

# Winds of Peace



Newsletter for Madison Quakers Projects in Viet Nam

October 2004

Issue #11

Dear Friends,

After a two-year hiatus, we are resuming publication of our newsletter Winds of Peace. To help us create a newsletter with information that is of interest to our readers, we need your feedback. Please let us know what you enjoy in the newsletter, topics you would like to see covered that haven't been written about yet, and so on. MB

## Going Back

by Mike Boehm

This year was a milestone for the Women's Union of Quang Ngai and the Madison Quakers. On March 15, 2004, we celebrated our ten-year anniversary of working together to improve the lives of the poor women of the province through the Loan Funds. The ceremonies included not only speeches by ranking Women's Union authorities, but also speeches by some of the women from mountain villages who had exceptional success with their loans.

It became obvious that these rural women had never spoken in public before. Despite shaking hands and voices, they finished their speeches telling us of the importance of these loan fund projects to their families and the community at large.



Photo by Mike Boehm

From left to right: Mrs. Phuong, Chair of the Women's Union of My Lai; Mrs. Lich, Chair of the Women's Union of Binh Minh village; and Mrs. Phung, Chair of the Women's Union of Pho Khanh village receive awards from Mrs. Tuyet (far right), chair of Quang Ngai Province Women's Union. These awards were given in recognition of their success in facilitating their loan fund programs.



Photo by M. Boehm

Mrs. Tinh Minh Oai, Vice-Chair of the People's Committee of Quang Ngai Province, speaking at the ten-year anniversary ceremony.

The most powerful speech that morning came from Mrs. Tinh Minh Oai, Vice-Chair of Quang Ngai Province. In it she said that the Madison Quakers are the only organization in the province that touches the heart of the people of Vietnam. And, she said, we are the only organization allowed to work with the ethnic people of the mountains of Quang Ngai province. I had been told these things in private meetings in the past, but this was the first time that a politician of her stature made these statements publicly and in the presence of the Vietnamese media.

One of the two issues that any organization working in Vietnam is warned to be aware of, is the sensitive nature of the relations of the Vietnamese people and the ethnic minorities. There are 54 ethnic tribes living in Vietnam. (See Winds of Peace #3 for a map showing where these tribes live within Vietnam.) The major ethnicity is the Kinh, the Vietnamese. The other 53 ethnic tribes are mostly mountainous people. The history between Vietnamese and the ethnic tribes living in Vietnam is similar to that of our country's history and relationship with the Native American people living here. The antagonism that has existed for centuries between them has exploded

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Photo by M. Boehm

These H're children meet a foreigner for the first time.

**Going back continued**



Photo by M. Boehm

Two elderly H're women from Ba Vinh village, Ba Tu district. This village is the most recent village to receive a loan fund.

periodically into violence as the strain between them becomes volatile. This rift was exploited by our CIA during the American War and by uprisings provoked by outside forces ever since. So the Vietnamese government is very cautious about who can visit these people, much less who can actually work with them.

It is an indication of the level of trust that the government of Quang Ngai province has for the Madison Quakers that we are now inundated by requests from the Vietnamese government to bring aid to the ethnic people in Quang Ngai Province

Mrs. Oai's statements at this ten year anniversary celebration were a validation of the tremendous effort put forth by all the parties involved to learn from each other not only to be able to succeed in our projects, but also to create long-lasting relationships built on mutual respect.

These achievements didn't happen in a vacuum.

Most of the credit for these successes goes to Mr. Phan Van Do, the project coordinator in Viet Nam for the Madison Quakers. For all of these years, Mr. Do has translated not only my words, on behalf of the Madison Quakers, but also who I am as a person. And to be able to do this meant that the two of us have had to enter into a relationship that went deeper than a mere working relationship.



Photo by M. Boehm

Phan Van Do, facing the camera, sharing traditional rice wine with H're people.

Through the years we have frustrated each other, angered each other, and even hurt each other...not intentionally, but because of the basic reality of the differences in our cultures. American friends who have known us for years have been telling us that we act like an old married couple. I have taken this as a compliment because, for an honest relationship to develop between Do and I, this kind of intimacy, and the vulnerability that results, was the only possible path. And the results speak for themselves.

