

## CIVILIAN DEATHS

# Quilts highlight drone deaths



Alex von Kleydorff / Hearst Connecticut Media

**A panel from one of the quilts at the opening reception for the U.S. Drones Quilt Project.**

Peace group's creation on display at Norwalk Public Library

**By Kaitlyn Krasselt**

NORWALK — At first glance, the patchwork quilt looks like any other, with its carefully sewn squares and bright colors.

Upon closer inspection, the squares are adorned with names — one for the person who sewed them and another remembering a civilian killed by U.S. drone strikes in the Middle East.

An exhibition of the U.S. Drones Quilt Project

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## QUILTS

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in conjunction with Veterans for Peace is on display through Oct. 30 at the Norwalk Public Library. Roughly a dozen people attended Monday's opening reception, which featured peace activist Ed Kinane.

The quilts on display were sewn by people from around the world to commemorate the civilian victims of drone strikes in Somalia, Yemen, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries. Each square contains the name of its creator and the name of one victim to be memorialized. The squares are sewn together to form a quilt panel used by the U.S. Drones Quilt Project to raise awareness about civilian deaths.

Kinane's talk Monday prompted a lively discussion and questions from the audience regarding drone use and why organizations like the United Nations have



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**Norwalk's Bill Collins introduces the speakers during the opening reception for the U.S. Drones Quilt Project, Veterans for Peace on Monday.**

allowed drone strikes to continue, despite being considered a war crime by some.

"Why use drones?" Kinane said. "They're tactically very useful. There's no crew, which means there are no body bags coming back to the U.S. Drones are tireless, no human crew can do that ... and they're obedient. During the Vietnam

era, particularly during the later part, the U.S. couldn't get GIs to do the dirty work and they become some of the best opponents to the war. You don't have that problem with drones."

Kinane, co-founder of the Upstate Drone Action Coalition and a contributor to the progressive website Truthout, spoke extensively about U.S. drone strikes and the

## U.S. drone strikes

### Pakistan 2004 onward

Total strikes: 424  
Civilians killed: 424-966

### Yemen 2002 onward

Confirmed drone strikes: 133-153  
Civilians killed: 65-101

### Somalia 2007 onward

Drone strikes: 31-35  
Civilians killed: 3-10

### Afghanistan 2015 onward

Total strikes: 474-479  
Civilians killed: 75-130  
*Source: The Bureau for Investigative Journalism*

work his organization has done protesting the Air Force drone bases in upstate New York at places like Hancock Airport, which recently started daily flights of Reaper drones. The Reaper drone is an armed,

multi-mission, medium-altitude, long-endurance remotely piloted aircraft primarily used against moving execution targets and as an intelligence collection asset, according to the U.S. Air Force.

The Hancock Airport, near Syracuse, hosts the 174th Attack Wing of the New York Air National Guard, which reportedly operates Reaper drones over Afghanistan. Kinane and members of the Upstate Drone Action Coalition protest several times a month at Hancock, blocking the entrance during the evening shift change. Kinane calls the demonstrations "street heat."

"I don't want the U.S. government, military and various intelligence agencies to have this technology because it's only a matter of time before it comes home to roost," Kinane said.

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