



Veterans For Peace - Chapter 93

May 2020 Newsletter

... The Utah Phillips – J. David Singer Chapter

Serving Washtenaw, Livingston, Hillsdale, Lenawee and Jackson Counties

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www.vfp93.org or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/VFP93

Veterans For Peace Chapter 93 Meeting – Saturday, May 16th, 2020

The next VFP Chapter 93 meeting will be Saturday, May 16th at 10am. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the meeting will be held by teleconference only using Zoom (<https://zoom.us>). To participate, at 10am, May 16th, if your computer has a microphone and video, go to the Zoom meeting link at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88563866355>. No computer access? Call 312-626-6799 and enter the meeting ID of 885 6386 6355 to join the meeting via phone. Anyone can participate in this meeting, or any other VFP Chapter 93 event, be they veteran or not. The meeting agenda is as follows...

1. Introductions and welcome
2. General Business
 - a. Previous meeting minutes
 - b. Treasury report
 - c. Membership
 - d. [VFP 93 Calendar](#) - Utah Phillips (Chapter namesake) birthday (5/15), Memorial Day Ann Arbor – Glacier Highlands parade
 - e. Teleconference provider
 - f. Other
3. Old & continuing business
 - a. Honorary Chapter member program
 - b. Counter-recruiting/Opt-out
 - c. VFP 93 & countering Trump actions locally
 - d. VFP Dingell meeting
 - e. VFP at Washtenaw Council of Veterans meetings
 - f. Therapeutic Writing Program – veteran co-facilitator needed
 - g. Other
4. New Business
 - a. Senator Gary Peters webcast
 - b. Other
5. Projects
 - a. Peace Studies Scholarship
 - b. MLK Day
 - c. Peace Pole
 - d. Ann Arbor Art Fair
 - e. John Lennon Concert
 - f. John Lennon Concert CD
 - g. Arlington Michigan
 - h. Other
6. Upcoming events – Next meeting – June 20
7. Announcements/Adjournment

2. Veterans For Peace Chapter 93 Meeting Minutes – April 18, 2020

The meeting opened at 10:00 a.m. via teleconference and then switched to Zoom. Present were Lynn Gilbert, Bob Krzewinski, Steve Morehouse, Mike Muha, J. T. Ramelis, and Bill Shea. Diane Zahn joined in via phone part-way through the meeting.

General Business:

- a. The March minutes were corrected for the spelling of Diane's last name.
- b. Mike reviewed recent expenditures, including those for preparing the music CD made from past John Lennon concert performances. He noted that the check to cover Chris Buhalis' honorary membership had not yet been cashed.
- c. Mike noted that the CDs will cost about \$4.43 each plus \$2.80 for mailing; at a retail price of \$15 each plus \$3 S&H, each should net the Chapter about \$10. They will be sold online as well as in person at events.

- d. Merchandise discounted by National VFP cost \$420 less \$79.60 in their recent 20%-off sale. BOB will add the image of the CD, entitled "Live Peace," to the Chapter web page and Facebook page, and ask National to carry the CD in its store. MIKE will send him the image today.
- e. Bob ordered \$126 worth of buttons to sell.
- f. Membership: The roster shows 30 people, with 7 lapsed, some of whom are being approached to renew. National finally got the Chapter roster up to date.
- g. Calendar: Utah Phillips' birthday is May 15. It's not clear if there will be a Memorial Day parade next month in Glacier Hills in Ann Arbor or an Arlington Michigan in Detroit.
- h. BOB will check over the web page and make sure all links are current.