We offer this example, the Madison Quakers and our Vietnamese partners, to our two nations as well as to other nations as an alternative to the violence that is escalating around the world. If, instead of raining missiles on those perceived as our enemies, we sat down with them with respect and a willingness to listen and learn from each other and by this means develop meaningful relationships, we would achieve our desire for peace and security. And, in fact, I believe this is the only solution to the terrorism that is tearing our world apart.

Finally, we need to remember that it is never too late. If hope can rise from the ashes of My Lai, it can rise anywhere in the world.



Photo by M. Boehm

Phan Van Do, Madison Quakers Project Coordinator in Vietnam, with his wife Mai Thi Kieu Ngon.

## Winds of Peace

Newsletter for Madison Friends Projects in Viet Nam

**Mike Boehm, Project Coordinator**

**Phan Van Do, Project Coordinator in Viet Nam**

**Terri Smith, Newsletter Design**

"The people of Viet Nam are looking forward to the winds of peace blowing from America."

Please send letters, questions, or written contributions to:

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# Letters

In keeping with this newsletter's purpose to educate and promote discussion, we will print not only letters which support our work, but also letters critical of this work. We request that all letters be signed by the writer.

Dear Mike Boehm

In October I went with the Oak Park Friends to hear your talk at the library. I found your presence and your talk inspiring, for rarely do I encounter someone doing the real work of building peace in a meaningful way, who is doing directly what so many only discuss over dinner or at their book club.

I bought cards so as to make a donation, but then I wrote this poem for you, which I hope you will accept as a gift from a stranger in token of your commitment to peace.

Sincerely, Adrian Ayres Fisher

## Paeon

### 1. The Earthen Dove and the Park

On a hillside in Wisconsin someone built a mound:  
sacred dove of peace, omphalos, nexus,  
settled among trees, it's become a place  
to hear the hovering low call,  
to lay down burdens laid on by war's bloody work,  
to draw strength from earth, stand upright in blue air,  
come away healed, no longer a soldier;  
pain transformed, leached, sent to fly-

And at My Lai, women and men,  
ground grief and rage with work,  
with patience and endurance with quiet talk,  
which, sunk into muscle memory, embedded in brain,  
must come before peace;  
blood-soaked, tear-watered, sweated over, worked.

They carry fertile loam and fix barren soil to make a quiet park  
where banyans absorb and transform memories as they grow,  
into something new, to peace for a thousand years.

And where the hard rhythms of labor,  
where incense and reunions re-consecrate a killing field,  
let peace sink beneath muscle down to the marrow,  
down to the silent energies at the heart of things, that link all  
things;  
let children train to the gentle persuasion  
of tranquil nights and harmless games, shape of an idea new  
expressed  
in growing muscle and bone, embedded in brain-  
the lift of the wing, the low call spring from sorrow and earth and  
work.

### 2. So the Dove Flies, Person to Person

You might see the glint of its feathers in a little girl's smile,  
see the lift of its wings as a building takes shape,  
hear its low call in the talk of a plainspoken man,  
himself sprung from earth  
to catch eddies and flows, updrafts and currents, to take flight-

Look closely, pay attention, release binding preoccupations;  
its wing might brush your cheek,  
might briefly shadow your sight while you sit or walk or eat.  
You might feel the slight breeze, might follow the low notes.

You might fly off for an hour, might fly further aloft  
as you listen to him tell  
how he and others have struggled, understood, and built,  
and later you tell someone else, your daughter, your child  
what you felt as he spoke:

That the rushing, invisible lift through our days  
glints when or where you least expect,  
as the arc of its fluttering flight-  
each individual flight, clumsy at first, person to person-  
as the gentle breeze of its passing  
changes your description of life, as each beat  
of the wings ever so slightly changes the atmosphere of the world;  
that the dove always gives voice, gives mournful voice,  
gives peaceful voice, settled among trees,  
at home among women and men, nagging us to honor its quiet  
call-  
dove built of earth, dove airborne on hope, dove embodied in our  
work.

For Mike Boehm, October, 2003

## Fall 2004 Speaking/Slide Tour

Mike Boehm will be giving a series of slide presentations this fall from November 1 to December 10 in Los Angeles, California; San Diego, California; Fresno, California; Santa Rosa, California; Arcata, California; Ashland, Oregon; Seattle, Washington; Olympia, Washington; Sandpoint, Idaho; Ft. Collins, Colorado; and Boulder, Colorado.

