



Vietnam Veterans Of America Chapter One

www.vietnamvetschapter1.org
APRIL 2018



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING

April 11, 2018

SPECIAL NOTE: To reduce the costs of returned mail and to insure accurate delivery of the newsletter, members who have a change of email or regular mail address should notify the chapter through the website listed above. A "Contact Us" button is prominently displayed at the top of the home page. The new address will be relayed to President Andy Megrath.

A nominal meeting of the Board of Directors took place. Directors present included President Andy Megrath, Treasurer Richard Reed, Secretary Jack Crowther, and Director Jim Ficken. No business was conducted.

The Annual Meeting of Chapter 1 began with President Andy Megrath turning the chair over to Jack Crowther, chair of the nominating committee. Andy informed us that Director Joanne Reynolds had resigned. In an email, Joanne expressed her regret in being unable to serve due to the lingering effects of Lyme disease, which makes evening driving difficult and risky.

"I so appreciate all my brothers, and thank you all," Joanne concluded. Chapter 1 is thankful for Joanne's service and hopes that a good recovery will allow her to take part in chapter affairs somewhere down the road.

Jack Crowther noted that the existing slate of officers, with the exception of Joanne Reynolds, had been put forward for re-election. With one vacancy on the board, we turned to Jon Pintello, who was present at the meeting. Jon is one of the chapter's very early members and served as treasurer for a number of years. Andy Megrath nominated Jon to be included in the slate of officers. No other names were offered. Jack then proposed the following officers and directors to be elected: president, Andy Megrath; vice president, Dave Mathis; treasurer, Richard Reed; secretary, Jack Crowther; and directors, Dick Doyle, Jim Ficken, George Henry, Jon Pintello, and Bill Whitney. Richard Reed seconded the motion. Motion carried without opposition.

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

Treasurer Richard Reed reported \$53,700 in our combined bank accounts. The report was accepted unanimously.

We returned to the topic of "rip tickets," which occupied much of the last meeting. As readers may recall, the tickets, sold at Tomasi's bar in Fair Haven, has been by far the main source of Chapter 1 income for many years and has enabled the chapter to support a number of charitable organizations and causes. However, as explained by two investigators for the state Department of Liquor Control, our accounting practices for the ticket sales have not met state requirements. As a result, we suspended the sale of tickets until we could bring the accounting up to standard.

In further discussion, we agreed that the bar should be allowed to, at its discretion, stop sales of tickets from a particular box of tickets when the major winners have been chosen. This makes the game more attractive but increases the accounting chores. Ultimately we decided on the following:

1. Chapter 1 will buy associate memberships for any bartender at Tomasi's selling rip tickets. This fulfills the requirement that a Chapter 1 member be in charge of the sales. Sean and Danielle Tomasi, owners of the bar, are currently members.
2. Any unused tickets from a given box will be returned to Chapter 1 for storage for approximately three years.
3. Invoices for the boxes of tickets purchased, the record of payouts, and the unsold tickets saved at our offices will constitute the records necessary for us to be in compliance. According to Andy, Danielle Tomasi is already doing the necessary bookkeeping. When the last winning ticket is sold and the bartender "closes the box," that is, stops selling tickets from that particular box, the remaining unsold tickets and the cash register tape showing all the tickets sold and the payouts for the winning tickets will be given to Chapter 1 for storage and safekeeping. We learned that a the rip tickets have their own cash register.

4. Our treasurer, Richard Reed, will in the future write the checks for purchase of the boxes of rip tickets, supplied by Bingo Supply in Bondville.

5. Chapter 1 is ultimately responsible to the state Tax Department to insure the accounting is done properly.

Jack Crowther moved to have Chapter 1 purchase memberships for any Tomasi's bartenders selling rip tickets. Seconded by Jim Ficken. Passed unanimously.

