

Bridges



Lessons of Vietnam

Volume X. Issue I Spring 2009

Returning Millbrook Grad Knows LOV and War

By Karissa Wojcik

Sean Patrick Keenan knows LOV and war.

He was told by his counselor he would not graduate his senior year as he needed to earn eight more credits in one year, which was impossible! But, Mr. Keenan is not the type of person to accept something like that at face value. Stepping up to the challenge during his last semester, he went to school, then to work, and then to night school. (On reflection, he added it was "a good thing I had Ms. Poling's U.S. History class the last period of the day, or I may not have come back to school after lunch!") The evening before graduation, he finished his last credit. The next day, he walked exuberantly across the stage with fellow members of Millbrook High School's class of 1992.

Mr. Keenan decided staying in Raleigh was not an option, so he enlisted in the Marine Corps. He found his assignment as a loadmaster extremely rewarding. But, he wanted a college degree. After two years at Wake Tech, he transferred to Campbell University and earned a degree in Government. He re-joined the Marines, this time as an officer. He is currently serving as a Huey helicopter pilot

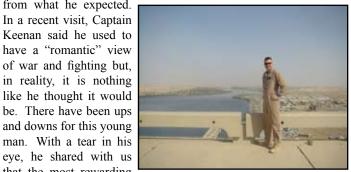
> and holds the rank of "Captain."

> Today, Mr. Keenan says he did not expect to ever become a helicopter pilot. fact, he does not want to be a helicopter pilot when he "grows up"-he wants to be a lawyer. But for the next few years, Captain Keenan will continue serving in the U.S. Marine Corps.

> He has traveled all over the world. He has

from what he expected. In a recent visit, Captain Keenan said he used to have a "romantic" view

like he thought it would be. There have been ups and downs for this young man. With a tear in his eye, he shared with us that the most rewarding experience of military service is seeing signs welcoming Marines



Captain Sean Keenan stands on the Haditha Dam overlooking the Euphrates River.

home. It is a feeling of pride for he knows he has helped to protect some of those Marines fighting on the ground, and helped to bring them home alive.

served two full tours in Iraq and has learned that war is quite different

When asked why he has given so much time as a LOV/RIR guest speaker and pen pal link for the past decade, Captain Keenan said it is an opportunity to give back to Ms. Poling and serve his community. He takes seriously his role of leading young Marines and loves to share stories about his experiences. When asked about advice to teenagers, he answered, "Be an American! This is what ties us all together. If we focus on that, we cannot be defeated."

In the eyes of his audience, Captain Keenan practices what he preaches. In a reflective letter, Irazu Valenzuela commented, "I appreciate people who care for the wellness of the community, and you truly showed me that there are people out there who do care for others." Another student, Aly King, added, "I was encouraged to do bigger and better things, no matter what anyone says. It was so inspirational to hear how Captain Keenan succeeded against all of the odds!"



Capt. Keenan taking off in a UH-1N "Huey" helicopter from a combat outpost in the Al Anbar Province of Iraq.

LOV/RIR Program Featured in National Peace Corps Publication

Ms. Lindy Poling's article, Developing Citizens of the World, was recently published in Global TeachNet, a publication of the National Peace Corps Association in cooperation with the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Ms. Poling's article describes the "Community-in the-Classroom" (CIC) approach she uses with more than sixty community members from all over the country and the world to help her to "team teach" her Lessons of Vietnam/Recent International Relations students each semester. She describes the positive impact of having guest speakers visit her classes, as well as pairing students with pen pal links who have experienced the events they are studying.

Ms. Poling strongly believes that "the CIC methodology not only makes history more exciting, but students are also being challenged to develop the important critical thinking and writing skills they need in order to become well-informed citizens and effective leaders in their communities." As MHS senior Jane Liu commented, "Through this program, I have gained a sense of responsibility to be an active and knowledgeable citizen of the world!"

This informative article can be found pp. 6-7 of the Winter Edition of Global TeachNet:

http://www.rpcv.org/GTNWinter08-09.pdf

Red Star Rising

By Jane Liu

sciences. She is now fast becoming the economic powerhouse of

the world. China's economy has blossomed from a closed communist financial system to the fourth largest on the globe. It has a large world-market oriented marketplace with a burgeoning interest in personal divisions. It is predicted China's economy will surpass both Japan and the United States by 2025. It seems like China is well on track to become the largest and fastest growing economy in the

The first attempt to propel China onto the economic world stage came after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The country was under the rule of Mao Zedong, whose five year plan, "The Great Leap Forward," emphasized replacing China's backward agrarian economy with a more modern and industrialized one. This plan to industrialize China was hastily pursued and was widely recognized as an enormous failure. Instead of boosting China forward, Mao's plan put China back decades. Although steel production went up, the products were generally inferior and worth very



Artwork by Lizz Alfano

little. Crops to be harvested were left to rot in fields because the focus was on steel production. As a result, millions of Chinese starved to death. My mother, who grew up during these difficult times, recalls | way for her to evolve as the next economic giant of the world.