He can be reached from Oct. 26 to Dec. 10 by cell phone at 608-556-3581. To book future presentations, contact Mike at vapp@igc.org or by phone at 608-244-9505.

## More Letters

Dear Mike,

It was great to see you again and to know that you are well and are persevering with the work in Vietnam. Thanks so much for joining us at Betsy's and Rif's and sharing the ten year retrospective of the work of Winds of Peace. It truly is a unique organization because you have been willing to make yourself vulnerable and learn from Mr. Do and the people of Vietnam. It's inspiring to hear that through your collaboration there has been healing on both sides. The bitter and useless refighting of the war as part of the current political campaign makes me feel that the spiritual work you are doing is all the more important, and I want to be part of supporting it. I am very grateful to the Madison Quakers for their continuing dedication to supporting you.

It is very painful to realize that we Americans have now created another war zone full of destruction and heartbreak. I only hope and pray that there will some day be a Winds of Peace in Iraq to bring healing there.

Thanks so much for all you are doing. Please give our best regards to Mr. Do when you see him again. Seth and Kate were happy to hear that you are thriving and send their greetings.

Peace and love.

Gay Harter

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Dear Mike,

Thank you for sending the newsletter. I think the work you are doing is amazing. So, I've sent you the enclosed check. Please place the money in whichever of the revolving funds needs money most right now.

My grandfather, Ethan Allen Doty, passed away two years ago and left me a few thousand dollars. I have been looking for meaningful things to do with the money. I bought a recumbent bike – which I love. I invested some of it in Philly's version of a revolving loan fund: the Delaware Valley Reinvestment Fund. I have been saving the gift that means the most to me for last.

My grandfather was not much of a giver to social causes, nor a terribly progressive guy. He might be confused by why I wouldn't want to keep all of the money he left me. But I think he would appreciate the work you are doing. He would be especially intrigued by the idea of having a gift work many times over through a loan fund. And, being thrifty, he would love how relatively small amounts of money (by U.S. standards) can make such a big difference.

Thank you very much for making it possible for me to honor the memory of my grandfather through your work. The journey of personal healing through making social change that you have undertaken touches me deeply. If there is anything I can do to help you sustain that journey, please let me know.

Take care,

Alex Doty

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Dear Mike,

What a beautiful idea, this My Lai Peace Park Project. My husband Edwin Stephenson, and I are grateful for the opportunity to contribute to it.

When he received your letter yesterday he put it aside for me, knowing my love for the Madison Meeting where I became a Friend in 1952. The Meeting greatly enriched the lives of my parents, Grace and Merritt Hughes.

It was good to have a visit at our Redwood Forest Meeting this

fall from Louise and Jim Lund.

In peace,

Elsbeth Hughes Benton

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Dear Roy M. Boehm,

My name is Katalin Kiss. I was born in Hungary, but I have been living in Australia, Sydney, since 1998. I urgently need informations about Vo Thi Lien, who is (was) my sister. (See WOP issue #9 for story on Vo Thi Lien).

I was looking for her in the last years and I just learned, I will never be able to meet her again, I will never see her. We were born at the same year, month and day. I met her in Hungary, where the Vietnamese government took her on a propaganda journey in the 60s. She visited my family, we spent some days together. Lien's story made an extremely effect on all of us. My parents wanted to adopt her, but the Vietnamese government never gave her away. I could never forgive us not trying it harder. I did meet Lien once more. She was in Hungary, visited me just after I had my second child and I was living in a village as a teacher. She also lived in a village, she was teaching too and had a daughter, the same time, I had mine. We did not have a common language, so we just cried...

I wanted to find her again. She could have been my sister, and we spent our life apart.

Please let me know, if her daughters are still living in My Lai, please send me any informations you have about her. My parents are living in Hungary, they don't believe she has died, neither do I.

I became a journalist in Australia, this was my dream. Lien wanted to be a doctor, she could not.

Thank you for your help,

Katalin Kiss, Sydney

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Dear Friends,

I am moving to California March 23<sup>rd</sup>, and I want to give you my new address out there, because I would like to continue to contribute annually to the Projects in Vietnam.