Old and Continuing Business:

- a. The question of Chapter membership in the U.-U. Church of Ann Arbor, which normally hosts Chapter monthly meetings, is on hold.
- b. The Peace Studies Scholarship program is on hold, but BOB will ask the two Michigan programs at Wayne State and Michigan State if the Chapter should offer some financial help to any of the peace studies majors.
- c. BOB will send a link to the National discussion of MLK's Riverside Church speech. Bill's reaction to it was that listeners would have to be quite familiar with it to get much out of the discussion.
- d. MIKE will get back with Fred Pierson about the languages to go on the Wayne State Peace Pole and send him a picture of one, so that Fred can pare down the list of languages that would be representative of the student enrollment.
- e. The Ann Arbor Art Fairs are set to go in July, at this writing.
- f. BOB will find out what the Detroit Chapter plans are, if any, for Memorial Day's Arlington Michigan.
- g. U.S. Rep. Debbie Dingle is too busy to bother; BOB will send her a letter of thanks for past support of veterans, and plans to contact her office later about a meeting concerning possible legislation.
- h. The Ann Arbor schools' College Fair has cancelled, and the Washtenaw Co. Veterans Council is on hold.

New Business:

- a. Ann Arbor Earth Day has been cancelled. Possibly something will occur online.
- b. J. T. reported that he has been invited to take part in an online veterans' roundtable with U. S. Senator Gary Peters soon, to discuss veterans' issues. He anticipates that there will be further meetings during the summer and asked for suggested topics. BOB will send out a query to the membership and include J.T.'s email address, and also add the query to the Chapter web page. One prominent issue is whether the Administration seeks to starve the V.A. so as to privatize its services. J. T. will keep the membership posted.

Projects:

- a. BILL will follow up with The Ark to see if their calendar of events can list the John Lennon Concert earlier than in previous years. Chris Buhalis plans to M.C. again in 2020.
- b. Diane Zahn joined the conference call at about 10:40 to discuss progress on the John Lennon CD. She said that the CD could be sold via the Chapter's donation site using the Chapter PayPal account; BILL will work on this option. Sale of downloads, she said, would require payment of a fee in advance based on estimated CD sales and to contact Patrick Stewart about this option. She said that orders beyond the initial 200 might cost a bit less.
- c. In connection with the letter to the attorney for Yoko Ono, Bob wanted to know the firm that handled licensing and royalties; Diane said it was Easy Song Licensing.
- d. Diane will notify the artists on the CD that it's ready and direct them to the Chapter website.
- e. Arlington Michigan: BOB can set it up online with the names of the Michigan dead.

The meeting ended at 10:55.

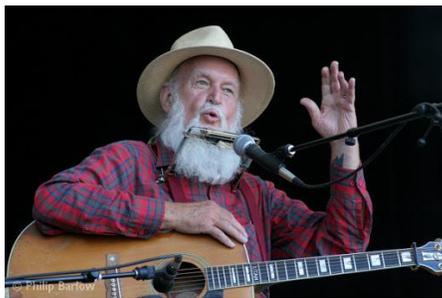
Next Meeting will be May 16—Armed Forces Day!—via Zoom. MIKE will set it up such that people without cameras can attend, and get that information to Bob to pass on.

3. Arlington Michigan Memorial Day Display Cancelled

With the Governor of Michigan continuing the state-wide "stay-home, stay-safe" policy until May 28th, the planned Memorial Day (which this year is May 25th) Veterans For Peace Chapter 93/74 Arlington Michigan display in downtown Detroit has been cancelled. The display, of one grave marker for every Michigan soldier killed in the Iraq and Afghan wars, is now tentatively planned to be set up in Detroit's Grand Circus Park from 10am to 5pm on Independence Day, Saturday, July 4th.

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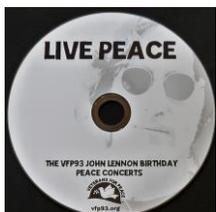
4. Chapter Namesake Utah Phillips Birthday May 15th



Bruce Duncan "Utah" Phillips (May 15, 1935 – May 23, 2008) was a Korean war veteran (and Veterans For Peace member), labor organizer, folk singer, storyteller and poet who often visited Ann Arbor as a performer at The Ark. Utah Phillips was an ardent advocate for labor and peace issues as well as for the rights of homeless people. Utah, who was once homeless himself, felt a responsibility to help those in need. Amy Goodman interviewed Utah Phillips for Democracy Now! in 2004 where in an 8-minute segment, he discusses his own military service and becoming a pacifist and can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/0VOnikFeLW0>. For more on Utah, please visit the website

started by his son, Duncan, at www.thelongmemory.com.

