

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.” — Margaret Mead



# Grandmothers for Peace International

Barbara Wiedner, Founder, 1928 - 2001

Lorraine Krofchok, Director

Founded 1982

Fall 2007

## Iraq

Fall 2006

U.S. Military Deaths = 2,578

Iraqi Civilian Deaths = 30,000-100,000?

U.S. Military Wounded = 18,000-48,100

Cost = \$300,104,489,575\*

\*Instead, US Tax Dollars could have:

Funded pre-school for 39,228,885 children

for a year; Hired 5,472,330 teachers;

Built 2,666,808 affordable housing units;

Funded 14,358,215 students with four-year

college scholarships;

Provided 71,717,012 PEOPLE with

health care; And funded neglected

infrastructure, jobs, world

hunger problems,

world immunization,

environmental concerns,

etc., etc., etc. ...

## War

Fall 2007

U.S. Military Deaths = 3,628

Iraqi Civilian Deaths = 65,000-100,000?

U.S. Military Wounded = 23,000-100,000

Cost = \$444,484,360,995\*

\*Instead, US Tax Dollars could have:

Funded pre-school for 58,872,114 children

for a year; Hired 7,702,972 teachers;

Built 4,002,167 affordable housing units;

Funded 21,547,641 students with four-year

college scholarships;

Provided 266,158,417 CHILDREN with

health care; And funded neglected

infrastructure, jobs, world

hunger problems,

world immunization,

environmental concerns,

etc., etc., etc. ...

## Update

### HOW

### MANY

### MORE?

# An Open Letter to the Soldiers of Fort Benning

Major General Paul Eaton, Commanding General of Fort Benning from 2001 to 2003, went to Iraq as Commanding General in charge of training the Iraqi Army. Before a September 25, 2006 Senate Hearing on the war, he stated:

*"The United States has failed to secure the peace... We went in with a bad plan. Stay the course is not a strategy."*

Major General John Batiste served as Commander of the First Infantry Division of the U.S. Army in Iraq in 2004 and 2005. He was offered a promotion to become a three-star general. Instead, after 31 years in the Army, he resigned over the war and said:

*"Somebody had to speak out. If not me, who? How long are we going to continue down this road to nowhere?"*

## A Call to Conscience...

As two military veterans, we join our voices with the majority of the people and many military leaders in our country who say that the war in Iraq is a mistake.

How long must we support a mistake?

Why should this country send more and more members of our military to their early graves in an attempt to justify the mistakes of the politicians in Washington?

## Bring the troops home!



For more information on how you can oppose the war in Iraq, write:

Charlie Liteky, Medal of Honor, Vietnam  
Roy Bourgeois, Purple Heart, Vietnam  
Veterans for Peace  
P.O. Box 3330  
Columbus, GA 31903

"An Open Letter to the Soldiers of Fort Benning," *Ledger-Enquirer*, Columbus, Georgia, June 4, 2007.

# How Long Must We Support a Mistake?

By **BILL QUIGLEY**

Two highly decorated Vietnam veterans published a full-page color ad picturing dozens of white cemetery crosses and an American flag for several days in the Columbus (Georgia) *Ledger-Enquirer* titled **"An Open Letter to the Soldiers of Fort Benning."** Fort Benning is located in Columbus, Georgia, and is home to thousands of members of the U.S. Army. Calling the war in Iraq a mistake, veterans **Charlie Liteky and Roy Bourgeois** offered, as members of **Veterans for Peace**, to help active duty soldiers oppose the war.

Charlie Liteky was awarded a Congressional Medal of Honor for saving 20 soldiers in Vietnam. Roy Bourgeois, now a Maryknoll priest, a Navy officer for four years, was awarded a Purple Heart during his tour of duty in Vietnam. Both vets have years of history at Fort Benning calling for the closure of the highly controversial School of the Americas, Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. See [www.soaw.org](http://www.soaw.org)

Liteky and Bourgeois point out in their ad that Major General Paul Eaton, former commander of Fort Benning, told the U.S. Senate that "The U.S. has failed to secure the peace. We went in with a bad plan. Stay the course is not a strategy."

The ad also quotes Major General John Batiste, Commander of the First Infantry Division of the U.S. Army in Iraq in 2004 and 2005. Batiste, offered a promotion to become a three star general instead resigned over the war in Iraq, saying "Somebody had to speak out. If not me, who? How long are we going to continue down this road to nowhere?"

"How long must we support a mistake?" ask Liteky and Bourgeois in the letter. "Why should this country send more and more members of our military to their early graves in an attempt to justify the mistakes of the politicians in Washington?"

**"When people in the U.S. tell me how passionately they believe in the Iraq war, I ask them, then why the hell are you here instead of over there?"**

**Only cowards want other people to fight their wars for them."**

—Fr. Roy Bourgeois

In bold letters over the picture of the gravesite white crosses, they wrote, "Bring the troops home!"

The ad concluded with an invitation. "For more information on how you can oppose the war in Iraq, write: Charlie Liteky, Medal of Honor Vietnam. Roy Bourgeois, Purple Heart, Veteran. Veterans for Peace. P.O. Box 3330, Columbus. GA 31903.

A June 7, 2007, letter to the editor of the Columbus *Ledger-Enquirer*, the primary newspaper in the area, with a circulation of about 50,000, was highly critical of the ad. "If it weren't for our men in uniform fighting for our freedom, these two men would be in a jail somewhere. If Mr. Liteky and Roy Bourgeois don't love our country, I suggest they pack their duffle bags and move to Iraq."

