Veterans for Peace Chapter # 27
Minutes of the Meeting: Sunday,13 June 2004
VAMC Minneapolis

John Varone, President called the meeting to order at 1810 hours. Shiloh read the Statement of Purpose.

Members Present: John Varone, Todd Erickson, Tom Chisholm, Art Marty, Patrick Smith, Kim Doss Smith, Harold and Louise Nielsen, Joe Schaefer, Lonnie Peterson, Chante Wolfe, Bob Heberle, Joe Downey, Barry Riesch, Shiloh Fetzek Hank and Barbara Brummer.

Special Guest: *Ms. Rebecca Thoman, Director of Citizens for a Safer Minnesota* addressed the group regarding the the Federal Weapons Assault Weapons Ban. Passed in 1994 it will expire, Sunset in September. We must call our legislators across the State urging them to continue the ban. Assault weapons are defined by a pistol grip, a large magazine and a forward grip. There are currently 19 models banned, all spray bullets rapidly from the hip or shoulder. Vulcan Armaments in Inver Grove Hgts, is the largest manufacturer of assault weapons in the US. Candidate Bush said he would continue the ban but House Majority Leader, Tom Delay of Texas opposes the ban. Call every legislator in Minnesota urging them to support the ban. Citizens for a Safer Minnesota led the opposition to Concealed Weapons and continues efforts to reverse that legislation. For further information go to: www.endgunviolence.com/

May Minutes: Not available. The secretary was absent in May due to violent weather.

Treasurer's Report: Wayne Wittman unavailable. All accounts have been transferred to Quick Books. The President expressed concerned regarding the budget for 2005. My Nielsen benignly expressed his faith in this NPO and like Scarlet O'Hara felt we could wait until tomorrow to worry about the possible deficit. The President was less than sanguine.

Presidents Remarks: Join him in the July 4th parade in Chanhassen, the most conservative village in Carver county. Wear your uniforms and carry the VFP banner. After fourteen years of effort, President Varone saved the Indian Mound in Chanhassen. A bronze marker has been placed on the mound memorializing those original Americans perhaps of the Pre Cambrian era. Theresa Daly will oppose John Kline, the retired Marine officer who represents 2nd Cong. district in the House. Larium, or mefloquin, an anti malarial in the chemical family of chloroquin is the drug of choice for personnel in the Middle East but has serious side effects. Cpl. Chisholm will investigate.
John has Support the Troops signs. He will sell 5 for $35. They will be offered at the NVFP Convention as well as locally. As the casualties increase, it is more important than even to display those signs. Get yours now! Make a statement!
We need a calendar of at lest six months projection listing forthcoming events such

as canoe venues so that all members can anticipate planned events and make arrangements to take part in the activities. Example; did you know that the new canoe, the 2005 canoe will be displayed and raffle tickets sold at the Stone Arch Festival in Mpls. the weekend of 18-20 June or that we will be selling tickets at the Gay Pride Event the last weekend in June? Unless you receive a phone call asking for your help you will not know and your plans will have been made long before.

Committee Reports:

Iraq Water Project: Barry reported that restoration of water systems has a resumed with money raised in the US and work done by the Iraqis.

Speakers Bureau: Much action at many locations by a variety of speakers with enthusiastic receptions. Interested? Call Chante of the VFP office.

Newsletter: The next issue is set for July. Have an article? Call Pat Downey, or sent it to him by e-mail. Can we sell adds to raise money for the Newsletter? Currently and previously it is our greatest expense but vital to communication. A writing workshop should be initiated not only for our publication but for submitting articles to the local newspapers and letters to the editors in response to articles we support or oppose.

NVFP: Annual convention in Boston, 22-25 July. Go to the web site, *veteanforpeace.org* for details. Great guest speakers. Take notice of the *VFP Bus that will drive across the US.* If you want to join a caravan, rent a van, share expenses, share a room at Emerson college, call the VFP office now!!

Membership: Said to be reaching 500. Where are you? Where are the Iraq veterans? We need help, we also need membership dues. A fund raising letter twill be sent out soon. How do we generate more active participation by all the members? Do you want to meet the members, help out in various activities or just pay the dues?

Fundraising and Canoe: Merchandize at the canoe events generally sells well. The committee does a great job buying and selling. Recent canoe events on Grand Ave and St. Anthony Village netted $2500. A record and my indicate growing interest in VFP and opposition to this bloody detour in the dessert. Additional canoe venues soon on the Stone Bridge in Mpls. with the new 2005 canoe.
We prefer to buy only American made, union merchandize. It is not possible to be certain where and by whom items are made despite the label.
The Canoe will be raffled on Friday 18 June at the Day by Day Cafe on West 7th St. in St. Paul as usual.
Donors iin any amount are sought to match an anonymous donor of $1000. Wayne Wittman is the contact person.
Video Report: No special action. Videos do not sell in large number.
They will be available at the NVFP convention as well all other items.

Grants: Kim and Chante are working hard on Grants.

Old Business: Reminder the *Chanhassen Parade on July 4th.* We must be visible, more visible all the time. An election is forthcoming and our Declaration for Peace must be projected!! Call John Varone.
Branierd Parade. We can participate this year---

Annual Retreat near Hager City, WI off US 63 across from Red Wing at Professor Paul Schaeffer's farm. This is your chance to participate, meet members of VFP and other Peace advocates, discuss the issues, respond to speakers, have some fun camping, listen to music, sing and eat a bit under the blue sky or starry night. There will be activities for children, camp sites for your tents and roasted pig. The program is in on the web site: *twincitiesvfp27.org Look for PEACE, Politics and Propaganda.*
The cost? Twenty five dollars-$25- or what you can afford. Consider the expenses required to produce the event, porta potties, pay transportation for speakers, musicians fee, The Buffalo Gals and other expenses. Sign in, get your tag or hand stamp. Volunteers are needed to park cars, sign in attendees, help with food, tents, etc. See you there.

New Business: A motion by Bob Heberle that VFP endorse Nuclear Weapons Day of Action on 16 JUly was seconded and passed. It is an antinuclear action.

John Varone read excerpts from a US classified paper on prisoner interrogation and use of torture. Direct breeches of Geneva Convention were readily appaent.

A summary statement of the chapter will be included in an Issue of the Newsletter annually, written by the President.

Adjournment at 1045 hours.

I would no more teach children military training than teach them arson, robbery or assassination. Eugene Victor Debs 1855-1926