This is to honor my late husband, John Pixton, who set up the limb making facility in Quang Ngai in 1967 for the American Friends Service Committee.

I want to continue to help in a small way with the Projects in Vietnam, and to get the newsletter from time to time.

In Peace,

Laurama Pixton

Please give my greetings to Joe Elder.

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Mike,

Great to meet you when you were in Amherst. Sorry I missed your presentation. I definitely support your work and thank you for doing what you are doing. To me this project is both symbolic of and an actualization of the healing that needs to take place—of the Vietnamese people, of Viet vets, of the Vietnam generation and of the relationship between the U.S. people and the people of Vietnam.

Keep up the good work. Here is a personal contribution to your important work.

Best, Rob Wilson

Director, Veterans Education Project

# My Lai Primary School Update

The photos below were taken on March 16, 2004. This is the second of three eight-room primary school buildings that the Madison Quakers have funded for My Lai. With the funding and construction of a third eight-room primary school building, the desperate need for classrooms will finally be met. All the children will be able to attend their classes in these new schools. Before this, hundreds of school children were packed into old rice storage warehouses, the only option available to them.



Photo by M. Boehm

The second eight-room primary school for My Lai. Construction was finished in January, 2004, and the dedication ceremony was held on March 16, 2004.



Photo by D. Umrau

Ribbon-cutting ceremony for the dedication of the new school building.



Photo by M. Boehm

Professor Hiroshi Fujimoto, with Phan Van Do translating, gives a congratulatory speech at the school dedication.



Photo by Phan Van Do

Playing volleyball at the My Lai Primary School.

# My Lai Peace Park Update

**2001: Then**

**2004: Now**

Photo by Don Unrau



Do Hoa, left, who was rescued as a boy during the My Lai Massacre by the helicopter crew of Hugh Thompson, Larry Colburn, and Glenn Andreotta, plants a tree with Kate Jellema at the dedication ceremony of the MLPP, March 16, 2001. Note the size of the sapling.



Photo by M. Boehm

The saplings planted three years ago have flourished and some now have a diameter of 8 inches.



Photo by M.

Le Ly Hayslip at the My Lai Peace Park in 2004. Le Ly was one of the first people to begin reconciliation and humanitarian efforts in Vietnam when she created the "East Meets West" organization in the 1980s. Oliver Stone produced a film about her life based on her autobiography When Heaven and Earth Changed Places.



Photo by M. Boehm

Local girls from My Lai come to the Peace Park to play. This tree was planted three years earlier by Hugh Thompson.

# A Tree for Rachel Corrie

In late April 2004, the parents of Rachel Corrie sent a request to peace and justice organizations around the world to, in some way, commemorate the death of their daughter, Rachel.

On March 16, 2004 (anniversary of the My Lai Massacre), we planted a tree in Rachel's honor at the My Lai Peace Park. With us were Professor Hiroshi Fujimoto and his students from Nanzan University, Nagoya, Japan; Kusra and Yukti Mukdawijitra of Thailand; and Vietnamese and American friends.

Rachel Corrie, a 23-year-old student from Olympia, Washington, looked for purpose in her life and found it when she traveled to Palestine in



"In Memory of Rachel Corrie," My Lai Peace Park, 2004. Rachel's tree is on the left.



Photo Courtesy of Corrie Family

January 2003 with the International Solidarity Movement. Their intention was to try to prevent, through non-violence, the destruction of the homes of innocent Palestinians by Israeli bulldozers.

Rachel wrote, "When I am with Palestinian friends I tend to be somewhat less horrified than when I am trying to act in a role of human rights observer, documenter, or direct-action resister. They are a good example of how to be in it for the long haul. I know that the situation gets to them—and may ultimately get them—on all kinds of levels, but I am nevertheless amazed at their strength in being able to defend such a large degree of their humanity—laughter, generosity, family-time—against the incredible horror occurring in their lives and against the constant presence of death...I wish you could meet these people. Maybe, hopefully, someday you will."