Fr. Roy Bourgeois said the ad will continue to run, at least five times. "So far" he said, "we have received a couple of letters from soldiers asking how they can oppose the war. Some veterans have written supportive letters, some have criticized us." The reaction of the local community? "Some are happy. Some are angry." When asked how he reacts to angry people, Fr. Bourgeois said, "When people in the U.S. tell me how passionately they believe in the Iraq war, I ask them, then why the hell are you here instead of over there? Only cowards want other people to fight their wars for them."

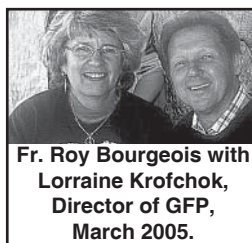
Bill Quigley is a human rights lawyer and law professor at Loyola University New Orleans. You can reach him at [Quigley@loyno.edu](mailto:Quigley@loyno.edu)

**For more information** on the call for soldiers to resist the war in Iraq, write Veterans for Peace. P.O. Box 3330, Columbus. GA 31903.

*(Editor: This article appeared June 7, 2007, on [www.counterpunch.org](http://www.counterpunch.org); Reprinted with permission.)*



**Charlie & Judy Liteky at a farewell celebration prior to his departure for a one-year prison term in Lompoc, CA, July 31, 2000, for his act of non-violent civil disobedience at Ft. Benning in November 1999.**



**Fr. Roy Bourgeois with Lorraine Krofchok, Director of GFP, March 2005.**

## What We Have Learned From War

Memorial Day is a time to remember in a special way the members of our armed forces killed in war. It is also an important time to reflect on what we have learned from war.

1. There is nothing more serious than war. Basic questions must be asked before going to war. Am I willing to die for this cause, knowing my death will inflict untold suffering and grief on my loved ones for many years? Am I prepared to take the life of another human being?
2. Our greatest enemy is ignorance. There is so little we know about other countries, their cultures and religious beliefs. While we may see our cause as noble and ourselves as liberators, others view us as invaders.
3. It is said that truth is the first casualty of war. Leaders are very skilled at exploiting people's fear and packaging a lie as the truth in order to rally the masses. In Vietnam it was the Gulf of Tonkin incident. In Iraq it was the WMDs.
4. General Smedley Butler, a two-time Medal of Honor recipient who spent 33 years in the Marine Corps, put it this way.  
*"War is a racket. A racket best described, I believe, as something that is not what it seems to the majority of people. Only a small inside group knows what it is about. It is conducted for the benefit of the very few at the expense of the masses."*
5. As human beings we must ask how do we justify war in light of the cost in resources and lives. In Vietnam over two million Vietnamese were killed along with 58,000 U.S. troops. In Iraq, hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have been killed and wounded. Tens of thousands of U.S. troops have been wounded, thousands killed and 30-40 percent of soldiers returning from Iraq suffer from PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). In money, over 400 billion dollars spent. A valid question: How many schools and hospitals could be built in Iraq or here at home?
6. We share these thoughts in memory of loved ones lost and in hope that we can move beyond war.

**Charlie Liteky, Medal of Honor, Vietnam  
Roy Bourgeois, Purple Heart, Vietnam**



## Costa Rica to Cease Police Training at the SOA/WHINSEC


Fr. Roy and the SOA Watch team recently went to Costa Rica. This excerpt from Lisa Sullivan's report is outstanding.

"We met with President Arias at his office at 5:30, as scheduled, along with his Minister of Security, Fernando Berrocal, who is head of the police force. I am assuming that all know that Costa Rica has no military and also that Arias is a former recipient of the Nobel Peace prize. Roy thanked Arias for his role as a peace maker in the region, and then shared briefly about the struggle to close the SOA. Minister Berrocal informed the group that Costa Rica currently had 3 police studying at SOA/WHINSEC, and one instructor. The instructor, Hector Navarro, was appointed in the previous administration and is currently under charges (not specified) here in Costa Rica. The Costa Rican government is soliciting his return for this reason. The courses which these 3 students are attending will end in June and August.

I gave President Arias the complete list of graduates (2,558) that Hendrik [SOA Watch member] prepared for us. As we talked, he flipped through, rather incredulous I think, at seeing this large list. We also shared the "cross-out" list for 2005, which as always brought a reaction of surprise.

While Roy was still speaking about the school, Arias suddenly turned to me and asked 'what needs to be done to close this school.' I shared that if Costa Rica were to pull out, that this would certainly have a positive affect, especially given his international standing as a peacemaker, and especially because a bill to withhold funding and investigate the school will be presented any day now. He immediately said 'it is done.' He spoke to the minister, and indicated that the current students would be allowed to graduate, but that COSTA RICA WOULD SEND NO MORE POLICE TO THE SOA."

(Ed: Costa Rica now joins Argentina, Uruguay and Venezuela in pledges NOT to send any more "students" to Ft. Benning and the School of the Americas. Unfortunately, America did not do its part: HR 1707 was defeated June 21, 2007, by a vote of 214-203.)



# CLOSE THE SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS

November 16-18, 2007  
Fort Benning, GA

## Vigil *Take a Stand for Justice!*

# and NONVIOLENT DIRECT ACTION

**Schedule of Events:**

**Thursday, Nov. 15**  
Workshops, Trainings

**Friday, Nov. 16**  
Teach-Ins, Nonviolence Trainings, Concert

**Saturday, Nov. 17**  
Massive Rally at the Gates of Ft. Benning, Puppet Pageant, Action Spokescouncil

**Sunday, Nov. 18**  
Vigil, Commemoration of Victims of SOA/WHINSEC Violence, Direct Action

For more information:  
**www.SOAW.org**

Contact SOA Watch at  
**202.234.3440**



## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

I am squeezed into this little space and isn't that great! We have so many outstanding articles to read.

**ACTION ALERT:** please send Congress your *postcards* (better than letters because they don't go through the anthrax procedure).

