



# Vietnam Veterans Of America

## Chapter One

[www.vietnamvetschapter1.org](http://www.vietnamvetschapter1.org)

NOVEMBER 2021



### MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING NOV. 10, 2021

**BIG NEWS:** At the VVA's annual convention Nov. 2-7 in Greensboro, N.C., the delegates approved the following resolution: "Vietnam Veterans of America, its Officers and Board members [are] prohibited from changing the organization's name and/or creating any new veterans organization to replace our current one; thus making us a 'last person standing organization.'" Michael Keating, editor of *The Veteran*, VVA's magazine reported the result to Jack Crowther, Chapter 1 secretary, by telephone. Jack called Keating wondering about the results of the convention, which, as of this writing, had not been posted on the [vva.org](http://vva.org) website. The other big news from the convention was that Jack McManus unseated John Rowan as VVA president. McManus was nominated from the floor of the convention. Rowan favored continuing VVA under a new name, opening membership to younger veterans from after the Vietnam era. Sentiment of the membership has seemed to favor ending VVA rather than changing it to keep it going.



Chapter 1 member Mike Klopchin of Clarendon sent us this photo with the caption, "Ammo dump blowing up at Dong Ha base. Loudest noise I ever heard. This was a harassment round that the VC got lucky with!"

At Chapter 1's sixth Zoom meeting, attendees included Andy Megrath, president; Tim Lonergan, vice president; Richard Reed, treasurer; Jack Crowther, secretary; Bill Ellwood, director; and Michael Murphy from Virginia.

A nominal meeting of the Board of Directors was held; no business was transacted.

The minutes of the September meeting were approved as printed in the newsletter.

Treasurer Richard Reed reported the chapter has \$66,597.20 in all its accounts. He noted that a lot had changed financially of late. "The bottom line is between September and October we have started getting money again," he said. "The break-open ticket sales have really gone through the roof." The tickets are sold by Tomasi's bar in Fair Haven and have been the main source of the chapter's income. The bar closed during the pandemic, interrupting that income source, but it reopened around June. In the fiscal year that ended in February, ticket income was about \$20,000, but already this fiscal year we've taken in more than \$29,000. From that latter figure is deducted about \$8,000 in the cost of the tickets.

The report was approved unanimously.

President Andy Megrath expressed his appreciation for extra Chapter 1 duties undertaken by director Bill Ellwood, web page maintenance; vice president Tim Lonergan, mailing of newsletters; Jack Crowther, emailing

of newsletters; and Richard Reed, work on chapter finances, as Andy copes with a family health issue.

Andy noted that he would be serving as host at Applebee's Grill and Bar the next day during their Veterans Day free meal for veterans.

Andy noted the Rutland Fire Department "has been taking good care of the flag" at the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial, lowering it to half-staff when necessary.

Bill Ellwood reported that on the website he had updated the list of the Board of Directors and posted the latest newsletters. He noted that the web site still lists our meeting site as the VFW, and asked that it be updated to reflect our current practice of meeting by Zoom. Jack Crowther will supply some wording. Bill asked and was given permission to add a link on the website to the Rutland Historical Society, which is hosting the chapter's digital archive of photos and documents. Andy noted that there are a number of links on the website to other sites, but as a rule he declines the requests, not being sure of their legitimacy or appropriateness. Members expressed support.



**A recently installed marker at the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Rutland commemorates the volunteer efforts of Wendy Hill of the Rutland Garden Club, who helped tend the flowers and plantings at the memorial for many years.**

Bill Ellwood noted that after several invitations to the membership he finally was sent a photo (see above) for our digital archiving project. The invitation is still good. Members are invited to send photos, information on their experiences, and/or updates on their current situations to [rutlandvvaarchives@gmail.com](mailto:rutlandvvaarchives@gmail.com).

A discussion followed about future meetings and whether to continue using the Zoom format versus in-person meetings or a combination of the two. The consensus seemed to be to continue meeting by Zoom, unless there was a reason to hold an in-person session, in which case there could still be a Zoom option.

Tim Lonergan made an appeal for financial support for Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports, which provides recreational opportunities for Vermonters with disabilities, including veterans (with and without disabilities). Like other organizations, Vermont Adaptive has been unable to conduct its usual fundraising over the last two years, due to the pandemic. Tim requested support from Chapter 1 in the amount of \$2,000, an increase from last year's \$1,000. "We're really in dire need," he said. He noted that in the current year Vermont Adaptive served 163 veterans, including 58 from southern Vermont. Activities included rock climbing, cycling on rail trails, mountain biking, and a new program, equine therapy, to name a few. A coordinator of programs who is based in the Sugarbush area has bought property in the Rutland area and will be spending time here regularly. That should help local outreach. Tim's request was treated as a motion for the chapter to donate \$2,000. It was seconded and passed unanimously.

In other business, Jack Crowther referred to a letter from VFW Post 648 indicating the post is "in the process of selling our building." Since Chapter 1 rents space in the building, we could be affected. The letter said the VFW post "will remain at 15 Wales St. (location of the building) for the foreseeable future," noting the sale is an attempt "to stabilize the Post's economic viability for years to come."

Andy said he would contact the VFW commander, Hugh Roberts, to find out the effect on Chapter 1's rental. Richard Reed said our rent was paid up but he has never seen a lease. "A paper lease would be a real handy thing if you're going to be dealing with a building that's going to be sold," he said.

Further effort will be made to insure that the late Bill Higgins, a life member of Chapter 1 who died May 24, 2020, is listed among deceased members in the "Taps" column of The Veteran, the regular magazine of Vietnam Veterans of America.

Richard Reed noted that the VVA State Council will meet Dec. 18 at the Chapter 1 offices at the VFW, 15 Wales St., at 11 a.m. Chapter 1 will endeavor to offer a Zoom option for the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jack Crowther, secretary

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE BY ZOOM WEDNESDAY, JAN. 12, AT 5 P.M.**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83453683725?pwd=U2dac2wweEt2anJiZWZjWmlpOEpzUT09>

Meeting ID: 834 5368 3725

Passcode: 095273