On March 16, 2003, Rachel, a non-violent, unarmed peace activist was crushed by a D9 Caterpillar bulldozer while trying to prevent the destruction of the home of a Palestinian pharmacist, his wife and three children. Although Rachel was wearing a fluorescent orange vest with reflective strips and carrying a bullhorn, the Israeli driving the bulldozer claims he never saw her and has been exonerated by the Israeli army.

In one of her last e-mails home Rachel wrote, "This has to stop. I think it is a good idea for us all to drop everything and devote our lives to making this stop. I don't think it's an extremist thing to do anymore.

I still really want to dance around to Pat Benetar and have boyfriends and make comics for my coworkers. But I also want this to stop."

[Based on article from [www.palsolidarity.org/activists/rachelcorrie.](http://www.palsolidarity.org/activists/rachelcorrie.)]

## For More Information about Rachel...

Statement from the parents of Rachel Corrie: <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article1270.shtml>

Four eyewitness accounts of Rachel's murder: <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article1263.shtml>

Amnesty International Condemns Killing of Rachel Corrie: <http://amnestyusa.org/news/2003/israel03172003.html>

Letters from Rachel: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/israel/Story/0,27>; <http://www.guardian.co.uk/israel/Story/0,2763,916885,00.html>

# Veterans read names of Americans /Vietnamese Killed in Vietnam War

by Lawrence H. Geller



John Grant (left), Vietnam '68-'71, and Laurence H. Geller, Korea '57, at the symbolic naming event.

Photo courtesy of L. Geller

Tourists in town over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend to visit historic sites got more than they bargained for. And it wasn't just the hot, hot weather.

They witnessed an historic event as a group of 15 area residents and veterans read the names of not only Americans killed in Vietnam on July 5, 1968, but also the names of 500 Vietnamese civilians killed in that same year. [These 500 names were the innocent civilians killed at the Massacre at My Lai, March 16, 1968. Ed.]

"It's likely the first time in our nations history that such a co-mingling of American and Vietnamese names have been read in public," explained John Grant, a Vietnam veteran and president of Veterans for Peace.

"We consider every human being past and present, a member of the earth's family," continued Grant, 55, wiping perspiration from his brow in the sweltering heat, "and it's with that in mind that these American and Vietnamese names are being read."

Close to 59,000 Americans lost their lives in Vietnam; almost 3,000,000 Vietnamese lost their lives from 1961-75.

Other Vietnam veterans who contributed to the reading of the names, which took over an hour, included Frank Corcoran, 53, and

Bob Hemmel, 54.

"I'm here to commemorate the dead of all wars," said Hemmel. "It's not just Americans who are killed. We Americans tend to be less concerned with the tremendous suffering brought to other lands, be it Vietnam, Afghanistan or Iraq."

Many tourists and other passersby on Market St. had puzzled looks on their faces as they walked by and heard the names Pham Choi, Vo Thi Tu, and others intoned by the veterans. But for those who stopped to listen and grasp what was going on – gave a thumbs up.

After reading 50 names or so, the next reader would share a poem or brief statement before continuing with name after name, "Pham Xi, Bui Thi San..."

It was also clear that the Vietnam conflict was not the only conflict on the minds of the vigil-holders that day.

A sign referring to Iraq: "No more Vietnams, bring the troops home," was held by area resident Larry Petkov, 55, who said he was there in sympathy with all who have died in America's wars on both sides. "We have been misled and lied to before and it's happening again."

"It's all one big lie," declared Vietnam Veteran Frank Corcoran, "from the Gulf of Tonkin to the alleged weapons of mass destruction. We just have to keep reminding the American people of their willful ignorance," he continued, "as the dead from Vietnam, Central America and today, Iraq, all melt into one another. We are here to give dignity to at least some of the individuals from other lands who have perished."

A former officer who resigned her Navy commission in 1968 over the government's Vietnam policy, Sandy Fulton felt it was a travesty "to celebrate our constitution at this time while people's civil rights are being violated."

Area resident Patti Harris, 48, said simply, "I'm here to mourn the deaths of all who died in Vietnam. A war caused by our government and which accomplished absolutely nothing."

After the completion of the name reading, and as the veterans packed up, Grant expressed the feelings of many that hot July 5: "It was a spiritual experience reading the names of those on the other side of the Vietnam wall."