**3,628\***  
U.S. Military Deaths in Iraq  
**HOW MANY MORE?**  
\*[www.icasualties.org](http://www.icasualties.org)  
(Your signature and address, if you want a reply.)

I sent mine to my Congressperson, Senators, and Speaker Pelosi whose address is: Office of the Speaker, H-232, US Capitol, Washington, DC, 20515. Flood their mailboxes over and over and over! Postage is 26¢.

*Peace to all of us, Lorraine*

## U.S. Is #1

The US is a proud nation of firsts: First in oil consumption (20.7 million barrels per day); First in carbon dioxide emissions (5.8 billion metric tons annually); First in external debt (\$10.040 trillion); First in military expenditures (\$647 billion [budget] for 2008) more than the rest of the world combined; First in weapons sales (\$21 billion in fiscal 2006); First in sales of surface-to-air-missiles (2,099 between 2001-2005); First in military ships (10 aircraft carriers and destroyers along with 338 anti-ship missiles) to developing nations; First in military training (the militaries of 138 nations); First in private military personnel (126,000 with 40 US based companies).

(Ed: "A Nation of Firsts Arms the World," by Frida Berrigan, [www.tomdispatch.com](http://www.tomdispatch.com), 5/20/07.)

### Sun City West, Arizona

**Frances Thomas**

Summers here see temperatures spiral over a hundred degrees. Marked by necessary hours indoors, this “meanwhile” time finds many looking back and forward, mapping the distance yet needed to travel for peace. Such private journeys can round corners of despair, but on the first and third Saturdays each month we mingle our meanwhiles. Emerging from cars, we squint into a pile of signs and share a stand in the hubbub of things. A stand for peace.

The only visible peace group in the West Valley, we invite all to shelter beneath our umbrellas. Recently we welcomed **Jennifer Bertagni** and **Brittany Martin**, who have known each other since they were six. **Joan Kroll**, who with her husband **Bob** share a corner with the two young women said, “They spotted our group while taking Brittany’s dog to be groomed. I told them I wanted to clone them and create tens of thousands of young people like them.” But the duo recently lost its status as our youngest demonstrators when **William Crum** led his galaxy of lively grandchildren into our mix. With summer already old, all the young faces surprised and energized us.

Another surprise visited us on June 18, 2007. **The West Valley Chapter** claimed its place in history that day when the searing sun retreated, eclipsed by a pale moon. Triumphant, it rose from the back seat of a car and perched humpty-dumpty style on a window ledge.

In the space between darkness and light, the Grandmothers for Peace abide.

(E-mail: grandmothersforpeace@cox.net)



**Sun City, AZ: Grandfather William Crum & his grandchildren stand for peace on a busy street, July 4th weekend, 2007.**

### Russia, Novosibirsk

**Larisa Cherepanova**

Dear Lorraine and friends all over the world,  
My warmest congratulations on GFP

25<sup>th</sup> Birthday. I am really a happy member of Grandmothers for Peace.

In November of 1982 in Kiev, I got acquainted with Barbara Wiedner & other women-participants from GFP during their peace journey in the USSR. It was there I was privileged to become a life-time GFP member, being in Kiev on my own peace tour.

Since the time till now I enjoy my everyday peacemaking “heart” activities, helping people, being the so-called “friendship bridge” between people & countries. I am an internationalist in a good meaning of the word.



**Larisa Cherepanova and husband in the Altai Mountains in Siberia. They have three grandsons.**

I am proud to get the title “Woman of the Year” of my city Novosibirsk (the capital of Siberia) in 2005 for peace-making activities

for 30 years, in the category “Preservation of Peace on the Earth.”

I am a former English teacher & advisor of International Friendship Club (20 yrs). Now I am the **director of the NGO Support Center of Women’s Initiatives for 12 yrs**. Our Center coordinates 10 social projects mainly without any sponsorship but on the volunteer base of its members.

We assist women, children & families, make friendships. I also belong to International Women’s Movement, being a member of “Women of Vision” (Seattle, USA).

Our big city Novosibirsk is the Sister City of the Twins, Minnesota. My dream is to visit the Twins again [visited 1990] to meet the women of the Chapter of “Grandmothers for Peace” International in Minneapolis, St. Paul as well as the Chapters in North Carolina, and in Texas (Amarillo).

My greatest dream is to meet Maya Angelou because I have translated her ten poems into Russian & admire her numerous talents.

With love & peace, Larisa (Phone/fax: 383-2236281; (E-mail: igsh@cn.ru)

### Superior, Wisconsin

**Janet Provost**

Our Northland Chapter finished out our year on a high note. Our annual Christmas Toy Drive for the underprivileged was a big success; had a successful (**Toddy O’Neill**) raffle; gave three \$200 Peace Scholarships to deserving students.

In the spring we had our annual GFP potluck meeting. Our membership has grown considerably in the past years. In 1982 we had four members and now have 92 members.

On the July Fourth, **Grandmothers for Peace** joined **Veterans for Peace**, **Women in Black**, and **Peace North** on a float



in the Superior parade. This float (above) has spurred much discussion (controversy) in the area about war and its terrible consequences. Although there were detractors during the parade, the overwhelming feeling from parade goers was a positive response: **“Get out of Iraq!”**

In July, **GFP Donna Howard** was a presenter at the *International Women’s Peace* gathering in Dallas, Texas.

Exciting news for us: GFP member **Dorothy Wolden** has graciously agreed to be our “Events Coordinator.” She has been a faithful GFP Northland member for many years and has always been available for whatever we needed done. Dorothy leads the charge at most protests, writes wonderful, thought provoking letters to the editor. She has co-chaired our annual Peaceful Toy Drive the past few years and it has grown tremendously because of her hard work and dedication. GFP Northland will continue to grow and prosper under Dorothy’s leadership. (E-mail: g4peace1@centurytel.net)

### Maryland Chapter

**Deborah Matherly**

Looking back: April 14, 2007, with **Sister to Sister**, we hosted “Women for Women - Building Awareness and Finding Solutions for Women Who Are Targets of Violence in the US and abroad.” This program featured four excellent speakers including **Dr. Rona Fields**, and presentations by Sister to Sister high school students. Also, we hosted the films “Arlington West,” Amnesty International’s “The Road to Guantanamo,” and, for a lighter touch, the 1956 classic “Friendly Persuasion.”