5. VFP John Lennon Birthday Benefit Concert Now On CD



In April 2020, our Veterans For Peace Chapter released a compact disc (CD) recording of the musical artists performing at our October John Lennon Birthday Benefit Concerts over the years for our Chapter's Peace Scholarship program. And like the Concert, a purchase of the CD also goes to benefit the Peace Scholarship program.

Selections on the CD include Revolution (Chris Buhalis, Peter "Madcat" Ruth), Maggie Mae (Dave Boutette, Peter "Madcat" Ruth, Dave Keeney), You've Got to Hide Your Love Away (Annie & Rod Capps, Jason Dennie), Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds (Billy King with Emily Slomovits and band), In My Life (Emily Slomovits with Billy King), Dear Prudence (Jo Serrapere), Across The Universe (Jen Sygit), Rest Easy Little Darlin (John Latini), Crippled Inside (Dave Keeney, Sophia Hanfi), Working Class Hero (Rochelle Clark), Come Together (Shari Kane and Dave Steele) and Imagine (Billy King).

The John Lennon Birthday Benefit Concert CD can be purchased for \$15, plus \$3 for shipping, by PayPal by visiting www.vfp93.org/john-lennon-concert-cd.

A sincere thank you goes to CD Executive Director Diane Zahn, Fred Ellert, Curt Hamilton, Dave Roof, Annie Capps and Cathy Muha for their work on the CD as well as all the performers who donated their time and talent. And a huge thank you Chris Buhalis, who makes these concert fundraisers happen. It should also be noted that the licensing fees and royalties have been paid for the CD production.

6. Virtual Arlington Michigan Display



With the cancellation of the Memorial Day Arlington Michigan display of grave markers for every Michigan soldier killed in the Iraq and Afghan wars, we encourage everyone to make a visit to our "virtual" Arlington Michigan display online by clicking on the links below. This consists of a listing of all soldiers killed with their name, age, a photo (if available), rank and unit. May they rest in peace... [Iraq War \(163 killed\)](#) [Afghan War \(68 killed\)](#)

7. Submit Letters to the Washington, D.C. Vietnam Wall For Memorial Day



Please write a letter to The Vietnam Wall in Washington, D.C.. Join those who were impacted by the war, from soldiers to mothers and fathers to children and grandchildren to peace activists, as we write to those who died a half a century ago. Let them know that we have not forgotten them. If you're so moved, please send your letter (by May 21st) to Doug Rawlings, at this address: rawlings@maine.edu. Doug will deliver your words on May 25th, 2020 to The Wall in Washington, DC. No matter how you lived out those days, your story needs to be told. It is through your words that history will reveal itself to all

generations. Please join us and for more information on VFP Letters To The Wall visit <https://www.veteransforpeace.org/take-action/memorial-day>

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8. Member Corner

A new feature about members of our VFP Chapter...

Hi, I am new to the Chapter and would like to introduce myself. My name is James Thomas Ramelis , J.T. as I prefer to be known. I volunteer one day a week at the Flint V.A. Clinic teaching 18 Form Qi Gong , (it's like Tai Chi), Mindfulness Meditation, Whole Health coaching , (the V.A. sent me to training to get a Whole Health Coach certificate), and do Spiritual Coaching. I still have a Social Workers License in Michigan (I don't know why I keep it up) and am an ordained Interfaith Minister and former Presbyterian Pastor.

I taught the 18 form Qi Gong at the Gerofit Rehab Center in Ann Arbor in an 8 week program. The Center contracts with the V.A. and serves Vets. I am also a Chaplain with the Fenton VFW and Grand Blanc Legion, neither of which has been getting much action, and I don't know how long that is going to last. I had problems with a DAV Chapter up north because of my politics. Both of these chapters are just starting to figure out I am way left in the political spectrum. Chaplain in both outfits is an elected position.

I teach a class for University of Michigan Lifelong learning "OLLI" called the Wisdom Circle where we investigate the perennial wisdom of the world's great religions. It is usually 8 weeks long and I like to teach it in the early Fall and late Spring. It, as well as volunteering in Flint is on hold because of the Virus quarantine. I would like to do something with the Dali Lama's call to "Secular Universal Ethics". A code of basic ethics that most of us can agree on. The world's great religions can of course have input but it needs to be without particular theologies and concepts of God, with input from atheists, agnostics, humanists, spiritual but not religious, etc. An expanded version of the Golden Rule. I am open to helpful ideas on this one.