Photo by M. Boehm

My Lai Memorial, Vietnam



Photo by Paul McMahon

Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, Washington, D.C.

# My Lai Brings Lessons in Forgiveness

by Mike Boehm

March 12, 1998

The Progressive Magazine (revised)

Thirty years ago, U.S. soldiers committed one of the most horrific crimes in American military history—the massacre of some 500 Vietnamese civilians at My Lai.

On March 16 I will have the honor of attending the groundbreaking ceremony for the My Lai Peace Park. As a veteran of the American war in Vietnam and as the project director for the Madison Quakers projects in Vietnam I have spent the last few years working with the Women's Union and the People's Committee of Quang Ngai province to establish a revolving loan fund for the poor women of My Lai and to prepare for the groundbreaking ceremony for the peace park.

The My Lai Peace Park, inspired by the Vietnamese-American Peace Park being constructed by the Madison Quakers north of Hanoi, will initially cover 4.5 acres near the existing My Lai War Memorial. It is designed, in the words of our Vietnamese counterparts, as “a place for children to entertain and a place where people can meditate over the past with its suffering and losses and also to hope for a better future.”

This peace park, with its tremendous potential for healing for the people of our two countries, would not have been possible without the amazing generosity and forgiveness of the Vietnamese people.

Last September, I spent most of an airplane flight from Danang to Hanoi speaking to Phan Van Do, the project coordinator for the Madison Quakers, about our previous four days in My Lai. At one point, the subject of the American soldiers who committed the massacre came up in our conversation. I told him the story of Varnado Simpson, which I had recently read in *Four Hours in My Lai* (Viking, 1992) by Michael Bilton and Kevin Sim. By Simpson's own account, he killed at least 25 people that day. For years he has lived with all his doors and windows locked and shuttered. He takes dozens of pills that don't seem to help. He is afraid to go to sleep at night because he has nightmares of the people he killed at My Lai coming back to kill him. He has tried to kill himself three times. \*

Then I told Do about Simpson's son. The 10-year-old boy was playing in the front yard when two teenagers across the street got into an argument. One of them pulled out a gun and started shooting. A bullet hit the young Simpson in the head. “I was in the house,” said Simpson. “And I came out and picked him up. He died in my arms. And when I looked at him, his face was like the same face of the child that I had killed. And I said, ‘This is the punishment for me killing the people that I killed.’”

Do looked at me with shock and sorrow in his face and then turned away from me and looked out the window of the plane in silence. After a while, he turned back and asked quietly, “Was that his only son?” I said, “yes,” and he turned back to the window for the rest of the flight.

I told Do this story about Varnado Simpson and his son because many Vietnamese people, including Do, believe Americans could kill and destroy and then walk away with no psychic, emotional or

spiritual scars. I didn't expect his reaction of sorrow and compassion.

I put myself in Do's place, and I wonder if I would have said, “Good, he deserved it” or “What goes around comes around.” Instead, what I received from Do that day, and what I have experienced again and again from the people of Vietnam is a level of maturity and understanding that is almost incomprehensible. I wonder, can we Americans give ourselves a chance to know these people, whose humanity we rejected and then ignored for so long? If we can, then we, too, might reach a new level of understanding.

[\* In May of 1997, Varnado Simpson ended his life with a shotgun.]



Ten-year-old Vietnamese girls ready for a game of badminton.

Photo by M. Boehm

# How Do You Heal the Wounds of War?

## The Sisters Meeting Sisters Project

by Joyce Ellwanger

I suppose each of us would have to think a bit before trying to answer such a difficult question. Depending on our own experience of war, and what we have heard from the experience of our families, our friends or those whose stories we have come to know from visiting war-torn countries, we would try to create a frame of reference.

For the women of El Salvador, victims of the horrible Rio Sumpul massacre of over 600 people in northern El Salvador at the border with Honduras, during their 12 year civil war which started in 1979, and for the women of Quang Ngai province in Viet Nam, victims, too, of terrible destruction of life and land, the answer is an agonizing one—"we have not healed from the wounds of war."

In 2000 Mike Boehm had the unique experience of sitting along the Rio Sumpul at the site of one of the many massacres which took place there and having women who had survived share the story of what had happened. Through their tears he learned the terrible suffering they still endure a quarter of a century later after seeing family and friends shot and killed trying to escape the Salvadoran military by swimming across the river. The river turned to blood and was clogged with the bodies of their loved one.