Our focus is on young people: we are looking at school curriculum options, scholarships, and counter-recruitment programs.

We have worked with other groups: in lobbying in DC; in the 22nd Annual Maryland United for Peace and Justice Conference; in



the rally to “End the (West Bank and Gaza) Occupation; in the Network of Spiritual Progressives July 4 Interdependence Day Celebration; and in monthly vigils in Columbia.

*Looking forward:* we will continue to meet the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of every month and to vigil monthly in Columbia; October 13 we will have a booth at the Oakland Mills International Festival; October 20 we are co-sponsoring a bone marrow screening registration drive with a former Sister to Sister member in conjunction with the Owen Brown Interfaith Center Blood Drive; and February 16, 2008, we will host a “Hootenanny for Peace.”

(E-mail: [dwmatherly@aol.com](mailto:dwmatherly@aol.com))

**Indiana-Kentucky-Illinois**

**Pat Galbraith**

The Tri-State Chapter continues to hold monthly peace vigils on the third Friday from 5:00-6:00 p.m. at the Four Freedoms Memorial on Riverside Drive, Evansville, Indiana.

A *Drumming for Peace* vigil was held in April in conjunction with **Peace and Justice**, the drumming community, and the local **Veteran For Peace**. GFP marched alongside VFP in the Sommer Festival Parade in June.



Pat Galbraith, standing, Leah Wise & Veronica Reis, Sommer Festival Parade.

A film series organized with VFP premiered June 21 with the showing of “Why We Fight.” These types of films will be shown on a quarterly basis. Our members continue to write and call Indiana Senators and newly elected House Member, Brad Ellsworth, on issues vital to peace efforts. Letters to the newspaper have been published. Lydia Schaffer, our 93 year-old grandma, was featured on the front page of the local paper. In August some members will attend the VFP National Convention in St. Louis where we’ll share a table with VFP Chapter 104 to sell GFP bumper stickers and buttons.

(E-mail: [pjg13@aol.com](mailto:pjg13@aol.com))

**San Jose, California**

**Margaret Marumoto**

Down here in San Jose I have no personal contact with other GFP members, so I do things by myself. For tax day, I created a flyer: “Tell the Congress and Senate How You Want Your Tax Money Spent - Health? Education? Social Security? Pay Down National Debt? War? ... And let them know they should legislate according to their constituents’ wishes”

(followed by the names, etc. of local representatives and senators). I made 25 copies and put them on windshields of cars parked at the local Post Office.

Also recently, I discovered several government license plates in a shopping center parking lot, near an Armed Services Recruitment Center. So I took out my little 3-inch notebook and left notes on eight of their windshields reading “Bring Troops Home.”

I still have the **GI Rights Alaska Hotline** call-forwarding connection at home, and I think the number of calls is gradually increasing. If you live in San Jose and would like to contact me: (408) 229-1324, or

([margimaru@comcast.net](mailto:margimaru@comcast.net))

**Florida Keys**

**Anne Anthony**

GFP Florida Keys sponsored a “Non-Violence Peace Training” workshop in Key West at the Unitarian Fellowship, presented by **Jasiu Milanowski** of the Michigan Peace Team, who was visiting in the Keys for the winter.

With lots of help from our friends at St. Peter’s Episcopal Church in Key West, we sponsored a “Peace for the Next Generations” youth concert, with proceeds to the GFP Peace Scholarship Fund.

(E-mail: [grannyanny@bellsouth.net](mailto:grannyanny@bellsouth.net))

**Santa Clarita, California**

**Patty Carmody**

At a super busy, multi-laned intersection by the local mall, positive reactions from passers-by to our anti-war posters and pro-peace banner dramatically outnumber the occasional middle finger salute or pro-killing screams at our monthly vigils.

To commemorate victims of this catastrophic war, thirty GFP and others held a candlelight vigil May 27, the eve of Memorial Day.

E-mail: [pattyc@thevine.net](mailto:pattyc@thevine.net)



GFP Santa Clarita, CA, joined MoveOn members to present a stack of letters to U.S. Rep Howard “Buck” McKeon’s office asking him to stop supporting the escalation of the Iraq war.

**Fairbanks, Alaska**

**Bryson Dean**

Our Fairbanks Chapter is alive and well. We have been involved in a variety of activities put on by the various peace activists in our community.

We supported **Rob Mulford, Veterans for Peace**, when he was arrested in Senators Stevens and Murkowski’s offices in Fairbanks.

Some of us got involved in the A28 [April 28, 2007] international move to spell out IMPEACH. As a result we met **Leslye Korvola** who is now a member of GFP and published a wonderful article in our local paper, the *News-Miner*, on why we should impeach.

We are looking forward to our big Fair where we will help staff the booth of the Alaska Peace Center, proudly display our banner, and collect more signatures on a petition to Impeach Bush and Cheney.

(E-mail: [brysondean@acsalaska.net](mailto:brysondean@acsalaska.net))

**St. Augustine, Florida**

**Peg McIntire**

Summer heat hasn’t slowed us down. Together with **People for Peace & Justice**, we have stepped up our Saturday morning anti-war rallies to twice monthly. Two of my favorite signs are “BRING THE TROOPS HOME,” and “IMPEACH.”