Long ago, China was the leading country in arts and I her hardships saying, "We no longer said 'hello' when we passed each other in the streets. We just asked our friends if they had eaten today."

> The disastrous Great Leap Forward directly led to the Chinese Economic Reform under a new leader by the name of Deng Xiaoping. Under the motto, "Poverty is not socialism. To be rich is glorious," Deng began to open up China's gates to the world. This plan quickly alleviated some of the extreme poverty, turning China's economy into the fourth largest in the world.

China's economy skyrocketed for decades after the implementation of the Chinese Economic Reform. But, in the midst of the current economic crisis it is slowing. Although still growing, it does so at a lower rate than before. Inflation has become a mounting concern, and many speculate not even China will be spared from this worldwide economic crisis. The hope is that a projected growth rate of 8% will be realized. The flexibility and strength of the economy will be tested during these challenging economic times. The future outlook for this blossoming country differs.

Some observers believe her economy will falter; others believe China's momentum will carry on throughout this crisis, paving the

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * LOV/RIR Students Focus on Global Issues

By Mark Zurawel

Recently, LOV/RIR students researched topics relating to "World Hot Spots and Controversial Issues." Students presented their projects, explained the situation, and proposed solutions to solve them. The topics ranged from North Korea, Iran, the Congo, Somali pirates, global warming, world hunger, how America is perceived around the world, and human trafficking

Listening to these "hot spot" topic was a very informative way for students to understand important international issuesissues they might otherwise know little about. Will Gouz taught us that 16,000 children die from starvation around the globe. everyday. While I knew world hunger was an issue, I had no idea

the extent of its deadly reach.

Another issue we leaned about was how America is perceived around the world. I always believed people around the world respected and trusted us as a nation and people. Ashley Honeycutt shared with us a recent poll reporting 70% of people worldwide have a negative view of Americans. But, she reminded us, we must take into consideration many of these people are taught to hate us by their governments. In North Korea, a country cut off



Ashley presents "America's Perception Around the World."

young people are taught Americans are malicious and evil. Many critics see America as being "hypocritical," feeling it is foolish for us to involve ourselves in other countries' business. But I sense the real reason many foreigners dislike us is twofold. Either they fail to see the good we do because their leaders do not want them to see it, or they are jealous of our free-market economy. Many other countries have leaders unwilling to sacrifice their power in exchange for freedom and equality for their own citizens. The more one examines this issue, the more one realizes how skewed the information can be.

Human trafficking, or modern day slavery, is another controversial issue. Danielle Garzon and Gessica Chadic shared that although this problem is more widespread in other parts of the world, such as Asia, over 17,000 people in the United States are victims of human trafficking. More than 800,000 victims of human trafficking are transported across international borders every year. Many are either human slaves or used for forced labor. This is a tough issue to solve, as it is not a priority to many world government leaders.

Global warming is another topic about which we learned. Rheda Denning stated that most of the greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere naturally, such as by volcanoes, release massive amounts of carbon dioxide. She concluded that global warming is inevitable and cannot be stopped, although we still need to take significant precautions to protect the environment and our planet.

There is no doubt that our research paid off. We all left these presentations much better informed about the complexities of major issues that will challenge our generation in the years to come.

from any outside communication, \star 木 一大 *

Reflections on *LOV/RIR*

Editor's Note: As part of Ms. Poling's final exam, students are asked to reflect on the *LOV/RIR* class and how its unique teaching approach has contributed to students' personal learning experiences. This is what several students had to say:

Community in the Classroom is a great way to learn about a different time period by hearing and learning about what people who have lived through these times think. Through the Link Program, I learned that everyone has a different viewpoint, but that each of them may be valid. By comparing some of the things that my link, Dr. Ric Vandett, shared with me to some things that other people heard from their links on the same issues, we realized that there were often four or five different opinions... This class has taught me that I need to open my eyes and listen to all viewpoints relating to any given conflict. Everyone is entitled to an opinion--and everyone deserves to be heard. I will remember that forever. ~ Glen Kalbaugh