He shared with them the suffering of the women of Quang Ngai, also heartbreaking memories of their loved ones lost to them in war. And the tears continued for their sisters, so far away.

One of the women went to the dry river bed and selected a small rock and gave it to Mike to take back to the women in Vietnam. She said that they had not healed from their wounds and neither had their sisters in Viet Nam, but maybe by knowing each others stories, they could begin to heal each other.

How do you heal from the wounds of war? You connect with sisters who know your suffering, you share your stories, cry together and look beyond that suffering to what has been learned and what can be shared. Strong and brave women have moved forward with broken hearts to rebuild families and houses, schools and communities, and some sense of hope for the future. The loss of hope was the most devastating loss of all. And they are struggling to recapture it for themselves and those around them. Out of this struggle, the Sisters Meeting Sisters project was founded.

Their strong vision of coming together to exchange testimonies of the war years and of how they have survived and are building new communities of faith and hope is a vision waiting to be realized. It gives me such encouragement to know that these sisters have waited in hope for several years now, planning for the day they will meet and share and bond more closely. It also gives me pause... why have we, who could make this vision a reality through our support not been there with and for them?

Have you healed from the pain of the Viet Nam war? Have you healed from

"We have assumed the name of peacemakers, but we have been, by and large, unwilling to pay any significant price. And because we want the peace with half a heart and half a life and will, the war, of course, continues, because the waging of war, by its nature, is total—but the waging of peace, by our own cowardice, is partial. So a whole will and a whole heart and a whole national life bent toward war prevail over the mere desire for peace....."

There is no peace because the making of peace is at least as costly as the making of war—at least as exigent, at least as disruptive, at least as liable to bring disgrace and prison and death in its wake."

**Daniel Berrigan**

"Let them march all they want, as long as they pay their taxes."

**Alexander Haig, former Secretary of State for President Richard Nixon.**



Susan Blake (left) receives a check on behalf of the Madison Quakers from Joyce Ellwanger (right).

Joyce is helping to "create a model for healing." While serving a six-month jail sentence for attempts to close down the School of the Americas in Ft. Benning, Georgia, Joyce asked that any contributions that came to her while she was in jail be made out in support of two projects she admired. One of these two projects is the Sisters Meeting Sisters Project.

[For more information on the infamous School of the Americas visit [www.soaw.org](http://www.soaw.org).]

the pain we have inflicted through our support of the wars against the people of El Salvador and Central America? I know I haven't. I have seen too many images of those wars, and I have met too many victims and heard their stories.

How do we heal from the wounds of war? Part of the answer lies in buying into the vision of these brave, suffering women. We can make their coming together possible. We can contribute ourselves, a bit of our time and money, and we can find groups and foundations to contribute as well. In doing so we can help create a model for healing for all of us.

For information on how to help make the Sisters Meeting Sisters project a reality contact Mike Boehm, [vapp@igc.org](mailto:vapp@igc.org), 608-244-9505.

# Holding Up The Sky: Peace Tales For Kids

Sarah Malone, Storyteller

Review by Jackson Tiffany,  
Madison Friends Meeting

Parents and teachers who play this audio CD for children and young people (ages 6 to 16) will find themselves in for a treat. New Mexico storyteller Sarah Malone has created and told, in a charming style, this series of 13 short tales ranging in length from one minute to 10 minutes (total 56 min.), that remind us that achieving peace need not be an impossible task seemingly beyond imagination, but can be, instead, a natural consequence of the wisdom and compassion of ordinary people and the animals, birds, and insects that inhabit our folklore.