For the first time in St. Augustine, there were public gatherings hosted by GFP in the downtown Plaza for Mothers/Grandmothers Day and Fathers/Grandfathers Day. We had live music and wonderful sharing of photos and memories.

We are planning to again join the 1,000 Grannies at the November SOA demonstration in Fort Benning, Georgia.

(E-mail: [pegmcintire@bellsouth.net](mailto:pegmcintire@bellsouth.net))

**UPDATES: OTHER GRANNY GROUPS**

**Walnut Creek, California**

**Nancy Landfield**

**Grandparents for Peace and Justice**, at the Rossmoor retirement community, presented a Documentary Film Festival July 3<sup>rd</sup>. The selections were: Born on the Fourth of July; Sicko; Fidel; The US vs. John Lennon; and Platoon.

The monthly meetings have welcomed speakers **Nadia McCaffrey** who showed her film *Journey To Peace*, the homage to her son **Patrick** who was killed in Iraq; and **Betty Kano** who summarized the case of **Ehren Watada** the soldier who claimed contentious objector status in opposition to deployment to Iraq.

On July 4<sup>th</sup>, members held a silent vigil at the entrance to the Rossmoor picnic grounds.

(E-mail: [unclnan80@comcast.net](mailto:unclnan80@comcast.net))

# Not Just a Walk in the Park

By ELLEN BROMS: GFP, SACRAMENTO, CA

A young Iraq Veteran and his wife coordinated a walk around the California State Capitol in Sacramento to remember 3,505 U.S. Iraq Military War dead and thousands of Iraqi civilian dead. This was the count on Memorial Day when a small group of individuals met on the northern steps of the capitol building and began the mission of walking around the capitol one time for every U.S. soldier killed in Iraq, as well as one time for every 200 Iraqi citizens killed as a result of this war.

Members of the peace community helped with the logistics which included getting permits at the Capitol, providing sustenance for the young man, and staying at the information table during his walk or joining him as he walked. A few of the Grannies provided food, water and new socks for the young Vet and other walkers.



**John & Marie Kiene with granddaughter Pearl walk to honor the US soldiers and Iraqi civilians killed in Iraq.**

The young man prefers to remain anonymous to honor the fallen



soldiers, Iraqi civilians and to call for Peace. He is a father of two young children, a student and a worker. He took the time because this is so important to him. He kept going day into night for eleven days. He lost count of the number of laps he walked to honor the fallen soldiers. He walked for each of the 300 plus fallen from California, and when he was finished, others helped him with the balance of the 3,500 soldiers killed in Iraq.

Over the week and a half of the low key event (this was not a march), it was transformed into a community project involving hundreds of people who come out to show their support for ending the war and bringing our troops home. Many people walked a lap who had never participated in a peace action before!!!! Many State workers walk or jog around the Capitol during lunch time - many dedicated their walk to a soldier.

Members of Grandmothers for Peace came and showed their support. Some walked and some sat at the table to provide support for the Vet and other walkers. Some handed out flyers encouraging others to join. On a personal note, I spent many hours during the eleven days helping out with anything that was needed, including the heart wrenching writing on ribbons. Each of the 3,500 had a yellow ribbon and a card listing name, age, hometown and manner of death. I did some walking with the Veteran but many others walked much more.

At a point in front of the Capitol we would pause and read the card. Some people wore the yellow ribbon before returning it at the end of their walk. I saw many people crying because they were so touched by their walking and the sheer number of ribbons on the home-made cardboard monument. The Iraqi dead also were honored with a monument that had all of the slips of paper.

This is from the young Veteran's statement at the end of the eleven days: "... you reflect on those whose lives have been lost in this war. Think about all the pain and suffering each individual went through as their life was taken from them and the emotional anguish that his or her parents or children went through when they received the news of their loved one's passing. And then say to yourself, 'Not one more.' Never give up the fight for peace and never stop demanding an end to this war."



**Information area with ribbon monuments to the US soldiers and Iraqi civilians killed in Iraq. Sacramento, California.**



## Casualties of Bush's Contract Army

By JIM HIGHTOWER

Here comes another dirty little secret about the Bushites' disastrous Iraq war: Many more American troops have died there than they have admitted. These troops aren't part of the Army or other official military units. They are part of the hidden "contract army" that Bush has quietly sent to war. While there are about 150,000 U.S. military personnel in Iraq, there are more than 120,000 other men and women serving alongside the military, but drawing their paychecks through such Pentagon contractors as Halliburton, Blackwater, DynCorp, and Custer Battles.

Bush's corporate army not only provides support services - including doing laundry, serving meals and delivering water - but it also is engaged in such direct military functions as interrogating prisoners, training the Iraq army, guarding the Green Zone, protecting military convoys, analyzing intelligence, and providing paramilitary security.

These are hired hands, not soldiers, and mostly they lack the training, discipline, and equipment of the regular forces - yet they're thrown into the same deadly environment, getting shot, bombed, maimed, and killed. Yet, the Bushites don't even keep count of them. A spokesman coldly says: "There is no requirement for the U.S. government to track these numbers."

Excuse me, but they're not numbers. They are people. And the Labor Department, which receives workers compensation claims, has quietly recorded that at least 917 of these people have died in Bush's war. Another 12,000 have been wounded in battle or injured on the job. That's about one-third more casualties than the Bushites have told us about - a hidden toll of this awful war, and another measure of its deceit and immorality.

Rep. Jan Schakowski is sponsoring a bill requiring the Pentagon to have the decency to start counting those people killed and maimed in Bush's privatized military.