This course has affected me personally, because I didn't know much about recent international relations; but now I do. Lifelong lessons? As a result of further studying and sharing my own Iranian culture, I will tell my kids, "There's always math, science, English, and basic history; but I took a course that helped me understand my own culture better." Michael Abbaspour

The Community in the Classroom experience is a breath of fresh air! This approach helped teach me how to interact with outstanding citizens; it also taught me things I would have otherwise never learned. The Link Program definitely helped me become a better writer... I learned a lot about the lessons of Vietnam, but I also feel like a more "tuned in" citizen. Before LOV/RIR, I never watched or read the news. Now, I read the paper in the morning and record the evening news in case I miss it. I feel that being informed is a responsibility and privilege that I will keep with me for the rest of my life. ~ Will Gouz

This class has given me a good sample taste of what college will be like. It has also changed my view (positively) on teaching--plus school as a whole. Some life lessons I can take from this class include how to be a better citizen in my community and my country, and being more aware of the history around me. I would encourage anyone to take a chance on this class. Initially, I didn't pick LOV/RIR. But, I got in here and excelled with flying colors. So go for it--and you'll "LOV" it! ~ Tiffany Carlyle

By Andy Chenlo

As Congo bleeds, Africa trembles. But how long will it be until that shiver spreads to the rest of the world?

Often described as the heart of Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo has never had an easy job dealing with its

governmental problems. When the Congolese state began to collapse in 1996, it spread war around the region like one of the many diseases claiming its people. When the government caved in again in 1998, it drew in armies from six other African nations. Since the beginning of the war, over six million people have died, making it the worst death toll since World War II.

The Kivu Conflict, as it is known, is often referred to as the "silent genocide." The Congolese wars always received less interest than the much exposed Rwanda genocide. For example, there are few movies about Congolese martyrs. And, the conflict has drawn far less political concern from the American government than the Clinton Administration gave the Rwanda affair. But, that now seems to be changing.

The Kivu Conflict involves two opposing sides. On one is the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo or FARDC. As forces of the state, FARDC defends the interests

of the democratic government led by President Joseph Kabila. On the other side is the National Congress for the Defense of the People or CNDP. This rebel group is led by former General of the Armed Forces, Laurent Nkunda. Sympathetic to Congolese Tutsis and the Tutsidominated government of neighboring Rwanda, General Nkunda has been expressing his beliefs with violence.

Wishing to prevent a second Rwanda, top U.N. diplomats have made their way over to Africa's current deathbed. For now,

they have been unsuccessful. Though ceasefires have been on and off during the past few months, the death toll keeps rising by the thousands. But it is not only the numbers that are staggering to the global community, it is the manner in which violence is imposed

on people of all age and gender. In November, some of the 17,000 U.N. peacekeepers sent to the African nation found a roadblock set up by the rebel group which was intended to prevent their entrance into one of the afflicted villages. This roadblock was not made with customary barbed wire and spikes but with the bodies of five innocent Hutu civilians—a symbol of the hell which the Congo has become.

A Catholic aid organization, along with the Congolese government, accused the Uganda-based rebel group known as the Lord's Resistance Army, of massacring 400 civilians during a Christmas Day concert. The group is also accused of burning down another church. Not only do these deaths affect the families of those killed, but "the number of dead bodies risk spreading disease," according to a spokesperson for Caritas International. The war has also created millions of orphans. Unable to care for themselves, these children—as young as eight years old—are being kidnapped to fight as

care for themselves, these children—as young as eight years old--are being kidnapped to fight as soldiers for the rebel army. Those not taken often die in a few days, unable to fend off starvation.

Attempts to stop these atrocities may finally have caught the attention of some. However, even the most powerful leaders are over how to stop Laurent Nkunda and his rebels from continuing their rampage of death, violence, and despair. A ceasefire, for now, gives hope to the young; but death is anxious to pounce.

The news of Congo's bleeding spreads – the world trembles.



Artwork by Zach Smithson

President Obama's New Approach to Foreign Policy

By Ashley Honeycutt

President Barack Obama has a different approach to dealing with international issues than did his predecessors.

