

VFP meeting, April 26, 2018, Brunswick

Meeting opened by Doug at 7:00 PM

Present: Regis Tremblay, Dan Ellis, Peter Woodruff, Peter Morgan, Caleb Roebuck, Rita Clement, Bud Buzzell, Clarence Smith, John Morris, Bob Lezer, Richard Clement, Doug Rawlings, Don Kimball

Inspiration: three songs: Penny Evans by Steve Goodman, Let Them In by John Gorka, and The Ballad of LD1781 by John Morris

Unsung Hero Award given to Bud Buzzell (on his birthday). Cookies provided by Richard and Rita.

March minutes were approved as written.

Treasury balance as of 4/26/2018 was \$4,054.37

Membership as of 4/26/2018 is 102 (71 paid up)

Doug distributed copies of the spring issue of Peace in Our Times, also copies of the VFP Statement on Gun Violence VFP postcards and business cards were distributed by Dan.

Richard and Doug will attend the Annual Meeting of Mainshare at the Lithgow Library in Augusta on May 30 from 2-4PM. Mainshare is inaugurating a new fundraising project called 'The Spring Share', an on-line day of giving to encourage contributions from member organizations and the general public.

The chapter will contribute \$750 to Regis for his upcoming return trip to Russia during which he will film interviews with Russian citizens, including some from Crimea. He will also meet with a Russian veteran's organization in an attempt to foster a connection with VFP. We wish him a successful and productive journey.

The chapter will contribute \$200 to the Betsy Ann Ross House of Hope, a home for female veterans and their children who are homeless or in need of help.

Discussion was held on the possibility of holding a retreat sometime this year. Possible locations are Belgrade, Ferry Beach, and Peaks Island. Peggy will investigate Peaks Island with a preferred date of early October.

Memorial Day activities: Dan will submit our application for the parade in Brunswick. There is no theme for this year's parade. As in the past, we would probably march together with Peaceworks.

Doug and Peter Morgan plan to attend the activities in DC. See Doug for more information if you plan to go. Doug asked for Letters to the Wall from anyone who has a connection with the

Vietnam War. The deadline for submission is May 15. Some of the letters will be included in a new edition of the book 'Letters to the Wall'.

Discussion was held about 'Wear Orange' day, June 1st, a day of protest against gun violence. Members are encouraged to wear orange to our May meeting. Peter Morgan will take a group photo and post it on the 'Moms Demand Action' website.

Richard reported on his conversation with Senator Shenna Bellows at the Pittston town office. He provided her with information on VFP, especially on the topic of gun violence and offered our support and assistance in crafting gun legislation on the state level. She made no commitment to doing so but given her previous position as head of the Maine Civil Liberties Union she could prove to be a valuable ally in the movement for gun reform.

Doug reported on the My Lai exhibit which will come to Portland on Sept. 7th. Local sponsors are asked to donate between \$750-\$1000 for the exhibit. Details are included in the April meeting agenda notes.

Member activities in April:

Richard spoke at the Global Day Against Military Spending in Portland on April 17th.

Robin and Peter Morgan attended the Day of Opposition to Gun Violence at the capitol in Augusta on April 2nd. They received \$45 in donations to VFP at the event.

Richard wrote a letter to the editor (Central Maine Newspapers) on the subject of guns in schools. Not a good idea.

Doug spoke at KVCC and Deering High School on military recruiting. He also attended a talk at UMF by Ann Jones, noted antiwar activist.

Several members took part in a protest against LD1781, a bill to provide Bath Iron Works with a \$45 million tax break. The protest, unfortunately, was not successful.

Don provided materials for writing letters to Reality Winner, a whistleblower who is currently in custody for allegedly releasing classified government data

Meeting adjourned at 9PM.

Next meeting on May 31st at UMA in Augusta.