(Ed: Posted 6/20/07 on [www.jimhightower.com](http://www.jimhightower.com))

**Bellingham, Washington:** GFP Ellen Murphy with Iraq War Veteran Evan Knappenberger who stood Tower Guard on a 6' scaffold at the Federal Building in Bellingham, 24/7, June 1-7, 2007, protesting the government's stop-loss policy. "Many friends I served with have completed their contractual obligations



to Active Duty. Now, they're being sent back to Iraq for their third or fourth tours. ... extended from 12 months to up to 18 months. Some soldiers are getting called up after living years of civilian life. Stop-loss is an unethical policy."



# Nonviolent Peaceforce

## WHAT TO SAY YES TO —

## WHEN YOU SAY NO TO WAR

BY DONNA HOWARD, GFP

You are reading this hope-filled newsletter because the good news you crave isn't on CNN. War gets the headlines and militarism gets the budget. But, what if another model couldn't be ignored?

I am a member of the spirited **Northland Chapter of Grandmothers for Peace (Wisconsin)**. And I put a whole lot of my heart and soul into **Nonviolent Peaceforce**.



A camp for war-displaced persons. Donna Howard, center, with a Nonviolent Peaceforce team member, right.

NP sends trained civilians from all regions of the world into conflict areas to protect human rights and human lives. We offer peacekeeping with proven strategies of nonviolent intervention rather than with weapons, as the military paradigm would have us believe is necessary.

Nonviolent Peaceforce currently has projects in Sri

Lanka, Mindanao, Uganda and Guatemala, plus one germinating in Colombia. Our team in Sri Lanka is now in its fourth year of providing accompaniment for civil society activists, being a protective presence in villages and at public events, monitoring volatile situations, consulting with local people on options for what to do in crisis, providing safe places to meet and much more. Though people are safer where we work and live, Sri Lanka is regressing into war in the wake of a failed cease-fire (as happens in 80% of conflicts). Fifty people cannot prevent war even when they are so carefully and highly trained. This standard of third-party nonviolent intervention must be expanded. Nonviolent Peaceforce intends to have 2,000 peacekeepers ready to take the field quickly and anywhere in the world by 2012.

In February, I visited Eastern Sri Lanka where political violence takes place every day in the form of a claymore bomb in the market, or a grenade at an intersection, or sweeping military incursions into areas controlled by Tamil Tigers, etc.

*What I want to share with you, dear Grandmothers for Peace, is the profound determination I feel to continue this work after sitting on the floor with women whose children have been abducted to serve as child soldiers. After being with grandmothers and children in camps for families who were driven from their homes by the violence of war, grief and passion burn in me.*

War is a knee-jerk reaction that will continue until we demonstrate an alternative so strong and effective that it gets headlines and budget. All combatants know how to do is fight. Nonviolent Peaceforce enters a conflict area as partners of local peacemakers who alone know how to resolve the discord and create a lasting peace. Our job is to keep them alive long enough to do their work.

*(Ed: Donna helped establish Nonviolent Peaceforce and currently serves as Co-chair of its International Governance Council. Contact: Donna Howard, 118 1/2 West Skyline Parkway, Duluth MN 55806 USA, Phone: (218) 724-0169; visit [www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org](http://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org); E-mail: [dhoward@nonviolentpeaceforce.org](mailto:dhoward@nonviolentpeaceforce.org))*

### New York City Phone-A-Thons

Grandmothers Against the War select a busy section in New York City and ask people to call Congress right then and there, to bring the troops home, using GAW cell phones. Contact: Eva-Lee Baird; E-mail: [ebaird@earthlink.net](mailto:ebaird@earthlink.net); Phone: (212) 866-4458.

## My Jail Time

BY CATHY WEBSTER, GFP

On March 21, 2007, I was introduced to life in the Sacramento, CA, County Jail due to my criminal activity of trespassing onto Ft. Benning Army Base last November with SOAWatch. For some unknown reason, the Federal Bureau of Prisons assigned me to Rio Cosumnes Correctional Center in Elk Grove, CA, rather than to Federal prison.



Lorraine Krofchok, left, with Cathy Webster.

This "Branch" of the county jail houses about 2,000 prisoners, including 270 in its women's facility. I was installed in the "working dorm," one of four units of segregation. Sixty-five women from the ages of 18 to 53 yrs. were my cellmates.

Upon my entry into the dormitory, curiously called "Golden Poppy," I was greeted with cheers and applause. It seems the women had just been watching the 6:00 pm local news which covered "Grandma's entry into jail." My story had already broken through those intended walls of punitive isolation! I was delighted to have such a facilitated path for my message of the need to close our taxpayer-funded school of assassins. The women were indeed interested, and knew nothing of SOA.

In the working dorm, inmates are assigned to their choice of jobs: kitchen crew, laundry, range crew (filling the holes in the targets used at the officers' firing range), and engraving (making county signs). The engraving work comes with a job reference for an inmate upon her release.

Sixty-six women together in one room, excluding the four hours of school programs (GED, business office machines, and life/recovery skills), and the few hours that most sleep, create a lot of noise – deafening sometimes. A television in the room could be on at varying decibels all day and late into the night.

Meals were true jail food, calibrated to provide a set amount of calories to fatten up wasted street folks, and prepared in a manner to remind one that one is not at the Ritz. Time allotted to walk to chow hall, get served, eat, and leave: 20 minutes.

In a county jail, the people I met are literally my neighbors. Their lives are much closer to me than I would have thought. The women in this county jail mostly grew up in northern California, in the counties closest to my county of residence. Upon release they return to their own neighborhoods just minutes away from this place. Many return over and over, many have relatives serving time along with them. Hearing their stories made my stay very personal.

Often, prisoners of conscience who have gone to prison become active in prison reform efforts, or write about the appalling conditions and treatment of inmates. They have interacted with and been touched by their companions of some months. I am influenced by the same forces, especially since these women are returning to lives just down the road from where I returned to my life. There is a connection which doesn't just melt away as I walk out the door.