I am a Vietnam Veteran. I actually was instructed in a form of what we call Mindfulness Meditation in Vietnam by a monk in the same order as Thich Nhat Hahn, a famous Vietnamese Buddhist monk. He was my girlfriends' brother. I was stationed for 13 months on Long Binh near Saigon in 70-71 and was mostly "in the rea with the gear". I was exposed to Agent Orange on the perimeter though and did get shot at twice. I tell people I was shot at twice in Vietnam and three times in Detroit and they think I am joking, I am not. Lol. I grew up in Detroit, was a Detroit Firefighter in the late 70s, and have been Up North in the U.P. for 27 years, moving a couple of years ago to Fenton. Besides getting pinned down by gun fire a couple times as a Detroit Firefighter, I had a few rocks and bottles bounced off my head too.

As far as political activism that could be of use to the chapter, I have some. I am a graduate of the Michigan Progressive Leadership program and had some Wellstone training. I worked for Bernie Sanders in Florida in the 2016 campaign (I was snowbirding that winter in Florida), worked for Obama in 2012 in the U.P., I am currently the Democratic Precinct Delegate in my voting district, was Jennifer Granholms appointment to the Mackinac County DHS Board and was Chair at one point, and the Mackinac County Board of Commissioners appointment to a tri-county Behavioral Health Board. At one point I was briefly the Democratic Chair in Mackinac County. I have flirted around with the Greens some. I was a part time Presbyterian Pastor, DHS Board Chair, and on the Behavioral Health Board, all at the same time. It was sort of my late life post retirement part time careers and equaled one full time job between the three of them, and I used this combination to start two food pantries, one in Engadine and one in Munising, and help poor people get things like wells dug and running water with little used DHS money. I did some good things with the Presbyterian money too. My church was poor but the Presbyterians at the higher levels have a lot of money and I got some cash for poverty programs. There is a lot of poverty in the U.P., people just don't know it. I also got some stressed out Vietnam Vets living in the woods with their AR 15s, still waiting for Charlie to come and attack, out of the woods, and got them some V.A. help, and usually on Social Security.

I was in Vietnam Veterans Against the War briefly in the 70s while I attended Wayne State. I voted but wasn't an activist in Veterans or political causes from 1980 until the fake election of 2000, 9-11, Iraq etc. I got moving again then. I did Teach Ins leading up to and during Iraq, and went to some protests in Detroit, Chicago, and the Grand Rapids area. Sometimes I linked up with Veterans For Peace. I went to a Veterans for Peace conference in Chicago during that time. I have a VFP flag if ever needed. My nearest chapter Up North was Traverse City, that was 3 1/2 hours a way and across the Bridge. In the winter, attending monthly meetings was just too much of a challenge. I was literally in the middle of nowhere in the U.P. so I didn't organize a chapter but looked into it.

I look forward to working with y'all and hope I can be of service and use.

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9. Our VFP Chapter Can Use Your Help

Currently our VFP Chapter has only a few people doing all the work and projects and to say we could use help is an understatement. Most of these jobs don't take up that much time at all, and would help out the Chapter immensely. One thing we are trying to promote is for people to sign up for a "volunteer email list". We always need extra people to help staff events like the Arlington Michigan display on Memorial/Veterans Day or the VFP booth at Earth Day or the Ann Arbor Art Fair. Just tell us you want to be on the volunteer e-mail list and when an event date starts rolling around, we will email you to see if you can help out. If you can, great. If not, we understand. Even if you are not a veteran, we could still use your help. To be placed on the "volunteer email list", just send an email to Bob Krzewinski at wolverbob@gmail.com and he will get back in touch with you. Thanks in advance for your consideration of this request!!!

