
# Veterans For Peace - Chapter 93

January 2021 Newsletter

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

Serving Washtenaw, Livingston, Hillsdale, Lenawee and Jackson Counties

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[www.vfp93.org](http://www.vfp93.org/) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/VFP93](http://www.facebook.com/VFP93)

**1. Veterans For Peace Chapter 93 Meeting – Saturday, January 16th, 2021**

The next VFP Chapter 93 meeting will be Saturday, January 16th, 2021 at 10am*.* Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the meeting will be held by teleconference only using Zoom (<https://zoom.us>). To participate, at 10am, January 16th, if your computer has a microphone and video, go to the Zoom meeting link at <https://zoom.us/j/96774053939>. No computer access? Call 312-626-6799 and enter the meeting ID of 967 7405 3939 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
	1. Previous meeting minutes
	2. Treasury report
	3. Membership
	4. [VFP 93 Calendar](https://dce38e56-2493-4b39-b71f-8709e753bd00.filesusr.com/ugd/50be72_b61a640c0b37479c883ac3557fb70c1e.pdf)
	5. VFP Outreach
	6. 2021 Chapter officer elections
	7. Other
3. Old & continuing business
	1. Honorary Chapter member program
	2. Truth In Recruiting/Opt-out
	3. VFP 93 & countering Trump actions locally
	4. VFP at Washtenaw Council of Veterans meetings
	5. Other
4. New Business
	1. Other
5. Projects
	1. Peace Studies Scholarship
	2. MLK Day
	3. Peace Pole
	4. Ann Arbor Art Fair
	5. John Lennon Concert
	6. John Lennon Concert CD
	7. Arlington Michigan
	8. Other
6. Upcoming events – Next meeting – February 20th
7. Announcements/Adjournment

**2. VFP Statement On Events At The Capitol**

The violence that broke out on January 6th in the U.S. Capitol by people who seek to halt the certification of the 2020 election results was both unsurprising given U.S. history and was also shocking to witness. The events highlight the reality that Trump, members of his administration and the silent GOP Senate have used their positions to foment hatred, racism, and sexism, to garner support for their own agenda. However, as we all know, the problem is not Trump but a deeply entrenched and longstanding system of white supremacy.

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As military veterans who know the true costs and causes of war, members of Veterans For Peace reject state violence and state-sanctioned violence. We have had to watch dishearteningly as fellow Americans invoke violence against others. These actions follow a long history of white supremacist actions in this country against indigenous, Black and Brown peoples. Furthermore, many of the people who fill the ranks of these mobs are (often white) military veterans.

As veterans ourselves, we have seen how white supremacy and violence are perpetuated in the U.S. military. The U.S. military continues to be an active recruitment tool for violent extremism and hate groups. This culture of toxicity, often fully embraced and/or condoned by military leadership continues to be a pipeline to violent right wingers, border patrol and police. We know that this pathway to violence must stop.

VFP supports peace abroad and peace at home. We support true peace which begins with defending racial and social justice by challenging systematic violence. We stand in strong opposition to the increasing trend of hate groups and political action groups that exaggerate the myths of the so-called "American" identity into moralizing political violence.

Veterans For Peace encourages our members to remain vigilant and united. It is our belief that positive change comes through nonviolent organizing, direct action, education, mobilization, and having a firm vision and commitment to help make a better tomorrow. We must continue creating a community that stands in stark opposition to the U.S. military and organize our fellow veteran community to unlearn dangerous ideology and break the conduit of violence. We can help deflect rightful discontent created by the neglect and betrayal of our institutions to constructive organizing. Let's help create a community that is an alternative to bigoted violence and pursue an egalitarian solution to our common root problems.

