



The Golden Rule

A National Project of Veterans For Peace
www.VFPGoldenRuleProject.org
vfpgoldenruleproject@gmail.com
P. O. Box 87, Samoa, California 95564-0087
(206) 992-6364



Special Message from Helen Jaccard

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Dear Golden Rule Friends,

What an amazing trip this has been and continues to be for all involved – certainly for me!

The *Golden Rule* peace boat, rested up from her 12-month voyage around the “Great Loop” of the Midwestern and Eastern United States, is embarking on a [three-month voyage](#) around the Pacific Northwest – Washington, Oregon and British Columbia – from mid-July through mid-October.

This week (July 8-15) we are sanding, painting, and varnishing the 64-year-old gaff-rigged ketch, and installing a new transmission (an unexpected expense of \$3,000). Captain Steve Buck and his experienced crew are gathering in *Golden Rule’s* homeport of Humboldt Bay (Eureka) in far northern California), and preparing themselves to sail north.

During my rare breaks from working on the boat and organizing calls in 16 cities throughout the Northwest, I have been reflecting on my experience as Project Manager of the Golden Rule, and how that has changed my life.

In 2013, after hearing from *Veterans For Peace* activist-extraordinaire Fredy Champagne about the potential of this “small boat with a big mission,” my partner Gerry Condon and I drove to the boatyard in Humboldt Bay and met the Restoration Coordinator, Chuck Dewitt, who had worked on the *Golden Rule* nearly every day for five years, along with many volunteers – veterans, Quakers and boat lovers alike. Chuck told us this boat could become a “weapon of mass education.”

It’s been over nine years since I answered the call in the *Veterans For Peace* newsletter to help put the finishing touches on the historic peace boat, which in 1958 was sailed by Quaker peace activists toward the Marshall Islands, bringing worldwide attention to the dangers of nuclear testing in the atmosphere. Such a wonderful chance to work for peace, I thought!

In February 2015, Gerry and I moved our little RV into Leroy Zerlang’s boatyard on Humboldt Bay, thinking we would be sanding, varnishing and painting, which we did. Since I was a retired computer programmer, I was asked to create an online form for volunteers to crew the boat, and I tested it by filling it out. Much to my surprise, I was selected to be on the first crew of the restored *Golden Rule*, as a spokesperson. Next thing I knew, *Veterans For Peace*, who had adopted the *Golden Rule* as a national project, hired me on a halftime basis to be the Project Manager.

And thus began the incredible *Continuing Voyages of the Golden Rule!* We sailed her up and down the west coast, to Hawai’i and all around the Hawai’ian islands, back to California, all around the Midwestern and Eastern U.S. (even Havana and Toronto). Through gales, equipment failures, funding challenges, and difficult to manage logistics, the project has persevered – and then some. We have reached hundreds of thousands of people with over 500 public events and remarkable publicity in many cities (over 100 last year alone).

“Goldie,” as she is affectionately called, is truly magic. She calls to her what she needs. Skilled people, captains and crews, money, boatyards, and the kindness of strangers... all seem to appear when needed most. All of you have answered her call at some point. In fact, you have been extraordinarily loyal and generous.

Thanks to you, the *Golden Rule* has received the solid financial support she has needed to keep sailing for a nuclear-free world and a peaceful, sustainable future. We are in pretty good shape right now. We actually have enough funds to hire another half-time project manager. You cannot imagine how important that is to me, as this job of coordinating boat repairs, crews, sailing schedules, events, media, newsletter, fundraising, etc. is just too big for one person. I am so grateful that we have a wonderful new Project Co-Manager on board.

Michelle Marsonette is no stranger to the *Golden Rule*. She is the niece of our Hawai’ian captain Kiko Johnston-Kitizawa, and she was on the crew on the very challenging 30-day voyage from Hawai’i back to California. Michelle is as much in love with the Golden Rule Project as am I. She is a talented organizer and she is already making my job much easier. When I finally decide to retire from this role, we will have an experienced coordinator to take over. Yay!

Please wish us a safe and successful voyage this summer, as we head to the Pacific Northwest. Our first protest will be in the Hood Canal just outside the Bangor Trident Nuclear Submarine Base. Just 25-miles west of Seattle, this little-known Navy base is home to eight nuclear-armed submarines, each one with enough nuclear firepower to destroy all life on Earth!

The United States is currently involved in conflicts with several other nuclear-armed powers – Russia, China and North Korea, as well as with the horrible genocide in Gaza carried out by Israel, which is also nuclear-armed. Many experts believe the world is closer to nuclear war than any time since the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 – some say even closer. Peace-loving people must urgently call on our political leaders to step back from war and pursue peace with all nations.

Thank you again for being a much-valued member of the Golden Rule family. You are definitely part of the magic. I really feel that and I am constantly reminded of your presence. We are many and we are doing all that we can. We have many great experiences with *Golden Rule* supporters wherever we go, but this is no pleasure voyage. We know our work is urgent. We must educate everybody we can possibly reach about the imminent and growing danger of nuclear war, and what we can do to avoid it. We must abolish nuclear weapons and war once and for all.

***Sailing for a Nuclear-Free World
and a Peaceful, Sustainable Future!***

Helen Jaccard

Project Co-Manager