This is one of the hallmarks of the work for justice. It "leads you where you do not want to go" oftentimes, but go you will – because it is personal.

Would I do it again? The cause is certainly worth it. The cost of discipleship is often dear. The vote this month (June 2007) in the House of Representatives to cut the funds for SOA lost 214-203 – so close, and very disappointing!

I am calling 1,000 grandmothers again to come to Ft. Benning in November: I am hoping to see 10,000!

*(Ed: Cathy is Founder of 1,000 Grandmothers.)*



# GRANDMOTHERS FOR PEACE DIRECTORY

## International Office

Lorraine Krofchok, Director  
Grandmothers for Peace International  
P.O. Box 580788  
Elk Grove, CA 95758  
Phone: (916) 685-1130  
E-mail: [lorraine@grandmothersforpeace.org](mailto:lorraine@grandmothersforpeace.org)

## United States Local Chapters/Contact People

### Alabama:

**Evergreen** Area Contact Person  
Diane S. Sosebee  
Phone: (251) 578-2350  
E-mail: [dianesosebee@hotmail.com](mailto:dianesosebee@hotmail.com)

**Huntsville** Area Contact Person  
Margaret Darlene Ehinger  
Phone: (256) 536-2716  
E-mail: [ehingermd@bellsouth.net](mailto:ehingermd@bellsouth.net)

### Alaska:

**Fairbanks** Area Contact Person  
Bryson Dean  
Phone: (907) 488-2371  
E-mail: [brysondean@acsalaska.net](mailto:brysondean@acsalaska.net)

### Arizona:

**East Mesa** Chapter  
Roma Jo Thompson  
Phone: (480) 986-2839  
E-mail: [rthompson5@juno.com](mailto:rthompson5@juno.com)

**West Valley** Chapter (Sun City West)  
Ordell Nelson  
E-mail: [grandmothersforpeace@cox.net](mailto:grandmothersforpeace@cox.net)

### Arkansas:

**Eureka Springs** Chapter  
Ann Johnson  
Phone: (479) 253-2927  
E-mail: [homeineureka@earthlink.net](mailto:homeineureka@earthlink.net)

### California:

**Hayward** Chapter  
Corine Thornton  
Phone: (510) 582-7699

**Palm Springs** Area Contact Person  
Barbara Humphreys  
Phone: (760) 770-7160  
E-mail: [vagabarb@earthlink.net](mailto:vagabarb@earthlink.net)

**Sacramento** Area Chapter  
Lorraine Krofchok  
Please see International Office

**San Carlos** Area Contact Person  
Joanne Thompson  
Phone: (650) 592-3656  
E-mail: [garnet248@sbcglobal.net](mailto:garnet248@sbcglobal.net)

**San Diego** Area Contact Person  
Kathleen Schroeder  
E-mail: [claywomank@pacbell.net](mailto:claywomank@pacbell.net)

**San Luis Obispo** Area Chapter  
Molly Johnson  
Phone/Fax: (805) 467-2431  
E-mail: [peacegrannie@hotmail.com](mailto:peacegrannie@hotmail.com)

### California con't:

**Santa Clarita** Chapter (So. California)  
Patty Carmody  
Phone: (661) 296-5904  
E-mail: [pattyc@thevine.net](mailto:pattyc@thevine.net)

**Southern California Area** Contact Person  
(West San Fernando Valley, Los Angeles  
County, Conejo Valley, Ventura County)  
Flo Weber  
Phone: (818) 716-7876  
E-mail: [floaweber@aol.com](mailto:floaweber@aol.com)

**Woodland** Area Contact Person  
Kathleen Saffin Schultz  
E-mail: [kas.6@juno.com](mailto:kas.6@juno.com)

### Colorado:

**Durango** Area Contact Person  
Lorna Waddington  
E-mail: [lornawadd@earthlink.net](mailto:lornawadd@earthlink.net)

### Florida:

**Cocoa** Area Contact Person  
Terre Beasley  
Phone: (321) 591-8644  
E-mail: [terrebeads@yahoo.com](mailto:terrebeads@yahoo.com)

**Florida Keys** Area Contact Person  
Anne Anthony  
Phone: (305) 745-9041  
E-mail: [grannyanny@bellsouth.net](mailto:grannyanny@bellsouth.net)

**St. Augustine** Contact Person  
Peg McIntire  
Phone: (904) 471-1986  
E-Mail: [pegmcintire@bellsouth.net](mailto:pegmcintire@bellsouth.net)

### Georgia:

**Atlanta** Contact Person  
Carolyn Dowie  
Phone: (678) 513-4675  
E-mail: [carolyndowie@hotmail.com](mailto:carolyndowie@hotmail.com)

### Indiana & Kentucky & Illinois :

See Indiana: Tri-State Chapter

### Indiana:

**Indiana** Chapter  
Christie Smith Stephens  
Phone: (765) 644-0069  
E-mail: [ecstephens1@aol.com](mailto:ecstephens1@aol.com)

**Tri-State** Chapter Area Contact Person  
(Indiana, Kentucky, Illinois)  
Patricia Galbraith  
Phone: (812) 867-3914  
E-mail: [pjg13@aol.com](mailto:pjg13@aol.com)

### Maryland:

**Maryland** Chapter  
Deborah Matherly  
Phone: (410) 730-6049  
E-mail: [dwmatherly@aol.com](mailto:dwmatherly@aol.com)

### Massachusetts:

**Boston** Contact Person  
Susan Lees  
Phone: (781) 316-1618  
E-mail: [swlees@earthlink.net](mailto:swlees@earthlink.net)

### Michigan:

Area Contact Person  
Joni Keskey  
Phone: (231)-275-3040  
E-mail: [tjkeskey@chartermi.net](mailto:tjkeskey@chartermi.net)