**3.** **VFP Chapter 93 Giving Online Presentation At Eastern Michigan University, University of Michigan & The Ann Arbor Public Library To Commemorate Martin Luther King Day In January**

With the COVID-19 pandemic still having a grip on Michigan, this year’s area Martin Luther King Day activities will be conducted online. In 2021, VFP Chapter 93 will concentrate on the rise of militarism in the United States, and specifically the increase of military tactics and equipment into local police departments with a talk theme of “MLK and Militarism: Beyond Militarism; Where Do We Go From Here”. The Zoom online presentations are as follows…

* Eastern Michigan University – Sunday, January 17th at 3pm (to 3:45pm) – Details at <https://www.emich.edu/mlk/about/index.php>. Access link to the VFP talk still to be announced (watch for additional email update with the link)
* University of Michigan - Ann Arbor – Monday, January 18th at 2:00pm (to 4pm) – Link to Remote Event: <https://umich.zoom.us/j/97810634734> - For more information on all University of Michigan MLK Day events visit <https://oami.umich.edu/um-mlk-symposium/>
* Ann Arbor Public Library – Monday, January 18th with time and online access link to the VFP talk to be announced (watch for additional email update with the link)

**4. Veterans For Peace Chapter 93 Meeting Minutes – December 19th, 2020**

The meeting took up at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom with six members attending: Lynn Gilbert, Bob Krzewinski, Steve Morehouse, Mike Muha, J. T. Ramelis, and Bill Shea. It ended at 10:53.

1. General Business:

 a. Minutes of the prior meeting were approved.

 b. Treasurer Mike Muha reported the finances are virtually unchanged from last month. with $9,648.33 in the

 treasury. He has sent T-shirts to Annie Capps and Chris Buhalis, along with $100 honoraria in recognition

 of their help with the John Lennon Concert in October, as well as to existing Chapter scholars.

 c. The Chapter has 26 members on the roster. Charlie Pekarek’s membership has been transferred to

 Chicago. Mary Bailey has moved away.

 d. In response to an enquiry, yes, MLK Day events are open to the public.

 e. Chapter officers were re-elected to serve another year.

 f. VFP Outreach:

 i. BOB will add, “If you like us, join us” to the Facebook page.

 ii. J.T. will contact Green Party members who are also veterans, to see if they might join.

 iii. MIKE get will get back in touch with the people in Lansing who expressed interest, to see if they would

 join Chapter meetings on Zoom, for the duration of virtual meetings or perhaps longer. He said that we

 have the technology to Zoom live meetings, if and when they resume. The usual meeting space at the

 U.-U. Church of Ann Arbor is closed through spring.

 iv. BILL will approach the VFW Post in Milan, MI, where there are a number of young veterans who may

 be interested in joining, according to the head of the Washtenaw County Council of Veterans.

 v. BILL will ask the vets organizations at Washtenaw C. C. and U. of M. about possible new members.

 vi. MIKE will inquire at EMU, of which he is an alumnus, about vets who might join.

2. Old and Continuing Business:

 a. Honorary Chapter member program: Matt Watroba of The Ark, who helped with the virtual concert, would be

 a good candidate. MIKE will check with National on the possibility of setting up a recurring draw on the

 Chapter credit card to cover annual dues for all honorary members.

 b. Truth in Recruiting: LYNN will send information on new demands for student contact information that are

 written into the pending defense funding bill, to Jeff Gaynor on the Ann Arbor School Board. BOB will go

 over the questions for students to consider before they enlist and will add a warning about sexual assault.

 c. Washtenaw Council of Veterans: Bill reported that Michael Smith told him the group is meeting. BILL will

 phone Smith about a week before their next scheduled meeting on Jan. 18 to gain meeting access.

3. Projects:

 a. There are no new applicants for the Peace Studies Scholarship. BILL will resend

 information to area colleges. On Dec. 8, Bob did a five-minute Zoom session with a Wayne State class in

 peace studies to explain VFP and its scholarship for students involved in a program of peace studies. BILL

 will follow up with Eric Montgomery about a virtual visit to do the same for MSU peace studies students.

 b. The Peace Pole: Fred Pearson is still looking for a location and a contractor to install it at Wayne State.

