

MINUTES FOR VFP TOM STURTEVANT CHAPTER
HOLOCAUST AND HUMAN RIGHTS CENTER, AUGUSTA

FEBRUARY 22, 2018

Meeting called to order at 7:00 by President Doug Rawlings

Members present: Rita Clement, Peggy Akers, John Morris, Clarence Smith, Dan Ellis, Richard Clement, Doug Rawlings, Suzanne Hedrick, Peter Morgan, Robin Spencer. Non-member Caleb Roebuck

A discussion was held on the topic of gun violence. The general sentiment was that the chapter should endorse any reasonable method of gun regulation that would help to improve public safety.

Robin Spencer was named the chapter "Unsung Hero" for the month of February in recognition of her many years of service. She received two \$10 Dunkin Donuts gift certificates, one for her and one for a homeless person of her choice.

The January secretary's report was accepted as written.

Treasurer's report: balance as of 2/22/2018 was \$5,559.98

Membership report: 100 total, 86 paid-up.

Discussion was held on posting to the listserv. It is currently limited to anyone who is on the listserv at the present time. Doug will formulate a comprehensive policy statement to be reviewed at the March meeting.

The "Take a Knee in Prayer" event on Feb. 3rd at the Portland Jetport was attended by several chapter members.

Doug reported that the "Open Letter to the Vietnamese People" from VFP on the 50th anniversary of the My Lai massacre would be on the listserv for members to sign. The letter will be delivered on March 16, which was the date of the massacre.

Members are encouraged to contact their state legislators and write letters to their local newspapers in opposition to LD 1781, a bill that would provide Bath Iron Works a \$60 million tax credit over the next twenty years (\$3 million per year). Information about the bill can be found on the listserv. Bruce Gagnon has begun a hunger strike to express his opposition to the bill and has requested others to join with him in solidarity.

Doug reported that he has sent letters from chapter members to Ahed Tamimi, a sixteen year old Palestinian girl who has been arrested and imprisoned by the Israeli government for defying violence by the Israeli Defense Force in the occupied West Bank.

It was agreed to provide Don Kimball with \$200 for protest activities at Creech Air Force Base, which is the center for US drone attacks on mid east countries. Doug will ask Don to provide more details about his request.

Dan reported that he has purchased a new sound system (Barringer Europort) for \$800. It is powerful, versatile, and heavy (just as he is-at least the first two) and should last for many years (just as he will)

Doug reported receipt of a \$50 check from the "Network for Good" organization. Because we are!

Doug gave each attendee a copy of "Addicted to War". They should be given, in turn, to each individual's town or school library. The books' format should be especially attractive to younger (high school) readers.

The "Hearts for Human Rights" fundraiser for the Maine Holocaust Center has been rescheduled for Feb. 27 at the Freeport Hilton Garden. We will be represented by Doug, Peggy, Richard, John, Bob Lezer, Peter Morgan, and Suzanne and her husband Charlie.

Discussion was held on the design of the chapter postcard. Dan will finalize the design featuring the VFP logo and statement of purpose.

Peter Morgan has secured a table for VFP at the "Gun Violence Prevention" event in Augusta on April 2nd. More details to follow.

Richard will speak and Peggy will provide a VFP banner for the War Tax Resistance event in Portland on April 17th.

Doug reported that Roger Leisner requests a speaker from VFP at the Common Ground Fair. Application deadline is April 6th. Let Doug know if interested.

Richard reported that Maineshare will hold a workshop in Brunswick on March 8th. See Maineshare website for details.

Doug reported that peace activist Rev. John Dear will host a workshop on nonviolence at St. Joseph's College in Standish on April 6th. Doug and John expressed interest.

Peggy was contacted by the Portland Media Center re public service announcements on community television. She will get more info and report at March meeting.

Doug passed out copies of "Tactic Star", a guide to developing nonviolent methods of action for various causes. This guide could be used to provide support for upcoming student led actions against gun violence (March 14th and April 20th). Watch the listserv for more details.

Doug passed out a list (not necessarily complete) of Chapter events and requested members to assume responsibility for one (or more) and to contact him at rawlings@maine.edu to discuss details. PICK ONE SOON,THEY'RE GOING FAST!

Meeting adjourned at 9pm.

Next meeting on March 29th in Portland.