



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

www.vvachapter1.com

MAY 2010



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING May 12, 2010

Seven people attended, including prospective member, Kevin Fletcher of Rutland, , who goes by Grandfather White Buck in recognition of his Native American heritage

Members approved the April minutes as printed in the newsletter.

President Andy Megrath reported the chapter membership at 133, of whom 92 are life members, plus two associate members, of whom one, Robin Mainwaring-Healey, was present.

We've received another request for inclusion on the Rutland County Vietnam War Memorial. There are a couple of other pending requests. It was informally agreed to publicize the opportunity to be added to the memorial, with an eye to updating the listing on Veterans Day, Nov. 11.

Andy Megrath is expected to become vice president of the VVA State Council at its meeting June 26. John Miner will most likely be re-elected president for a two-year term. The understanding is that Andy will succeed John in the presidency two years hence. As a result of this understanding, Andy has been getting up to speed on state veterans issues and national VVA issues.

At the time of the April meeting, Andy was in Silver Spring, Md., for a meeting of the national VVA board of directors and state council presidents. He reported that 44 of 47 state council presidents were on hand. He was introduced as president of Chapter 1 and received a standing ovation.

He also touched on various topics covered at the Silver Spring meeting, including the future of VVA as its membership ages. There appears to be no consensus on the best course of action. Proposals offered to broaden membership by opening it to non-Vietnam vets have proved controversial. Current VVA membership nationally stands at 62,092. There are 7,682 associate members.

The annual picnic at the Vermont Veterans Home in Bennington, coinciding with the State Council meeting, will be June 26, beginning at 10 a.m. VVA members from around the state will be on hand to prepare and serve a cookout to the residents.

Mike Divoll moved that the chapter approve \$120.13 in charges to the chapter credit card for Andy's recent trip to Silver Spring. Seconded by Bill Whitney. Approved unanimously.

Mike also moved to approve a charge to the chapter credit card for \$136.36 in expenses for his trip to the Region 1 VVA meeting in Bennington on May 8. Seconded by Bill Whitney. Approved unanimously.

Continuing his increasing schedule of VVA-related travel, Andy was to go to Montpelier Friday to meet with the Governor's Veterans Advisory Council regarding a voluntary contribution line on the state tax form. The distribution of funds collected would be up to a committee. The makeup of the committee is a matter of some dispute. With the adjournment of the Legislature, it appears the bill would have to be introduced anew in 2011. The bill, H.728, began as a proposed scratch-off lottery ticket, with proceeds to benefit veterans. It was then changed to a proposal for a voluntary contribution on the state tax form.

Recognizing the need for Andy's use of the chapter credit card as he fulfills his duties as State Council vice president, Dave Jarvie moved to allow Andy to charge up to \$400 to the card, subject to review by the membership at a subsequent meeting. Members would have the power to reject the charge upon review of the spending. Seconded by Bill Whitney. Approved unanimously.

Andy passed out flyers for a Town Hall Meeting Open Panel Discussion on Agent Orange. It will take place Saturday, June 19, from 1 to 3 p.m. in Room 11 of the State House. The meeting was prompted by a measure in Congress to provide assistance to Vietnam to deal with the effects of war on the population. Pointedly, the VVA State Council wants to continue to press for attending to the needs of our own veterans suffering the effects Agent Orange, particularly the effects on children and grandchildren of Vietnam veterans. Guest speakers will address the issue. Sens. Patrick Leahy and Bernie Sanders and Rep. Peer Welch have been invited. Andy described Leahy as an advocate of the aid to Vietnam.

In relation to the Agent Orange issue, Andy suggested the chapter purchase 150 Agent Orange Remembrance pins, one for each chapter member. The pins are being sold as a fund-raiser by the Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America, referred to as AVVA.

Jack Crowther moved to appropriate \$310 for 150 pins and the cost of shipping to provide each member a pin. Seconded by Bill Whitney. Approved unanimously.

Andy proposed the chapter buy a brick at the memorial of the Vermont Veterans home, which honors veterans of various wars. Bill Whitney moved to appropriate \$100 for the brick, which will be inscribed with the name of Chapter 1. Seconded by Dave Jarvie. Approved unanimously.

Andy has received a laptop from the Dodge House for use on his veterans work, both for VVA and the Dodge House, for which he serves as a board member. He said a local computer shop will update the memory and provide wireless capability for \$150.

Jack Crowther moved to appropriate \$150 for updating the computer. Seconded by Mike Divoll. Approved unanimously.

At the April meeting Jack had proposed setting aside some money with the city of Rutland for ongoing maintenance of the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Main Street Park when Chapter 1 ceases to exist. Andy has responded that he opposes any such transfer of money to the city at the present time.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Crowther, Secretary

**THE NEXT CHAPTER MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, AT 6 P.M.
AT THE CHAPTER OFFICES AT THE VFW, 15 WALES ST., RUTLAND, VT.**