariel Dorfman





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To learn more, call Scott Camil at 352-375-2563, visit www.vfpgainesville.org, email gvlvfp@earthlink.net, write to PO Box 142562, G'ville 32614, or come to our regular meetings (7 PM, on the first Wednesday of almost every month - whenever the coronavirus situation permits) at Scott & Sherry's house - call 352-375-2563 for directions.

The more I study the history of the world the more I am convinced of the inability of brute force to create anything durable.
— Napoleon Bonaparte, on St. Helena

Happy Holidays

to
Veterans for Peace

from
**the Poe
Family**





Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Gainesville
Social Justice Council

We believe all people share a moral responsibility to create peace. Mindful of both our rich heritage and our past failures to prevent war, and enriched by our present diversity of experience and perspective, we commit ourselves to a radically inclusive and transformative approach to peace.



2010 Statement of Conscience
Unitarian Universalist Association

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