

Join Sam Winstead in another ride for peace

by John Heuer

On April 29, 2012, Sam Winstead led a seven day, 350 mile bicycle Ride for Peace from the NC Capitol in Raleigh to the White House in Washington DC. Sam is an 87 year old retired farmer from Person County, and a WW II Marine combat veteran. He believes, in the words of the Denzel Washington's character in the film "Crimson Tide," that "In the nuclear age, the enemy is war itself."

Prior to launching his 2012 Ride for Peace, Sam received the Torch Bearer Award from the World Harmony Runners. Following the successful finish and Lafayette Park rally in Washington DC, on May 5, Sam received the Beacon of Peace Award from the Eisenhower Chapter of Veterans for Peace, with the following inscription:

"In appreciation for his determination to deliver his message of peace to our representatives in Washington DC, Sam Winstead led a bicycle Ride for Peace 350 miles from Raleigh, NC to the White House, April 29—May 5, 2012. During his 7 day ride, the 87 year old WW II Marine combat veteran braved the elements, fatigue, and the daunting hills of northern Virginia in a demonstration of unstinting courage and devotion which inspires us to raise our own voices in the call to put an end to war."

But Sam Winstead is not a man to rest on his laurels.



RIDE FOR PEACE
SUNDAY, APRIL 28

He has decided to continue riding for peace, until warfare becomes a historic relic in our rear view mirror, or until his Maker calls him home. While some might say that it is hopelessly utopian to imagine an end to war, the same was said about the end of slavery and the enfranchisement of women. Outrages against human rights are typically viewed as immutable, until citizen action successfully demands their redress. West Point graduate Paul Chappell argues this point eloquently in his book "The End of War." In "When the World Outlawed War," noted author/activist David Swanson reminds us that, following the horrors of World War I, the United States actually agreed to outlaw war in the Kellogg-Briand Treaty of 1928, a treaty that remains the law of the land, according to our

Constitution. While Kellogg Briand has been forgotten during the last half century's resurgence of war lust, we would do well to remember that we have already outlawed this scourge.

Sam led 16 riders to Washington DC last year. This year we plan to have at least 100 riders, building toward 1,000 and more in years to come.

We will follow the same route this year as in 2012, enjoying the hospitality of friends in Henderson, Blackstone, The Grey Haven Winery in Gum Spring, Culpepper, Middleburg, Lincoln, Purcellville and Leesburg, on our way back to Lafayette Park and the White House.

In an extraordinary gesture of reconciliation, Rotary International President Sakuji Tanaka invited Sam to Japan after the conclusion of this year's Ride for Peace. Sam fought Japanese soldiers in the Pacific during WW II.

Now Sam Rides for Peace.

We are recruiting bicyclists of all ages to join the 2013 Ride for Peace departing the NC Capitol in Raleigh at 8 a.m. Sunday, April 28, for all or part of the ride to DC. If you can join the ride launch, you could ride to the Raleigh city limits and still make Sunday church services. To support Sam's 2013 Ride for Peace, contact the Eisenhower Chapter of Veterans For Peace, 748 Meadow Branch Road, Pittsboro, NC 27312; heu93@aol.com or call 919.444.3823.

We need riders who can try to keep up with Sam Winstead!

John Heuer, Director of NC Peace Action, is also with the Eisenhower Chapter, Veterans For Peace

Fracking: the devil is in the details

By David Streifford

The devil? What details? Well, read on and learn about the NC Senate's most recent attempt to circumvent legislation that some legislators voted for ONLY because they would have a chance to review a set of regulations before approving permitting for hydraulic fracturing.

Turns out that the NC legislature and its own creation, the Mining and Energy Commission [MEC], think it's both necessary and perfectly fair to force landowners to let frackers drill beneath their lands, lay pipeline across their lands, build roads across their lands, all to extend the horizontal hydraulic fracturing process and maximize extraction of natural gas. ANYTHING for natural gas, even if it's only a tiny fraction of what's available and already produced in Pennsylvania, Texas, Oklahoma, Montana, West Virginia, etc.