 BOB will forward to Mike one of Fred’s emails in which Fred commented on this effort, and Bob will follow

 up with Fred.

 c. MLK Day will take place at U. of M. on Jan. 18 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. The Ann Arbor District Library wants

 a program they can present on their screening service and also archive; BOB AND BILL will come up with

 something for them.

The EMU date in Jan. 17, hour TBD.

 d. MLK Day presentation content will be updated in the light of the new book out concerning the development

 of King’s thinking against militarism, including its drain on domestic spending. One new aspect is the

 relationship between militarism and the recent use of the military in civilian U.S. settings, which is

 supposed to be ruled out by the *posse comitatus* law (1878), and also the recent quasi-military behavior of

 domestic police. The question arose of what military hardware is in the possession of local law

 enforcement.

 e. The Board of the Ann Arbor Art Fairs still says it plans to go ahead with the outdoor event next July. BILL

 will see that the Chapter’s application gets in by the Feb. deadline.

 f. The John Lennon Concert video is still viewable on The Ark website.

 g. A dozen copies of the CD assembled from prior concerts were sold following this year’s virtual concert.

 h. The next Arlington Michigan is scheduled for Memorial Day in Detroit.

4. Further meeting plans:

 a. The next meeting will be virtual, on Zoom, on Saturday, January 16, at 10:00 a.m.

 b. MIKE will double-check to ensure that the Zoom link will stay the same as before. He has set up Zoom

 access for the Chapter for all of 2021.

**5. Take Away Donald Trump’s Power To Launch Nuclear Weapons**

(From Win Without War - <https://winwithoutwar.org>) -It’s simple: if Donald Trump can’t be trusted with Twitter, he cannot be trusted with a nuclear arsenal that could end humanity as we know it. People created nuclear weapons and designed the systems governing their use — and people can work to limit and ultimately eliminate their use. It is incredibly dangerous that any single person gets the godlike powers to destroy humanity.

Speaker Pelosi and multiple members of Congress, like Senator Ed Markey and Representatives Jim McGovern and Ted Lieu, are already raising the alarm about Trump’s access to nuclear weapons — Congress is primed to act, and a push from us could help make sure that they step in to take the nuclear button away from Trump and all future presidents.

Add your name to this urgent call on Congress to immediately pass legislation blocking the President’s sole authority to start a nuclear war by going to <https://tinyurl.com/NoTrumpNukes>. Your signature will be instantly delivered electronically.

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This isn’t hyperbole: the system is designed for speed, not for democratic decisions. There’s no kink in the Pentagon’s atomic chain of command that can stop a Presidential order to launch a nuclear missile: the orders would be transmitted. Missile, submarine, and bomber units would break out targeting packages. Nukes would fly.

As President Richard Nixon threatened in his final, dangerous days in office, “I can go back into my office and pick up the telephone, and in 25 minutes, 70 million people will be dead.” Right now we’re in a situation where a President isn’t trusted with Facebook but can still launch nuclear weapons. Only a respect for humanity and a fear of the consequences stand in the way of a President pressing the nuclear button — two characteristics that just this week Trump demonstrated to the worst extent he does not have.

Until and unless Donald Trump is removed from office — through impeachment, the 25th Amendment, or the end of his term — a Trump nuclear strike could be carried out. Unless Congress steps in to change this absurdity. That’s why we need Congress to remove this power for good. As the only country to use nuclear weapons in conflict, the United States has a moral obligation to lead the world in ending this threat and that includes building in checks on the authority to use these weapons. There is no overstating the devastation of a nuclear war, and we are past the point of dangerously close to that horror today — in no small part because Trump’s nuclear buildup has made it more attractive for countries around the world to acquire nuclear weapons themselves.

We owe it to ourselves and to future generations to take action now that will never again allow one person with the nuclear button to control our destinies. Please sign today at <https://tinyurl.com/NoTrumpNukes>.

