

Meeting opened by President Doug Rawlings at 7PM

Attendance: Clarence Smith, Dave Crowley, Richard Clement, John Morris, Seth Berner, Bill Higgins, Don Kimball, Martha Morrison, Bill Laidley, Louise Somlyo, David Larsen, Peter Morgan, Peggy Akers, Caleb Roebuck, Dan Ellis, Doug Rawlings, Robin Spencer, Rita Clement

Daily inspiration was two songs led by Peggy and John

The monthly Unsung Hero Award was given to Peter Morgan

Minutes of Feb. meeting were accepted

Treasury balance as of 3/29 was \$4,039.51

Membership as of 3/29 was 100 (84 paid-up)

Banner against gun violence was displayed. It was carried by VFP in the Portland march and was received enthusiastically. Cost was \$130.

VFP covered the cost (\$500) of a radio ad (WGAN) by Bruce Gagnon opposing LD1781 (BIW tax exemption bill). Unfortunately it did not prevent passage of the bill

Peter Morgan asked for help for tabling at the April 2 Gun Violence Prevention Education and Advocacy Day in Augusta. Richard and Robin offered to participate.

Doug reported on the My Lai Project Presentation in Portland in September. Peggy and Doug will help to coordinate the interactive display.

Richard and Doug will assist State Senator Shenna Bellows in writing a bill on gun violence for the Maine legislature. VFP will support this bill

Don Kimball thanked the chapter for our \$200 contribution for his participation in an anti-drone action at Creech AFB in Nevada.

Discussion was held concerning the VFP logo on Don's business card. Members present felt that it was not appropriate and Don agreed not to use it in the future. He may, however, continue to use the cards that he currently has.

Richard reported that the annual meeting of Maine Share will be held at the Lithgow Library in Augusta on May 30th. We will discuss our participation further at our April meeting.

Peter Morgan will work with Caleb Roebuck on possibly combining the VFP table at the Common Ground Fair with Maine Conservation Voters. Our application for a table and a speaker at the Fair has been submitted.

Doug introduced a motion to support a statement by the Maine chapter of Physicians For Social Responsibility to prevent nuclear war. It calls on the US to reverse current policy on nuclear weapons and to lead a global effort to eliminate them completely. The motion was passed unanimously.

Doug introduced a proposal for rules for posting messages to the Maine VFP listserv. These rules are not specific to our listserv but rather an accepted set of rules for listservs in general. It was moved, seconded and passed that one additional requirement be added; that there be no political advocacy in any postings by individuals. The complete set of rules is contained in the March meeting agenda.

VFP will again participate in the Brunswick Peace Fair (August 4th). Dan will pick up all informational materials from Richard.

Doug encouraged everyone to write and to solicit letters from anyone with a personal connection to the Vietnam War to be included in the "Letters to the Wall" project for Memorial Day in Washington.

Doug reported that Eric Herter is currently in Vietnam working on a documentary featuring interviews with women who were Vietcong members during the war. He also mentioned a letter that was received from the granddaughter of Robert McNamara that will be sent to the museum in Vietnam commemorating the My Lai massacre.

Martha circulated copies of two emails she received from Army recruiters outlining the financial and educational benefits of enlisting in the Army. We all hope she will avail herself of this wonderful opportunity and we are confident that she will be a great soldier. So Martha, in advance, thank you for your service.

Martha also made us aware of another piece of military propaganda called "Point 5" which honors the .5% of Americans who have served. Any veteran, and maybe even anyone at all, who would like to have a patch commemorating this .5% should contact Martha.

Peter Morgan reported that he did the following:

- 1) Attended a meeting of USM Husky Veterans
- 2) Attended a meeting of USM Veterans Services (Student Veterans of America) after which he distributed VFP cards and newsletters and invited them to our meeting
- 3) Attended a Vietnam War Commemoration event in Lewiston during which he spoke several veterans and gave a VFP card to one attendee.

Thank you Peter!

Bill Higgins brought up the possibility of having VFP members help in serving meals at Preble Street in Portland. Anyone doing this must be cleared first.

The last Lenten Vigil at BIW will be March 31 from 11:30 to 12:30 pm. Everyone is invited.

Caleb Roebuck thanked VFP for cooperating with Maine Conservation Voters.

Meeting adjourned at 9pm. Next meeting in Brunswick on April 26.

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