- Overall, he believes in a more diplomatic brand of foreign policy, as he has said during his campaign and described in his book, *The Audacity of Hope*: He believes leaders of world nations should be able to meet and talk about issues, even if they are adversaries.
- Thousands of American troops will leave Iraq. President Obama has said he wants to immediately begin phasing troops out of Iraq. But, he warns, there will probably always be at least some kind of American presence there.
- Regarding nuclear weapons, President Obama has will work toward preventing terrorists from getting nuclear weapons. He will



President Barack Obama

strive for a nuclearfree world. This means he will also stop U.S. production of nuclear weapons, try to work with Russia to take both nations' ballistic missiles off hair trigger alert, and try to reduce U.S. and Russian stockpiles of nuclear weapons.

- On Darfur: President Obama wants immediate pressure on the Sudanese Gov't to stop the slaughter or deployment of a large international military force will be needed to stop their crimes against humanity. He also plans to continue supporting Israel against terrorist seeking her destruction, ensuring American-Israeli ties remain strong.
- As for energy, he says he will do everything in his power to help speed up the discovery of a clean energy source.

President Barack Obama does not have an easy task ahead of him when it comes to these challenges. It is difficult for a president to keep *all the promises* made as a presidential candidate. Some promises fall by the way side as a president gains the benefit of U.S. intelligence resources. A recent study by Knight Ridder indicates that President Bush kept about 46% of the promises he made during his 2000 campaign, and President Clinton about 66% of those made in his 1992 campaign. Now that President Obama has taken office, he has many promises to keep. Time will tell whether he is able to do so--or whether his promises are tempered by the realities of today's world.

Point of View: The Gitmo Controversy

By Dan Nobles

While the *War on Terror* has stretched the U.S. to two Southwest Asian nations, a new president has stirred up controversy over a country in a different part of the world--a little island in the Caribbean, Cuba, where a U.S. prison camp is maintained. Cuba's *Guantanamo Bay Detention Camp*, or "Gitmo," has been controversial ever since the camp opened to hold Afghani prisoners of war in 2002. The issue of whether or not the prison should be shut down has sparked numerous debates between Republicans and Democrats over the past six years, but more recently during the 2008 presidential election.

Before the candidates were named, each party's hopefuls made their stance known on Gitmo. Democratic Senators Joseph Biden, Hilary Clinton, and Chris Dodd supported one of two bills which would release prisoners who have not been charged, as well as immediately close the prison. Then-Senator Barack Obama did not show his support for either bill, but still advocated closing the prison and restoring the right of prisoners to challenge their detention. Among the reasons for the candidates calling for Gitmo to be shut down is that suspects are being held indefinitely without charge. These senators called this a "violation of human rights." Senators John McCain and Ron Paul are in favor of closing the prison, but for different reasons. Senator McCain believes Gitmo is "damaging U.S. credibility abroad." And, due to his strict opposition to torture, Senator McCain does not agree with interrogation techniques being used by guards there. However, former Mayor Rudy Giuliani and former Governors Mike Huckabee and Mitt Romney are in support of keeping the prison open due to the national security threat posed by releasing hundreds of terrorist suspects (Moore, USA TODAY).

The Supreme Court ruling on the case of *Boumediene v. Bush* further intensified the debates on Gitmo. The Court ruled 5-4 that prisoners had the right to *habeas corpus*, relief from unlawful detention (*Lectlaw.com*), under the U.S. Constitution. Senator McCain blasted this decision, calling it "one of the worst decisions in the history of this country." He also stated that we shouldn't give those rights to the enemy, because they are not U.S. citizens. Senator Obama praised the decision of the court, calling it "a victory for human rights." (*Rhee, Political Intelligence*).

Making a final decision about the future of the Guantanamo Bay prison remains extremely controversial. It is not unlike a high stakes poker game in which the final outcome will only be determined after it is known who holds the higher hand—the human rights of the individual prisoner or the national security interests of our Nation.

Washington, DC Field Trip '09!

LOV/RIR students will journey to Washington, DC for their 12th annual field trip--April 23rd-25th, 2009.

SHARON A SHARON A SRAE AL SHARON A SR SR RALPA EDDINGS

Scheduled events include:

Thursday, April 23rd: Visit with U.S. Institute of Peace experts; dinner at a Vietnamese Restaurant in Georgetown.

Friday, April 24th: Tour of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and rubbings at The Wall led by Veteran Links; visit to the Holocaust Museum; free time to visit our Capitol's historic sites; candlelight ceremony near the Lincoln Memorial; nightime tour of The Mall.

Saturday, April 25th: Visit to Arlington Cemetery and a tour of the Women's Memorial; Changing of the Guard Ceremony.