Forced pooling is deemed necessary in order to help the oil and gas industry access the most natural gas at the least cost. Isn't that nice of your legislators? isn't it just great that our PUBLIC SERVANTS are doing so much for PROFIT-MAXIMIZING PRIVATE INTERESTS? Did it ever occur to these PUBLIC SERVANTS that their responsibility is to be serious stewards of the environment, to protect our water, our air and ensure we have safe communities? No, I guess not since the Senate just sent forward SB76 that negates whatever minimal protections in Senate Bill 820—the legislation that approved oil and gas drilling subject to approval of a body of regulations. The pending law actually:

1. removes the State Geologist [Kenneth Taylor] from the MEC [why would Senator Rucho want to purge the most knowledgeable person from the body that is writing the regs? Hmm.]

2. effectively requires the Department of Environment and Natural Resources [DENR] to become a marketing agent for oil and gas companies.

3. allows for drilling permits on 3/1/14 even if the regulations have yet to be finalized and approved

Here is the link to a recent story in the N&O: <http://www.newsobserver.com/2013/02/16/2686176/lee-county-records-reveal-who.html#storylink=cpy>

What can you do? Sign this petition: <http://rafiusa.org/issues/landowner-rights-and-fracking/fast-track-bill-76/call-for-action/>

David Streifford is with Preserve Carolina.

To the Editor:

Our geology is different than other states with fracking. Part of the shale formation to be fracked lies within the water table in Chatham County. The "Halliburton Loophole" legally allows for the use of carcinogens/toxic chemicals in fracking fluids if identified as "proprietary/trade secret," and they will eventually reach the water table. It is only a matter of WHEN, not IF, our water gets contaminated.

The Mining and Energy Commission, stacked with individuals with conflicts of interest, is tasked with developing safe guidelines. Livestock in some fracking areas are sick/dying; half are born dead/not producing milk, and their tails are falling off. These livestock reach the food chain. Six percent of the wells leak immediately, 60 percent of the wells leak over time. The EPA indicates: "A final draft report

is to be released for public comment/peer review in 2014." So the final report will come too late and it will not address how often drinking water contamination might occur.

Fracking associated with earthquakes jeopardizes the Shearon Harris nuclear power plant (the nation's largest depository of highly radioactive spent-fuel rods) that sits near a fault; seismic activity could cause a nuclear incident. In other states fracking caused: earthquakes; homeowners' insurance denied/not cover fracking damage; mortgages denied/recalled; local roads destroyed by thousands of fracking trucks; and water shortages, all causing falling housing values. Who would want to relocate from elsewhere to live in or relocate their business in NC if they knew anything about the dangers of fracking?

Charles Ritter, Cary

To the Editor:

Thank you for publishing Tim Keim's piece on Population Growth. It is the first mention I've seen anywhere on the Elephant in Everyone's Room. I recall Joan Baez talking about it some years ago, but since then the landscape is barren when considering the really biggest problem we have, i.e. too many folks on the planet and not one indication that we will somehow attend to it in the future, never mind right now. Keim and you are to be congratulated for taking

up the banner.

Perhaps after we stop to consider reigning in the population growth, we might put some thought into how to qualify prospective parents in an effort to reduce the inevitable "Blind leading the blind" tradition of raising children as we've always done through fear based behavior which backfires with more fearful folks trying to get along in an increasingly crowded place — love, forgiveness, and compassion will save the day, IF we go find the elephant with peanuts in hand.

John A. Shearer, Pittsboro

To the Editor:

Our clouds are not normal anymore.

Preoccupied with the holidays, and before that, the Election, most of us probably did not look up much at the sky during 2012, and may still not be looking up there. So my statement may come as a surprise: someone has been spraying chemicals throughout our skies.

