

**MINUTES FOR JULY 28TH MEETING
TOM STURTEVANT CHAPTER
AUGUSTA, MAINE**

PRESENT: Richard Clement, Rita Clement, Michael King, Vicki Saint Amand, Robin Spencer, John Morris, Dan Ellis, Doug Rawlings, Peter Woodruff, Regis Tremblay, Clarence Smith, and Peter Morgan

> Smitty sent along regards from Bud, who was unable to make the meeting for health reasons. Gerry Kamke was also laid up because of his recent operation, but he sent his regards and a comment that he is working on love songs now, not war songs. Nichole is having difficulty freeing herself up for Thursday nights.

> Doug read the poem "Erebus" by Doug Anderson (which appears in the latest VFP Quarterly newsletter) as our opening inspirational piece. Anderson was a medic in Vietnam. His collection of poems THE MOON REFLECTING FIRE is one of the best poetry collections available to veterans.

> The Secretary's Report was accepted as written.

> The Treasurer's Report was also accepted as written -- we have a balance of \$7,435.38.

> Standing Committees:

1). MaineShare -- Sarah is putting out videos highlighting various member organizations' work to put on the MaineShare website. Richard reminds us that we have always been good fundraisers for them, and we have to continue our support. How? Bike and hike -- now a "virtual" experience. Bowling -- last year's bowling event went well. A Tim Blanchette Recognition event (see Peggy Akers). In any event we have to do something. Ideally, we should have something in the mix by Labor Day.

2). Membership -- we currently have 132 members on the books, with 82 currently paid up in their dues. Dan distributed more business cards.

3). Education/Outreach/Media -- Regis reported that his latest documentary is close to being finished except for his planned trip to Russia in October. Regis is even hopeful that he might have a chance to interview Putin. And he will go to Crimea as part of the film. He hopes to have the film completed by the end of this year. He wants to have the premier release at the Waterville Railroad Square Theater. He does need to raise more money. Rita moved that we provide another \$1,000 to help out, Smitty seconded. Unanimously accepted.

Doug reported that Ginny from War Tax Resisters, Lisa Savage, Jerry Kamke, and himself will be meeting on August 18th to begin discussion of plans to revitalize our counter-recruitment work in schools around the state.

Doug reported that there has been no new communications with the USM Elders group about their white paper. He and Fred did discuss a September or October social gathering of our two groups.

John reported that most of the planning for the October Peace Walk has been completed. Dan reported that the itinerary is up on our VFP website. Doug and John reported that the state

acupuncturists are interested in helping us out. John reminded us that our chapter has pledged monetary support for the van.

Doug handed out copies of the latest PEACE IN OUR TIMES issue. More copies are available if people want to use them as they advocate for VFP causes.

> ONGOING AND UPDATED EVENTS

1). MOFGA FAIR (September 23, 24, and 25) -- Richard reminded us of how important this event is for us and others. Last year over 60,000 people attended the fair, many of whom passed by our tables. We need to have a strong presence there -- ideally three or four of us on each day. Members who agree to staff the tables will be provided passes by VFP. Richard will set up the table Friday morning and be there all day Friday. We talked about having Rob Shetterly's postcards on display this year, and we agreed to do that. Richard will contact Rob. We discussed themes to emphasize this year-- The Peace Walk, The Full Disclosure Project (with the book LETTERS TO THE WALL available), Pie Charts on war expenditures, the Elders Statement on Peace, Statements on VFP's stance on the Pulse massacre, Islamophobia, Black Lives Matter, etc. Richard reminded us that we are not just against war -- "Peace at Home and Abroad" is a basic VFP theme that we should reinforce. Please sign up for times that you are available to help out -- it's fun!

2). National Convention -- Doug attended this year's convention in San Francisco. He just returned. He will give a full report at the next meeting. It was one of the best conventions ever.

3). Brunswick Peace Fair (August 6th) -- John, Dan, and Doug staffed this year's table. Richard pass the button machine on to John, which proved to be a big hit with all.

4). Dan suggested that we recognize long-time supporter of VFP, long-time peace activist, and all-around good guy Herschel Sternlieb. Every month for the past thirty years, Herschel has contributed \$100 to VFP. So how do we honor him? We decided that at our next meeting in Brunswick (end of September) that a small delegation of us go to his house in Brunswick with a letter written by Dan, with a copy of the LETTERS TO THE WALL book, and perhaps a poster from Rob Shetterly on Palestine. Other suggestions are welcome.

5). Richard reported that between meetings the VFP board decided to provide Dan with a \$1,000 stipend to upgrade his computing facilities. His current computer is aging. He shared with us his ideas for upgrading and will report back to us what he has purchased at the last meeting. Doug reminded us that this not the \$1,000 we have pledged to give Dan annually for his services as our webmaster.

> VFP IN ACTION

1). Hallowell Parade -- six members of Maine VFP were there along with members from Women In Black. Richard reported that it was a good event.

2). Zumwalt Twelve -- John reported on the arraignment hearing where all activists pleaded "not guilty," deciding to take their case to a trial in hopes of continuing publicity about our cause to abolish war and bring peace to the world.

3). Veterans Community Conference -- Doug reported on attending part of the veterans' gathering in Augusta at the Civic Center. He was there to support the free veterans acupuncture clinic that he attends each week. There was a special session on alternative PTSD therapies that he testified at.

4). Doug urged people to buy a copy of LETTERS TO THE WALL that is now available in print format and e-book format. You can get it by going to vietnamfulldisclosure.org

and scrolling down to the image of the book cover. We are selling it at cost (\$8.67 for print and \$2.99 for e-book). It includes 150 of the 300 letters we delivered to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial over the past two Memorial Days. It is chock full of moving letters from veterans, war resisters, families of veterans, etc.

The meeting closed at 9:00pm.

NEXT MEETING IN PORTLAND
AT THE USM WISHCAMPER BUILDING AT 7:00PM
AUGUST 25th

Doug Rawlings
Veterans For Peace

Art is not a mirror held up to reality but a hammer with which to shape it. -- Bertolt Brecht

I refuse to live in a country like this, and I'm not leaving. -- Michael Moore

American politics is the entertainment wing of the military industrial complex -- Frank Zappa

Common sense: the insight of mediocrity. -- Theodore Roethke