**6. 2021 Chapter Officer Elections For 2021**

At its December meeting VFP Chapter 93 members elected its officers for the 2021 calendar year with Lynn Gilbert elected as Secretary, Mike Muha as Treasurer, Bill Shea as Vice-Chair and Bob Krzewinski as Chair.

**7. The Save Our VA Steering Committee Calls For The Secretary Of Veterans Affairs To Resign**

The evidence is replete with examples of VA senior leaders undertaking defensive actions and engaging in confrontational messaging while failing to recognize the need to take corrective action to address known problems. Secretary Wilkie and other VA officials privately disparaged the veteran, with the Secretary referring to her as “the Takano staffer whose glamor shot was in the New York Times.” The tone set by Secretary Wilkie was at minimum unprofessional and at worst provided the basis for senior officials to put out information to national reporters to question the credibility and background of the veteran who filed the sexual assault complaint.

Together with statements made by Secretary Wilkie and other leaders, this approach points to a lack of genuine commitment by senior leaders to address the serious issues raised by the veteran’s complaint.”

This is totally unacceptable. Women veterans are often faced with an environment that tolerates if not encourages sexual harassment while on active duty. They must be able to find a safe harbor in VA facilities. Any allegations of sexual harassment should be thoroughly, and independently investigated and appropriate disciplinary action taken were warranted. Secretary Wilkie’s failure to protect women veterans from sexual harassment is cause for his resignation.

To read the whole statement from the Veterans For Peace “Save Our VA” Steering Committee visit <https://www.veteransforpeace.org/pressroom/news/2020/12/18/save-our-va-steering-committee-calls-secretary-veterans-affa>

**8. Announcement, Anniversaries & Reminders**

Winter Online VFP Peacestock – Saturday, January 16th

A mixture of speakers, activists,& musicians with a theme of “Where Do We Go From Here? (99 hours before inauguration). Free event, 2pm to 5pm+ more information, schedule and registration at [www.peacestockvfp.org/events](http://www.peacestockvfp.org/events).

Beyond the Dream: A Call to Conscience - Special Episode of StandDown Live - Friday, January 22nd, 6-8pm ET

Two-hour VFP program with speakers, music, and a round table discussion focused on remembering Dr. King's legacy to stand up and organize for a better today and tomorrow - not just on his birthday but every day. Topics covered will include the intersectionality of people's struggles to include addressing racism, heterosexism, poverty, male supremacy, and nuclear weapons. January 22nd, 2021 was chosen for this special edition of StandDown Live as it is the date that the UN has chosen to take a stand against nuclear weapons - and this was also a message of Dr. King's call for people to mobilize and organize for change. Broadcast live over the VFP YouTube Channel - <https://www.youtube.com/user/VeteransForPeace> - or register to receive a link for the program at <https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_L6zaZU2mTouPIh7ASwlazA>.

Protect The Results Ann Arbor Rally – Friday, January 22nd, 1pm to 3pm

Note: Event will be cancelled if President-elect Biden and VP-elect Harris are peacefully sworn in to office. Otherwise, meet up at the University of Michigan Diag (<https://goo.gl/maps/aPzBBGMRVrXpyrLb7>) in Ann Arbor!

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 every Thursday at 6pm. (EDT). To join the Social Hour, go to <https://zoom.us/j/324812650> or go to <https://zoom.us/join> and click join meeting and enter in Meeting ID: 324 812 650

VFP John Lennon Birthday Benefit Concert CD

Our VFP Chapter has 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. 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](http://www.vfp93.org/john-lennon-concert-cd).

Selections on the John Lennon CD include Revolution (Chris Buhalis, Peter “Madcat” Ruth), Maggie Mae (Dave Boutette, Peter “Madcat” Ruth, Dave Keeney), You’ve Go 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 Slomvits 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).

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>

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!!!

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.

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](http://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 <https://shopvfp.org> (secure, online sales available).