### Minnesota:

**Duluth** Contact Person  
Mona Cheslak  
Phone: (218) 724-1193  
E-mail: [monajc@hotmail.com](mailto:monajc@hotmail.com)

**Minneapolis** Chapter  
Marilyn Jones  
E-mail: [minnesota@grandmothersforpeace.org](mailto:minnesota@grandmothersforpeace.org)  
Website: [minnesota.grandmothersforpeace.org](http://minnesota.grandmothersforpeace.org)

**St. Paul** Chapter  
Constance Fleisher  
Phone: (651) 227-4619  
E-mail: [CBF36@aol.com](mailto:CBF36@aol.com)

### Missouri:

**St. Louis** Contact Person  
Sue Jackson  
Phone: (314) 647-1260 (evening)  
E-mail: [JACKSONDS@aol.com](mailto:JACKSONDS@aol.com)

### New York:

**Chautauqua County** Area Contact Person  
Faith Woolson  
E-mail: [woolson@netsync.net](mailto:woolson@netsync.net)

### North Carolina:

**Carolina Beach** Contact Person  
Lynn Heritage  
Phone: (910) 458-7132  
E-mail: [ncpeacegrannie@yahoo.com](mailto:ncpeacegrannie@yahoo.com)

### Western Area Contact Person

Clare Hanrahan  
Phone: (828) 285-0010  
E-mail: [hanrahan@buncombe.main.nc.us](mailto:hanrahan@buncombe.main.nc.us)  
Website: [celticwordcraft.com](http://celticwordcraft.com)

### Ohio:

**Bayside** Area Chapter  
Margaret Kreager  
E-mail: [bayside1022@yahoo.com](mailto:bayside1022@yahoo.com)

### Oregon:

**Myrtle Creek** Area Contact Person  
Julieene DeMarsh  
Phone: (541) 680-4231  
E-mail: [julienne@tymewyse.com](mailto:julienne@tymewyse.com)

### Texas:

**Amarillo** Area Contact Person  
Pam Allison  
E-mail: [psallison@earthlink.net](mailto:psallison@earthlink.net)  
**Austin/Round Rock/Hill Country** Chapter  
Linda Wiles  
Phone: (512) 912-7624;  
Cell: (512) 619-5715  
E-mail: [wileslinda@yahoo.com](mailto:wileslinda@yahoo.com)

**GFP Directory: U.S. & International Contacts**

◆ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

**Virginia:**

**Northern Virginia Chapter**  
Suzanne C. Doherty  
Phone: (703) 425-6894  
E-mail: scdoherty@cox.net

**Washington:**

**Eastern Area Contact Person**  
Susie Gaul  
Phone: (509) 582-3495  
E-mail: nimmal2@yahoo.com

**Wisconsin:**

**Kickapoo Valley Chapter**  
Rita G. Conway  
E-mail: grannysforpeace@kickapoo-valley.com

**Milwaukee Area Contact Person**  
Verdell De Yarman  
Phone: (414) 562-8014

**Northland Chapter (Superior)**  
Janet Provost  
Phone/Fax: (715) 394-7929

E-mail: g4peace1@centurytel.net

**International Local Chapters/Contact People**

**Germany:**

**Berlin Area Contact Person**  
Eva Quistorp (affiliated with Women for Peace)  
E-mail: equistorp@aol.com

**Romania:**

**Romanian Chapter**  
Ms. Victoria Dirvaru  
Str. Mitropoliei Nr. 26  
2400 RO  
Phone: 0040 269 218178  
Fax: 0040 269 232650

**South Africa:**

**South Africa Chapter**  
Mufumbe Mateso, PWC General Secretary  
Grandmothers for Peace  
Power of Women and Children, South Africa  
P.O. Box 17066, Hillbrow 2038  
Johannesburg, South Africa

**United Kingdom:**

**Area Contact Person**  
Jean Stead  
E-mail: jeanstead@hotmail.co

For links to other Granny Groups, visit [www.grandmothersforpeace.org](http://www.grandmothersforpeace.org) and click: Other Granny Groups.

**No GFP POLITICAL ENDORSEMENTS PERMITTED**

**Although Grandmothers for Peace, as an organization or chapter, can not endorse any political candidate or group due to our non-profit status,**

**WE DO THANK EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTS PEACE.**

*“Civil disobedience is not our problem. Our problem is civil obedience. Our problem is that numbers of people all over the world have obeyed the dictates of the leaders of their government and have gone to war, and millions have been killed because of this obedience. Our problem is that people are obedient all over the world in the face of poverty and starvation and stupidity, and war, and cruelty. Our problem is that people are obedient while the jails are full of petty thieves, and all the while the grand thieves are running and robbing the country. That’s our problem.”*

— Failure to Quit by Howard Zinn

**“There are not enough jails, not enough policemen, not enough courts, to enforce a law not supported by the people.”**

Hubert H. Humphrey, 1965

**Daughters of the Earth**

BY LARISA CHEREPANOVA

*Women of the USA & Russia  
Are the daughters of the Mother earth,  
“Mary” is so similar to “Masha,”  
Though she has a far-off place of birth.  
Much in common can be seen for sure,  
Love for kids, for life is common love,  
Common wish to keep the air pure,  
In the morn to see the sun above.  
Similarities are in the baby care,  
Though different lullabies are sung,  
Women have so much to give, to share,  
Women speak a universal tongue.  
Peace on earth! Goodwill to all the Nations!  
Let a sunny, kind tomorrow come!  
Much depends on women’s good relations,  
Daughters of the earth, their common mom.  
Larisa, a GFP, is the Director of the Support Center of Women’s Initiatives, Russia, Novosibirsk.  
(Ed: See report in GFPI News, Russia, page 5.)*

**Barbara Wiedner & Dorothy Vandercook**

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