MHS *LOV* Teacher Receives Kiwanis Honor

Millbrook High history teacher Lindy Poling was recently presented the *Kiwanis International Distinguished Service/ District Patriotism Award* from the California--Hawaii--Nevada District of the Kiwanis. This past semester, *LOV* student, Alicia Baldelli, was linked with Vietnam Veteran, Mr. Ken Delfino. Mr. Delfino is an officer of Kiwanis International who lives in Colfax, California. He made a beautiful plaque, which was presented to Ms. Poling by Alicia with the following inscription:

"Educator/Historian/American Patriot in recognition and grateful appreciation of your creation of the Millbrook High Lessons of Vietnam class and Link Program. Your innovative



Alicia presents Kiwanis International Award to Ms. Poling.

program has been the key to unlocking and opening the door of memories and experiences that have not been recorded and need to be shared. On behalf of our fellow Vietnam Veterans in our District... we thank and salute you!" Alicia added, "When a teacher puts so much effort into teaching, enriching, and encouraging each and every student, you understand how deserving

WCPSS Social Studies Senior Administrator

she is of an award like this."

Melinda Stephani offered her congratulations to Ms. Poling: "You know how proud I am of your tremendous efforts in working with students to recognize that history is something that affects and impacts them today as well as in the past."

Congratulations, Ms. Poling, we are proud of you!

Bridges Staff

Editor: Karissa Wojcik

Design Editors: Nick Orban and Karissa Wojcik

Staff: Lizz Alfano, Gessica Chadic, Andy Chenlo, Alison Gamble, Christine Gamble, Michelle Goldenberg, Danielle Garzon, Laura Green, Ashley Honeycutt, Aly King, Jane Liu,

Chantelle Martin, Ceci Martinez, Katherine Nevils,

Michael Nguyen, Dan Nobles, Alisa Senna, Zach Smithson,

Zack Stevens, Adam Taylor, Bridgette Williamson Advisor: Ms. Lindy Poling (lgpoling@juno.com)

Advisory Board: Vice Admiral and Mrs. Emmett Tidd,

Lt. Col. Jim Zumwalt, Mrs. Mouzetta Zumwalt-Weathers,

Mr. Bob Gray, General George B. Price, Mr. John Odom,

Mr. James Sarayiotes, Mr. Joe Galloway, Mr. Larry Stogner,

Mr. Rob Wilson, Mrs. Elizabeth Stevenson, Dr. Ric Vandett,

Mr. Robert Nasson

女

太

Websites

http://www.wcpss.net/community_in_the_classroom http://mhs.wcpss.net/academics/poling/index.htm http://www.nationalhistoryclub.org

Pirates Lurk off Somalia Coast

By Chantelle Martin

Piracy is no longer a thing of the past. Pirates operate today, capturing vessels and then demanding ransoms for ship and crew. Pirates have been busy doing this business off the coast of Somalia for nearly two decades now. Ever since the fall of the Siad Barre government in 1991, Somalia has been a lawless nation. Initially taking to the seas to join local fisherman, they quickly

turned to piracy, buying weapons and boats with profits made from ransoming ships. Working for themselves, these pirates along the Somalia coast have turned piracy into a highly-profitable business, hauling in over millions of dollars annually. Acts of piracy have been growing more frequent, with over 100 attacks taking place during 2008 alone.

Pirates have become swifter and more devious over the years. In one case, they pretended to be thirsty fisherman in need of water. Once onboard the Good Samaritan vessel, however, they quickly hijacked it. They use GPS to locate ships, then sending a



Artwork by Bridgette Williamson

mother ship out to sea, thus enabling them to hijack ships while still in deep waters. This has its advantages. There are no safe havens or witnesses and it is much more difficult for a ship to escape. The mother ship has several smaller boats that can close with the targeted vessel and overtake it. The most common types of equipment these pirates use include radios, radar, assault rifles, satellite phones, machine guns, and rocket-propelled grenades. Due to last year's surge in attacks, international attention has now been sparked.

So far the NATO alliance, the U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet, and countries such as Russia and India, have been guarding the coast of Somalia and the Gulf of Aden to deter acts of piracy. If it is believed a ship has been hijacked, the goal is to seize the vessel and hold it for the rightful owners. The Indian Navy was able to capture 23 pirates off the Gulf of Aden in early December. But, piracy in this area continues to flourish.

Although it may appear to be an easy task with such international cooperation, stopping the Somali pirates will be difficult. They are well organized and funded. They enjoy the support of local communities and crooked members of the government. In the end, successful deterrence will turn on the commitment of the international community to effectively ban together.



2008-2009 Bridges Staff