



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

www.vvachapter1.com

APRIL 2011



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING April 12, 2011

Ten members attended, including Doug Bailey, who came up from Connecticut. He had attended our 25th Anniversary in 2005, traveling by motorcycle.

Dick Doyle presided over the election of officers. Nominated were Andy Megrath, president; Dave Mathis, vice president; Jack Crowther, secretary; Ed Wiehe, treasurer. As there were no further nominations, Jack Crowther moved that the nominees be elected. Seconded by Bill Whitney. Motion passed unanimously.

Dave Mathis moves into the vice president's position, replacing Larry Young, while Ed Wiehe replaces Dave as treasurer. The chapter thanks Larry for his service as v.p. for the past several years.

Nominated for the board of directors were Dick Doyle, Bill Whitney, Bub Crosby, Mike Divoll, and Mo Burden. As there were no other nominees, Dave Mathis moved that the slate be elected. Seconded by Ed Wiehe. Motion passed unanimously.

The minutes of the March meeting were approved as printed in the newsletter.

Treasurer Dave Mathis reported a balance of \$23,366.87 in the chapter's two accounts. The report was approved without dissent.

Dave Mathis reported on the State Council meeting April 9 in Essex. The chief news was that the VVA-sponsored service officer program is strapped for funding. Though the service officers are volunteers, money is needed for training and expenses. The national VVA is reportedly cutting funding. State Council President John Miner will be asking the chapters in Vermont for help. The state of Vermont is expected to continue support for the program with a contribution of \$5,000.

Dave reported there are 635 VVA members in Vermont, including 35 new members.

A bank account is being set up for maintaining the flag at the Vermont Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Randolph. The flag is subject to severe wear at that location, so it will now only be flown at certain times, specifically for periods surrounding Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

As mentioned at the last meeting, Andy Megrath, who is vice president of the VVA State Council and in line to become president in 2012, will attend the national VVA convention in Reno, Nev., in August, accompanying John Miner, the State Council president. The chapter voted in March to pay for Andy's expenses.

This year the annual picnic at the Vermont Veterans Home in Bennington will take place on June 25, with a VVA State Council meeting to follow. VVA members are invited to take part by serving the residents of the home and

then having their own meal after the residents have been served. Dave Mathis moved to approve the chapter's assessment of \$80 for the picnic. Seconded by Bill Whitney and approved unanimously.

Andy Megrath, who also serves on the board of the Dodge House in Rutland for homeless vets, reported on some renovation work at the home. The chapter recently donated \$3,800 to the Dodge House to assist in purchasing a van and for the renovations. There are four men living at the Dodge House at present, with plans afoot to house two women veterans.

Anyone interested in buying a print of the "Reflections" art print by Lee Teter can visit www.vietnamreflections.com. The print portrays a surviving vet, dressed in business clothes, leaning against The Wall in Washington. Besides the names of the Vietnam War dead, the wall in the well known painting appears to reflect the images of soldiers that the survivor is thinking about. Regular costs of \$35 to \$50 for the print are reduced for VVA members from now through June 17. Other related items are also on sale. The website does not show the discount, which was described to the chapter in a flyer. Therefore, be sure to call and ask for your discount as a VVA member. The sale of the print is a project of VVA Chapter 172 in Cumberland, Md.

Dick Doyle noted that April 13 would be the 31st anniversary of the chapter getting its charter.

Dick Doyle moved to approve two revisions in the chapter bylaws. Seconded by Doug Bailey. Approved unanimously. The two changes are as follows:

1. A change in Chapter One's address from a post office box to 15 Wales St. in Rutland. We no longer have a post office box.
2. A change in Article XI adding the following: "The president, or vice president in the absence of the president, may authorize expenditures up to a total of \$1,000 between meetings with approval of a majority of officers and board members, that is, five people. A description of the expenditure or expenditures will be presented at the next meeting and entered into the minutes of the meeting."

Previously, the chapter had an emergency fund of \$150 that could be used if approved by the president and one other officer. That fund continues to exist. The addition to the bylaws for spending up to \$1,000 between meetings was made to deal with situations in which larger amounts of money were need between meetings. This situation has arisen on two recent occasions.

Returning to the subject of funding for service officers, Andy noted a cutback in the funds for service officers from national VVA. Two VVA service officers living in New Hampshire serve veterans from Canada, Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts, so they cover a lot of cases. There has also been a service officer connected with the Vermont Veterans Home in Bennington. A couple of other service officer volunteers are apparently no longer active. The state of Vermont employs two service officers in the state Office of Veterans Affairs.

Dave Mathis moved to donate \$1,000 to the service officer program of the State Council. Seconded by Bill Whitney. Passed unanimously. Jack Crowther noted that more could be donated when the funding picture becomes clearer. Andy noted that the donation box at the Vermont Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Sharon is taking in money that goes to the service officer program.

Andy briefly discussed a website being started by the National Center for PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder), which is headquartered at the VA Medical Center in White River Junction. A flyer promoting the project was handed out. The website designer is inviting vets who have been treated for PTSD or are in treatment to speak about the subject on video. If the vet approves of the video, it may be used on the website. If after viewing their video, the vet does not approve of its use, the video will not be used. The videos will be in the form of interviews with a standard set of questions. Andy stressed that the participants are not required to talk about their experiences unless they wish to. For more information, you may call 802-566-0402 or email theptsdproject@gmail.com.

The giant flag that is traveling the country and destined to fly at Ground Zero in New York City on Sept. 11, will be in Bennington to be flown June 27. Rutland will fly it on June 28 from 3 to 6 p.m. On June 29, it will go on to Camp Johnson in Colchester. It will then go on to Rouses Point, N.Y., and Burlington.

Andy again noted that when he sends out newsletters by email, some bounce back, indicating the email address is no longer valid. Thus it's important that members on our email list who change their email addresses let us know of the changes. More than 40 members receive the newsletter by email, saving the chapter significant mailing costs. Please notify us also of changes in regular mail addresses.

Respectfully submitted: Jack Crowther, secretary

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8, AT 6 P.M.
AT THE CHAPTER OFFICES AT THE VFW, 15 WALES ST., RUTLAND, VT.**