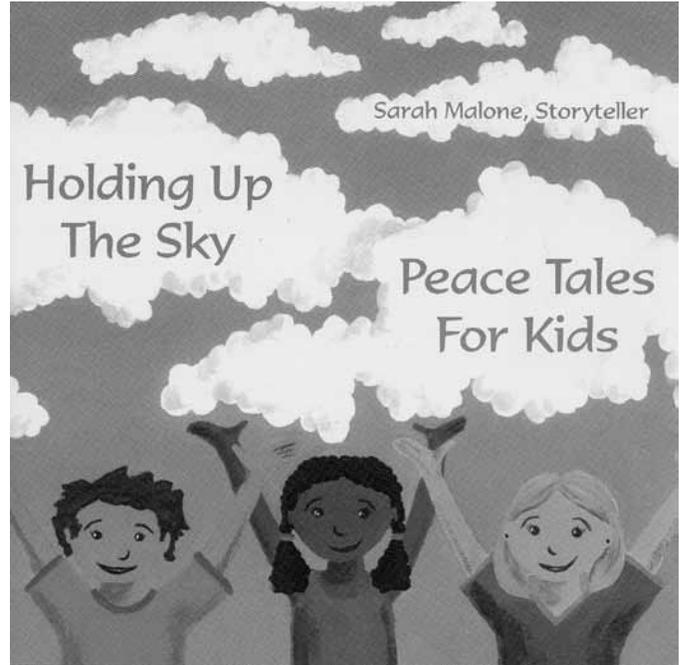
In the Tale of Mussa and Nagib, an act of friendship is chiseled into stone to be remembered down the ages while an insult is written in sand to be forgotten as soon as the next wind blows. This story won the 2004 Story Telling World Resource Award chosen from over 3,000 entries.

The Tale for All Seasons reminds us that each small act for peace is important. We never know when the next step toward peace will be the turning point.

Peace Songs presents “coyote” as a song maker whose lyrics are a howling success in turning a threatened war between the animals and the insects into a songfest. The truth behind this tale has been verified by peacemakers who found that an angry confrontation could be transformed by the peace group starting to sing a hymn.

Sarah Malone tells her tales and sings her songs in the voice of storytellers down the ages with total conviction that all creatures, two legged, four legged and winged share deep wisdom and can communicate with each other when need be. Parents and teachers will find this a rich resource for bringing the magic of peacemaking into the lives of their children.

A curriculum guide is available to help parents and teachers use this resource. Proceeds from the sale of the Audio CD benefit The



Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children and also Peace Talks Radio (<http://www.peacetalksradio.com>), a forum for peacemaking and nonviolent solutions. For further information, see Sarah Malone’s web site: <http://www.peacetales.org>.

[Sarah Malone is a Quaker from nearby Albuquerque, NM. Unable to sleep during the period leading up to the war in Iraq, she conceived of the idea of teaching peace to children through the telling of stories.-Ed]

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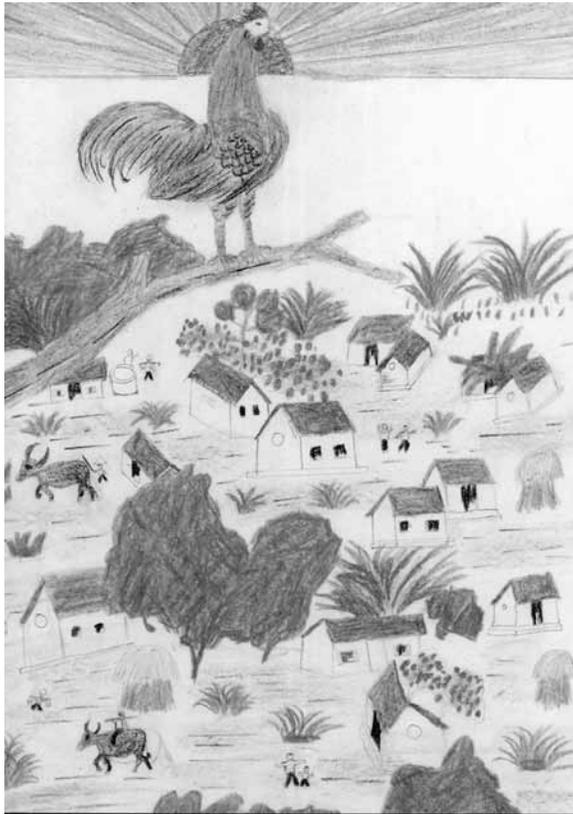
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Please write "My Lai Greeting Cards" in the memo part of your check.

To view all the cards, in color, visit [www.mylaipeacepark.org/greetingcards.htm](http://www.mylaipeacepark.org/greetingcards.htm)

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