Andy Megrath reported on communication with Chapter 1 member Tim Lonergan, who made a pitch at the March meeting for a Chapter 1 contribution to Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports. The group, with whom Tim volunteers, provides year-round recreational activities to people with disabilities. At the March meeting, we expressed concern that any contribution be earmarked specifically for veterans. We further inquired about the portion of a donation that would go for administrative costs, as opposed to direct services to veterans.

In response, Tim responded to Andy. "All of the money that we give to Adaptive (Ski and) Sports, as long as its earmarked for veterans, that's the only place that it goes," Andy reported. Tim has been named as a go-between for the charity and Chapter 1.

Jack Crowther moved that the chapter earmark \$500 to \$1,000, which can be released to Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports, on approval of a specific use for veterans by the president of Chapter 1 and one other officer. Seconded by Richard Reed. Passed unanimously.

Andy Megrath reported 141 regular members, 124 of them being life members. There are five associate members.

Andy circulated a copy of a proclamation signed by Gov. Phil Scott proclaiming March 29 of this year as Vietnam War Veterans Day. Andy will have framed an official copy of the proclamation, with a gold seal. The proclamation noted that nearly 23,000 Vermonters served in Vietnam and 100 were killed in action. The proclamation notes the state's responsibility "to help our Vietnam veterans and their families and provide them with the support they need to maintain a sustainable state of well-being." The proclamation also notes the state's obligation to consider and be grateful for the service of veterans of other wars and for the men and women currently serving in the military.

Andy read a note from Fred Wallis, a life member living in Belgium. Fred sent a \$100 contribution and complimented the chapter on its new website.

The next State Council meeting will be June 23 at the Vermont Veterans Home in Bennington. This will be the annual cookout, at which VVA members from around the state help prepare the food for the residents. Those wishing to take part should plan to be at the Veterans Home at 10:30 a.m. There may be carpooling opportunities. Check with an officer or member from your area.

Andy announced that the acting director of the VA Medical Center in White River Junction, Matthew Mulcahey, will be conducting "town meetings" on May 7 at 1 p.m. at VFW Post 782 at 176 South Winooski Ave. in Burlington; on May 8 at 5 p.m. at the Lebanon, N.H., American Legion Post 22, which is at 189 Mechanic St.; and on June 4 at 10 a.m. in Brattleboro at VFW Post 1034, 40 Black Mountain Rd. Andy has attended two of these, which he said are an effort to gather input from veterans on the services the VA provides. "And believe me, he got an earful," Andy noted of the sessions he attended.

Andy said the acting director makes a presentation and then has a question and answer session with the veterans who show up.



The VVA 40th Anniversary challenge coin measures 1 3/4 inches across. Members of Chapter 1 are entitled to receive a coin free upon request, with additional coins costing

Andy displayed a VVA challenge coin, commemorating the founding of VVA in 1978. (Chapter 1 was chartered in 1980 as the first chapter in the nation.) The chapter purchased 50 of the coins, anticipating a demand from chapter members. After brief discussion, we decided to give the coins for free to all chapter members who request one. Simply notify Andy Megrath at vthogman@comcast.net or by mail at VVA Chapter 1, 15 Wales St., Rutland, VT 05701. Be sure to give your mailing address. If you'd like more than one coin, send \$5 per additional coin.

The coins will be sent out first-come, first-served as long as they last. If we go through the entire 50 coins, we'll try to order more, though availability is uncertain.

Richard Reed won the \$50 drawing among those who attended.

Andy Megrath offered those present marble chips from the new and recently installed marble carving from the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial. We had intended them to be available on Veterans Day at the dedication of the new sculpture, but forgot to have them on hand. We now have a bucket of chips available. Contact us through the website or in person if you'd like a chip.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Crowther, secretary,

**THE CHAPTER WILL HOLD ITS NEXT MEETING WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13,
AT 6 P.M. AT THE CHAPTER OFFICES AT THE VFW, 15 WALES ST., RUTLAND.
A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL PRECEDE THE REGULAR MEETING.**