10. Web Resources

- Podcast: Congress leaning towards drafting women for next war - Rivera Sun and Edward Hasbrouck on upcoming changes to military draft registration laws, and the history of resistance by men and women. [Listen to Rivera and Edward's update](#)
- Podcast: "That's me, I AM the enemy" Howard Morland - Air force pilot Howard Morland's exposure to the atrocities in Vietnam and extreme military training led him to question what the war was really about. [Listen to Howard's story](#). This Courage to Resist podcast was produced in collaboration with the [Vietnam Full Disclosure](#) effort of Veterans For Peace — "Towards an honest commemoration of the American war in Vietnam." This year marks 50 years of GI resistance, in and out of uniform, for many of the courageous individuals featured.
- Mapping Militarism - A new collection of maps displays what militarism looks like in the world. Included are these topics: Wars, Weapons, U.S. Weapons, Money, Nukes, Chemical and Biological, U.S. Military, Air Strikes, Law, and Promotes Peace and Security. [See the maps](#)
- [Meet the US veterans returning to make amends in Vietnam](#) - Forty-five years after the fall of Saigon, U.S. veterans are returning to Vietnam to find peace — and to atone for the damage they left behind
- [As COVID Rages, Will the VA Be There for Future Generations of Veterans?](#)

11. Announcement, Anniversaries & Reminders

VFP National Online Social Hours

VFP has experimented with VFP Social Hours and members enjoyed the chance to chat and catch up (or meet) with other Veterans For Peace members. VFP will continue these twice a week every Tuesday and Thursday at 2 pm. (EDT). VFP will post the "Join" link in the Calendar section on the right side of the front page of our website - www.veteransforpeace.org - before every Social Hour.

Veterans For Peace National Weekly E-News List

Get updates on upcoming VFP national actions, ongoing campaigns and news from chapters across the country. Additionally, the e-news provides resources and helpful tips for engaging your own actions. To sign up visit <https://veteransforpeace.salsalabs.org/eblast0/index.html>

Support Those Who Supported Us For Our John Lennon Concert!

We again thank our musical artists who are contributing their talent to make our 2019 John Lennon benefit concert a success and urge you to support them throughout the year by attending their performances and purchasing their recordings. Visit <https://www.vfp93.org/john-lennon-concert> for a listing of concert musicians.

VFP 93 On Facebook

Veterans For Peace Chapter 93 now has a Facebook page. To sign up, just visit <https://www.facebook.com/VFP93>

Swords Into Plowshares Gallery

Open Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, 1pm to 4pm at [33 East Adams](#) (near Woodward) and next to Comerica Park in downtown Detroit. Free parking is available in the Central United Methodist Church parking lot on the west side of the Center. If parking lot attendants are present, please tell them you are going to the Gallery. For more information, including a map to the Gallery in downtown Detroit, and exhibit updates, visit www.swordsintoplowsharesdetroit.org.

Car Donations To Help The Chapter

If anyone has a car to donate, the Chapter would appreciate it be given to Charity Motors 888-908-2277. They pick it up anywhere and will give 70% of the sell price to our Chapter. The car can be in any condition.

Michigan Peace Network - <http://michiganpeacenetWORK.org/>

Metro Detroit VFP Chapter

The Metro Detroit Chapter of Veterans For Peace covers Wayne, Oakland, Macomb and Monroe Counties and also has regular meetings. For more information visit www.vfp74.org.

A Simple Way To Promote VFP - Wear Your VFP T-Shirt!

Help spread the word about Veterans For Peace by wearing a VFP t-shirt, sweatshirt or button around your town or in your travels. Not only does this introduce the public to the fact that there are veterans who stand for peace but can help bring additional veterans into the organization. Don't have a VFP t-shirt or button? Order them by visiting <http://veterans-for-peace-onlihttps://veteransforpeace.salsalabs.org/eblast0/index.htmlne-store.myshopify.com/> (secure, online sales available).

GI Rights Hotline

If you know someone in the military who is seeking a discharge due to a hardship, conscientious objection, homosexual conduct, medical, or psychological problems, or is in the delayed entry program, has not reported for boot camp, and wants out of the military, contact the GI Rights Hotline at <http://girightshotline.org/en/> or calling them at 877-447-4487.