



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

www.vvachapter1.com

OCTOBER 2010



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING Oct. 13, 2010



This is a scene from the motorcycle cavalcade to Washington in August in which steel from the World Trade Center was taken to a fire department in Arlington, Va., that responded to the plane crash into the Pentagon. Chapter 1 President Andy Megrath took part.

Six members attended.

Members approved without dissent the August minutes as printed in the newsletter.

Dave Mathis reported \$27, 577.49 in the chapter's two accounts. The report was approved without dissent.

President Andy Megrath read a thank-you note from Janice, Samatha, "Moose," and David Porter, the family of the late Robert Porter of Bridport, Vt. Porter, a life member of Chapter 1, died recently of cancer. Bub Crosby, a Chapter 1 board member, brought to the chapter's attention the financial need of the family. After consulting with other chapter officers and board members, Andy authorized a payment of \$1,000 to the funeral home toward funeral expenses.

The following 14 names have been approved for addition to the Honor Roll at the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Main Street Park in Rutland on Nov. 11, Veterans Day: David J. Therrien of Shrewsbury; James H. Perry of Fair Haven; Raymond J. Cook of Pittsfield; John A. Hughes and Frederick R. Lester, both of Pittsford; Hayden P. Jones of Poultney; and Thomas H. Allen, Douglas S. Bora, Eugene I. Brown, Raymond M. Courcelle, Nicholas J. Duprey, Arthur J. Griffin Jr., Nicholas J. Lafaso Jr., and Thomas T. Thompson, all of Rutland. (Middle initials are not listed on the Honor Roll.)

Chapter 1 will conduct a small ceremony on Thursday, Nov. 11, at 10 a.m. at the memorial. This will allow time for attendance at American Legion Post 31's traditional Veterans Day ceremony, which begins at 11 a.m.

Andy Megrath said he had received other inquiries about inclusion on the Honor Roll. However, these still need proper documentation showing entry into the military from Rutland County and service in Vietnam. The addition of the 14 names will bring the total of names on the memorial to 313. The initial list of names when the memorial was dedicated in 2000 was about 125.

Andy said that Robert Miles, a city fireman, has agreed to seal the concrete pad at the memorial at no cost

to the chapter. Miles' business installed the stamped concrete walkway that surrounds the central monument.

Reporting on the fund-raising for the Disabled American Veterans van, Andy said the group had raised only \$3,000 toward the \$14,100 local cost. Chapter 1 has donated \$300, and a Chapter 1 member donated another \$1,000. The van is used to take veterans to the Veterans Administration in White River Junction. No further action was taken at the meeting.

In connection with veterans transportation matters, Andy mentioned that the Dodge House van is near the end of its useful life. The Dodge House is Rutland's facility for homeless veterans. Chapter 1 has regularly supported Dodge House and may be asked for support for the van in the future.

Dave Mathis has stepped in as VVA State Council representative for the chapter. We are entitled to three delegates. Andy Megrath can no longer be our delegate as he is now vice president of the State Council. Any member willing to serve as delegate can receive \$30 in expense money for trips to meetings.

Dave reported from the State Council meeting that donations at the Vermont Vietnam Veterans Memorial at the Sharon rest area on Interstate 89 totaled more than \$7,000 this year.

He also noted that VVA State Council Chaplain Pat Boynton of Colchester is offering a suicide awareness and prevention program later this fall in Bennington. The program is geared to the needs of troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. He is willing to present the program in other areas of the state if interest is sufficient. Boynton can be reached at email address: vermontveteran [“at” symbol] myfairpoint.com.

Dave reported that there are 600 VVA members in Vermont's seven chapters. In the POW-MIA committee report, the following numbers of unaccounted-for soldiers were noted: Vietnam war, 1,711; World War II, 79,000; Korean War, 8,022; and Iraq, 2.

Dave noted that a box checkoff for donations to a veterans' fund will appear on this year's Vermont tax return. The money will be made available to veterans groups that apply for grants. A committee will oversee grant distribution of the money, which will be held by the state treasurer.

Andy brought to the group's attention a new social networking site for veterans. It is found at <https://www.vetbook.us/vetbook/>. When I checked the site, a “preview version” was offered. It was clear the site was in development and not fully functioning, although visitors were invited to create an account. The site describes itself as follows: “Vetbook is a unique mixture of social networking (similar to Facebook or MySpace) and collaboratively-edited historical record (like Wikipedia). Vetbook is a place where active duty military, veterans, and ‘legacies’ can connect, share, and remember.”

Andy also reminded people that Applebees restaurant will again serve free meals to veterans and active military on Veterans Day, Nov. 11. The restaurant, which has a location on Woodstock Avenue in Rutland, offers six meal choices for vets. One should bring proof of service of some kind. Membership in a veterans group, like VVA is sufficient.

Dave Mathis mentioned that Home Depot gives a 10 percent discount to veterans. It was suggested that if anyone else is aware of similar discounts for vets, they should contact the chapter so the information can be included in a future newsletter.

Andy reported on his trip to the national VVA Board of Directors meeting in Maryland with John Miner. Andy is vice president of the VVA State Council and in line to succeed Miner in a year and a half. Speakers included John Gingrich, chief of staff to Veterans Administration Secretary Eric Shinseki, and former secretary of state and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell. Andy attended a meeting of the Agent Orange Committee and is evidently now a member.

Andy said John Miner has asked him to attend a meeting in January 2011 in San Francisco of the VVA state council presidents. He will apply for hardship assistance for trip expenses from the national group, as Vermont's State Council treasury is less than \$5,000. He warned that there will probably be some expense to the chapter, however.

The chapter authorized Jack Crowther to pursue the cleaning of the marble sculpture at the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Rutland, which is showing some dark staining. There may or may not be time to have the cleaning done before Veterans Day.

Respectfully submitted, Jack Crowther, Secretary

**THE CHAPTER'S NEXT MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY, NOV. 10, AT 6 P.M. AT
THE CHAPTER OFFICES AT THE VFW, 15 WALES ST., RUTLAND, VT.**