



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

www.vietnamvetschapter1.org

JUNE 2024



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING JUNE 12, 2024

At Chapter 1's June meeting, held on the Zoom app and in person at our office at the VFW, attendees included Bill Ellwood, president; Andy Megrath, vice president; Richard Reed, treasurer; Jack Crowther, secretary; and Directors Tim Lonergan, Michael Murphy, Carl Baldwin, and Larry Gold. Also present were members Shawn Bryan, new member Perry Melvin, Tom Rousseau, Al Wilkinson, and Sandy Hayward, and associate members Joan Ellwood and Penny Baldwin.

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

The minutes of the April meeting were approved as written.

Treasurer Richard Reed's report was unanimously approved.

Preceding the regular meeting, we had a gathering of those interested in committees, which Bill Ellwood appoints. Bill thanked members for efforts already made and under way on various fronts. Looking forward, committees include: Housing and Outreach, chaired by Jack Crowther; Tech and Social Media, chaired by Larry Gold with Jack as a member; Membership, chaired by Dick Doyle with Mike Murphy as a member; Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America (AVVA), to include all AVVA members; and Liaison, a committee to foster ties with other local groups we can collaborate with. As part of the liaison mission, Al Wilkinson and Tom Rousseau, both Air Force veterans, will be making contact with the local Civil Air Patrol group to explore working together. The Rev. Pete Hults, chaplain of Chapter 1, has been visiting shut-in veterans.



Chapter 1 Vice President Andy Megrath congratulates Rory Landrie, winner of Chapter 1's \$2,000 scholarship for a graduate

In terms of membership, Mike Murphy reported 133 members, as of the end of April. Mike has been tracking down members whose addresses on our roster are invalid. Thomas Truex and Bill Whiteman are new members. Sadly, David Cain, David Gilman, and Robert Fontaine are deceased. Mike is still hoping to find the location or status of James Lay (last known address Michigan), John Leonti (last known address North Canton, Ohio), Arthur Massey (Klamath Falls, Ore.), William Picknell, (Candia, N.H.), and Robert Slabey (South Bend, Ind.). If any of you know anything about these five, please notify Mike through the chapter email address, vietnamvetschapter1@gmail.com.

Bill read a thank-you note from a veteran the chapter assisted with a dental bill, and from the Rutland Historical Society, to whom we donated \$2,000 for a book scanner and some vacuuming equipment.

We approved an \$80 donation for food for a picnic for the residents of the Vermont Veterans Home in Bennington on June 22. Vietnam vets from around the state will prepare a cookout for the veterans



Peg Gibbud (above right) receives well wishes at a gathering at Tomasi's in Fair Haven on June 9 in tribute to her husband, Jon Pintello. A longtime treasurer of Chapter 1 and participant in many activities, Jon died April 30 of a blood cancer attributed to Agent Orange exposure. He is shown in 1997 as part of a color guard at the Rutland fairgrounds.

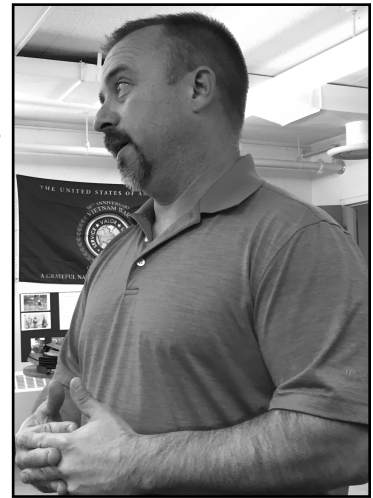
and then hold their regular VVA State Council meeting. Anyone wanting to take part should let Perry Melvin know by June 15. His email is usmcdocvt@yahoo.com.

Three VVA chapters in Vermont — Brattleboro, Williston, and Brattleboro — have disbanded. Chapter 1 is happy to have any of their members join Chapter 1. A Chapter Transfer Form to fill out can be found at the national VVA website under the Info for Members page. Click on the “Membership, Information, Guides and Forms” listing. Chapters still operating,

besides ours, include St. Albans, Bennington and Chester.

Andy Megrath described the Honor Flight he took part in recently, including overnight stays in Plattsburgh, the flight to Washington, D.C., visiting the military memorials in the Capitol, and meals. It was a great time and is recommended to all vets. Application for Honor Flights out of Albany or Plattsburgh can be found at their websites, leatherstockinghonorflightny.org (Albany) or northcountryhonorflight.org (Plattsburgh).

Chapter 1 member Sandy Hayward and Chris Chapman appeared on behalf of the RISE Rutland/Hanamaki Student Exchange, which sponsors visits to Japan and Rutland by Rutland High School and Rutland Middle School students. It was formerly the Rutland/Ishidoriya Student Exchange and has a 30-year history of across-the-globe exchanges. Six students will be traveling to Japan later in June for eight days. In turn, Hanamaki students will visit Rutland in the fall. Chris Chapman, a veteran himself and chaperone for the trip, said a major donor to the program had been lost, leaving a fundraising gap. He requested a contribution, noting that the students have been raising money to reach the \$25,000 goal to travel to Japan and then host the Japanese students in the fall. After some discussion, Larry Gold moved to donate \$4,000 to complement the \$18,200 already raised. Seconded by Tim Lonergan. Passed unanimously. When they return, the students will make a presentation to the chapter on their trip.



Chris Chapman, appears at the Chapter 1 meeting June 12 on behalf of the RISE Rutland/Hanamaki Student Exchange, to which the chapter made a \$4,000 donation.

The chapter approved making a \$100 donation to the Wallingford Rescue Squad in memory of Donald Shedd, a World War II Marine vet who died recently at 101. He was the father of Bradford Shedd, a Chapter 1 member. Chapter 1 extends its condolences.

The \$2,000 Chapter 1 Stafford Technical Center Scholarship for this year has been awarded to Rory Landrie of the Health Careers program. Rory is the granddaughter of Carl Nickerson, a veteran. Having already received licenses as a licensed nursing assistant, phlebotomist and medical assistant, she plans to continue her education in the field of radiology. Her instructor at Stafford, Courtney



Andy Megrath and Chris Morgan in Andy's Mustang convertible (above) and Dave and Carol Currier in a BMW convertible represented Chapter 1 in Rutland's annual Loyalty Day Parade May 5. Tops were up due to rain.



Dumas, described Rory as “one of the most dedicated and hard-working individuals” and said that trait extended beyond the classroom. “Rory has also managed a job when she was not studying or attending classes,” her teacher said.

There was discussion about a meeting for Vietnam vets at Rutland's VA Community Based Outreach Clinic (CBOC) with a mental health counselor. Although four showed up for what was to be an initial meeting recently, it had not been scheduled. We can update you once this gets off the ground.

It was reported that four men and two women are currently living at the Dodge House for homeless veterans in Rutland. Chapter 1 has in the past had close ties to the facility, but not since its recent closing and change of leadership.

Any vet who did not receive a high school diploma is now entitled to one, assuming his or her high school is still in existence. Contact the Office of Veterans Affairs in Montpelier if interested.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Crowther, Secretary

**THE NEXT CHAPTER 1 MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY, AUG. 14, AT 4:30 P.M.
BY ZOOM AND IN PERSON AT THE CHAPTER 1 OFFICE AT THE VFW, 15 WALES ST.,
RUTLAND.**

HERE'S THE LINK:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89158674450?pwd=HKxxanzaqLnuApog7cQrdXwgl0JBbi.1>

Meeting ID: 891 5867 4450

Passcode: 103742