This arresting event seems to occur most days of the week. I was skeptical at first when a friend alerted me. But evidence gained by direct observation has piled up; nearly every day over the Triangle, I can see many fuzzy "contrails" which spread out, rather than disappearing as regular contrails do. I can see big stretches of linear clouds with fuzzy filament-like strands drifting out. Sometimes I can see a patch of partial-spectrum rainbow: I've read that this is sunlight

reflected through water vapor plus chemicals.

You might ask, "What chemicals?" I've been researching the internet with the words 'aerosol spraying' and 'chem trailing'. The chemicals being sprayed clandestinely into our air are metallic nano-particles of aluminum, barium, strontium, thorium oxide and something called 'Welsbach materials'.

How can just one person have any effect speaking up about this? Yet I have to speak out: I want Mother Nature to be left alone. What could be the health effects of this constant spraying? What could be someone's odd logic about why we need to do this? Please look up in the skies and see what you think. I am hoping for truth and clarity to come to every one of us.

Barbara Janeway, landowner, Chatham County

Astronomical names come up short

by Julian Sereno

NGC 6872. It's the biggest thing there is but it probably doesn't ring many bells. Its name doesn't do it justice.

When I say it's the biggest thing there is, I'm not exaggerating. Astronomers recently confirmed NGC 6872 as being the largest known spiral galaxy in the Universe. It spans over 522,000 light years, making it five times bigger than the Milky Way, which has a much better name.

Then there is DA14. That's the name of the asteroid that whizzed past earth last month. Without a particularly catchy name, but with a diameter the size of half a football field, it passed closer to earth than the satellites that were observing it. It, of course, was upstaged by the meteor that streaked across the sky and exploded over Siberia that same day, which didn't even have a name. Meteors, fragments of comets and asteroids, are so numerous that only their showers get names. The ones that explode above ground are still meteors, the ones that hit are meteorites. I prefer calling them shooting stars anyway.

They only get names when they hit the earth, and they are named for where they land. The one last month hit

near Chelyabinsk. If many more land in Russia, keeping their names straight will be akin to trying to do the same in a Dostoyevsky novel.

Asteroids and comets are big enough to get their own names, some better than others. While everyone can remember Halley's Comet, other names lack that panache. Take 99942 Apophis. It is scheduled to come within 20,000 miles of earth on April 13, 2029. How about calling it Apophis Close Shave instead?

The New York Times reports that no fewer than two dozen asteroids have a better than a one in a million chance to strike earth during the next 100 years, and that less than 10 percent of all near-earth objects have been discovered.

One of them may be old 9942 Apophis, which will pass by the earth again in 2036 and may hit when it approaches in 2068, according to the *Hindustan Times*. I hope we don't have to rename it Apophis Bulls Eye.

For those who worry about the earth getting hit and human beings going the way of the dinosaurs, there are efforts afoot to prevent this from happening. Johns Hopkins University's Applied Physics Laboratory is preparing

a decade-long, \$350 million project to send a rocket into the asteroid Didymos (a nice name) as it passes close to Earth. If successful, it would be the first time an asteroid is knocked off course by human intervention. They are aiming for the Didymos, which is Greek for "twin" because it is two asteroids in one: a larger object with a smaller, moonlike rock circling it. It is predicted to pass 6.5 million miles from Earth in 2022.

As far as tracking asteroids is concerned, there is a group dedicated to just that. Former Apollo Astronaut Rusty Schweickart is the chairman emeritus of the B612 Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to protecting Earth from asteroids. B612 comes from the children's book by Antoine de Saint-Exupery; it's the asteroid home cared for by the Little Prince. I find the asteroid's name wanting, although it is probably astronomically correct. And it didn't stop the book from becoming both the most read and most translated book in the French language, and voted the best book of the 20th century in France.

So what to do about getting better names for heavenly bodies? How about letting NASA sell naming rights, just like they do for sports stadiums and football bowl games. I bet they could charge astronomical fees.

Julian Sereno is editor and publisher of Chatham County Line.