



Rogue Valley Chapter 156 News



Newsletter of Rogue Valley Veterans for Peace Chapter 156

Visit our website at: <http://rv-vfp156.org>

Volume 1, Issue 5

June 29, 2011

Walk with VFP 156 in the Ashland 4th of July Parade

Our Chapter President Daniel Guy invites you all to participate in the VFP 156 contingent in the Ashland parade that starts at 10:15 a.m. next Monday, July 4. Daniel and VP Jim Woods will be sending you information soon on where to assemble. We need lots of folks to carry our large peace dove, our chapter banner and to hand out flyers, so please email Dan and Jim and let them know you'll be there!

Monthly meetings cancelled for July and August

Your officers have decided to cancel our regular first Wednesday monthly chapter meetings for July and August due to the proximity of Independence Day in July and the VFP National Convention in Portland the first week of August. More below on the convention. Our next regular chapter meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 7, in a member's home yet to be decided. Dan and Jim will let you know if any special meetings are scheduled before then.

Come to Portland for the Veteran for Peace National Convention!

Yes, the VFP's National Convention will be held in Portland, OR, Aug. 3 through Aug. 7 on the campus of Portland State University in downtown Portland. Dan Guy, Jim Woods and Allen Hallmark will be there, and we hope you'll join us for all or part of the convention, which will feature many informative workshops on PTSD, health issues, movement planning, etc. On Sunday convention attendees will participate in a "No-Nukes" rally. See the national VFP website at <http://www.vfpnationalconvention.org/> for more information and to register to attend.

Member of the Month and Newsletter Profile: Dennis Clancy

Editor's Note: Dennis Clancy has been one of our stalwart member since we formed our Rogue Valley chapter. He and his wife live on a beautiful herb farm on Thompson Creek Road in the Applegate Valley where they hosted a recent chapter meeting. Below are Dennis' largely unedited answers to your editor's list of questions. I know you'll find the story of his service in Vietnam quite compelling.



Dennis Clancy at home in the Applegate Valley

Editor: Where were you born and raised? Describe your life before the military.

Dennis: Born in Cooperstown, NY. Raised in Virginia and Delaware. I was, in the words of Phil Oches, a typical American Boy.

Ed: When were you inducted? what service? Describe how and why you went into the military.

Dennis: Inducted into the Army in July 1966. I joined to fly helicopters and serve my country.

Ed: How long were you in the military? Did you consider re-enlisting? What was your rank upon discharge?

Dennis: I was in for 3-1/2 years, I passed on a direct commission to 1st lieutenant because it would have extended my enlistment by one year. I was a warrant officer-2 when I was discharged in February 1970.

Ed: Did you serve in a war zone during your military service? What outfit were you with? Describe your experiences. Were you wounded? Have any residual effects? Metals earned?

Dennis: I was in Vietnam from August 1967 to August 1968. I was assigned to the 11th Armored Cav and flew the Huey Charley model gunships (Bell UH-1C helicopter). I was the platoon's Armament Officer, Aircraft Commander, Fire Team Leader and Unit Instructor Pilot.

I was shot down once just after the Tet Offensive of 1968 and shot up several times. I was never wounded by direct enemy action, I was put in for the Purple Heart for a gash in my leg when I tripped over a boot scraper on the way to the bunker during a rocket attack. I received 14 Air Medals and had a Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with a V device, three Air Medals, a Distinguished Flying Cross and a Bronze Star stolen from me by the captain in charge of Operations. (He didn't like me, and as a result of that I refused the Purple Heart).

After serving as a flight instructor at Fort Walters in Texas for a year, I was involuntarily redeployed to Vietnam. I was assigned to a NEIT team (New Equipment Information and Training Team). We were testing classified weapons on the Mike Model gunship and were to write up the pros and cons of the equipment. The equipment was impressive, but the way it was mounted and the procedures utilized were dangerous and unnecessary.

After a few months I discovered that the colonel in charge of the program was changing my reports to conceal these problems. I talked this situation over with the colonel that I worked for and he let me stand down while he investigated if I was reporting accurately. He took my place on the next flight and was killed as I had predicted could happen. I was then forced to take the next mission and I killed an American soldier as a result of another problem with the procedures. At that point I refused to fly, obtained an early out from the Army and went home to begin dealing with PTSD.

Ed: If you went to war, can you describe your experiences when you first returned to the U.S.? What lessons to you feel you've learned?

Dennis: Upon my return to the U.S., I began an intensive program of self-medication, otherwise known as drug and alcohol addiction. I had (and still do have) serious doubts about the integrity and morality of the United States. I joined the VVAW (Vietnam Veterans Against the War) and protested the war at every opportunity. I could not hold a job for 12 years and had no lasting relationships until 1998. I finally was able to secure a flying position with TWA in 1988 and held that job until being furloughed in 2003 as a result of (the terrorist attacks on) 9/11. The reason I ended up in Vietnam, killing hundreds of innocent men women and children who were protecting their homes from an illegal and immoral invasion, was because I had failed to do my homework. I did not research why we were there and what the effect of our actions was. As a result I never take a position, regardless of which side advocates it, without researching the issue as thoroughly as possible.

Ed: After discharge did you go to college or technical school? Pick up any degrees?

Dennis: I used the GI Bill to obtain fixed wing licenses including, commercial, multi-engine, instrument and airline transport ratings. I then went back to school and received a BS in Criminal Justice in 1979.

Ed: What have you done for a living in the years since you were in the military?

Dennis: I went through more than 40 jobs before getting hired by TWA, so it is hard to say what my occupation was, mostly pilot.

Ed: Are you in touch with any of your fellow service members from your time in the military?

Dennis: I did attend several reunions with the 11th Cav in the mid 1990's but have lost touch with them since I moved to Oregon.

Ed: When and where did you first get involved in public peace activities? What caused you to join Veterans for Peace?

Dennis: I was a member of the VVAW and joined VFP to work toward ending the wars that George started.

Ed: Describe your experience as a member of VFP RV Chapter 156.

Dennis: It has been mostly good, I have met new and interesting people. I do have trouble at times with the meetings triggering my PTSD and I

sometimes feel that the topics are ones we covered in the 1970's and wonder if there are really any answers to humans propensity for war. However, I can't stop trying.

Ed: Do you have any ideas or goals that you think the chapter should consider to further the cause of peace or improve our chapter's standing in the community?

Dennis: I would like to see if we can set up a "Big Brother" type program with the returning Iraq and Afghan vets. I think they need help and I think we could provide some for them.

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