

V.P. Todd Erickson opened the meeting at 1815 hours. Bob Heberle read the Statement of Purpose.
Members Present: Todd Erickson, Tom Chisholm, Vern Hall, Doug Drews, Art Marty, Joe Johnson, Wayne Wittman, Bob Heberle, Pat Downey, Chante Wolfe, Kim Doss Smith, Lennie Peterson, Hank Brummer and Paul Schaefer.

Agenda: Approved with several additions.

Minutes of November: Approved.

Vice Presidents Report: John Varone is on Sick Call. Iraq Vets Against the War (<http://www.ivaw.net/>) will convene for their first formal conference at Ft. Bragg, NC on 3/19-20. **VFP members were encourage to attend. IVAW Membership has grown from eight at the August National VFP Convention in Boston to 100 reported out at the November, 2005 VFP meeting at Colmmbus, Ga.**

DOP CAMPAIGN The Department of Peace Campaign, <http://www.dopcampaign.org> is in the process of organizing an historic citizen lobbying effort to create a U.S. Department of Peace (HR 1673), sponsored in the House of Representatives by Congressman Dennis Kucinich. This bill establishes nonviolence as an organizing principle of American society, providing the U.S. President with an array of peace-building policy options for domestic and international use. It has 50 sponsors thus far, three from Minnesota. **A motion was made by Todd Erickson to endorse efforts to establish of a Department of Peace, HR1673. Motion passed.**

SUPPORT THE TROOPS Todd urged VFP members write letters to newspapers and call your legislators regarding the preemptive deficit of our troop's personal equipment, vehicles and repetitive tours for this preemptive war. Calling is immediate and definitive. Outline your brief but pungent messages before calling. Write Todd at todd9500@msn.com for information, guidance and current events. **E-BAY SALES John Varone has sold \$400 worth of items on E-Bay. Todd encouraged VFP members to donate items to John Varone for e-Bay sales.**

Treasurer's Report: The temporary deficit, with reference to the SOA trip and Canoe moneys will be neutralized. Fund Raising letters have been sent. Please respond NOW! The Executive Committee will deal with the restricted Video and Canoe funds. A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was seconded and approved.

NVFP: Bob Heberle lost his position on the National Board in the recent election. There are four new member of the National Board. Bob has served the National Office and VFP 27 for many years with alacrity and honor. We thank him for his extraordinary service to VFP and to the nation.

Staff Report: Shiloh has Hepatitis and will be in quarters for 4-6 weeks. Contact her through the office. Wayne and Chante will sub for Shiloh but you are invited to fill her moccasins. Chante will lead a discussion following Anti War Play Monday, 12 December at St. Jeanne D'Arc. **We will be tabling at the Cry Justice Project 8-9 January and at the annual Social Studies Convention - Thursday-Friday, March 3-4, 2005.**

COUNTER RECRUITMENT The first seminar, Counseling Those Who Refuse to Fight regarding draft resistance and conscientious objection has sold out! Kim has arranged a second seminar on 2/12/04, Lincoln's Birthday. If filled again, she will schedule additional seminars. Call the office or Kim for more information. The Christmas Party was a jolly gathering of happy spirits with songs and music by Jerry Rau and John Varone at Matins Table, Saturday evening 10 December. John Sherman and Kim were on KP with help from Barry Riesch. Donations exceeded expenses by more than one half. Photos recorded John Varone signing the lease for St. Stephens our new office and meeting sanctuary. The crowd of 40 or more including new members and recently returned Iraqi AF veteran applauded this necessary and important improvement.

Old Business:

Bob Heberle distributed Minnesota statutes regarding the No Child Left Behind Act. He urges all members to call their local high schools reminding the Principals of their duty and parent's right not to divulge students near to the military, both parts of that legislation. Bob published two Letters in his village newspaper regarding this critical issue. Mrs. Pat Dahlgren, VFP member is active in this effort. Lennie Anderson suggested the Peace Coalition support in this effort.

College and high school, students rallied in the Capitol Rotunda Thursday morning denouncing the ominous [of Men and Women that may be forthcoming. Bob Heberle was impressed by the students information and grasp of the potential problem as well as their courage and conviction. Wayne Wittman discussed Veterans Day Program at the First Shot Monument on the south west side of the Capitol Mall. The members agreed to

made by Wayne Wittman to hold the 2005 Armistice -Veteran's Day at the same location. Motion passed.

Committee Reports:

SOA: Another successful, safe, rewarding and lucrative trip to Ft. Benning was reported by Wayne Wittman. The tally is positive in morale and income. **The chapter raised \$2000.00 at the SOA vigil at the gates of Fort Benning, Ga..**

Speakers Bureau: Chante reported **eight** venues including Bloomington Kennedy HS aided by active student participation.

Newsletter: Products may be advertised in the newsletter. Pat Downey is looking for photos from SOA and other events. An editorial expert is scheduled to assist the committee with creative ideas and other Pearls.

Fund Raising, Merchandise and Canoe: Fund raising letters were sent. Joe reports an early positive response. We need money to fund our office, newsletters, minutes, supplies, salaries, special projects and dues to related organizations **Pat Downey** recommended using Molly Culligans's one act play about Meridel Le Sueur, (1900-1996) the late, great, social activist and author as an effective source of income. An early feminist, part the lore of the 20th century, she was blacklisted by Joe McCarthy. **According to members in attendance, Barry is working on this.**

Joe Johnson reported that the Canoe income at Calhoun over Thanksgiving was \$1080.00, not equal to 2003 suggesting less disposable income in the US. We will be at Calhoun Sq. 17-19 December and daily from 12/26--01/02/05. **We need greater participation** to staff the booths from noon to 1800 hours. Bring your notes and engage the hurly-burly. The canoe will be at the annual MN Canoe Association event the first week February at Har Mar Mall.

Kim Doss-Smith reported that a musical fund raiser with a variety of bands and decibels is scheduled at the Five Corners Saloon on Cedar near Riverside on Jan 20th.

New Business: The Red Wing group, newly forming, is planning the Retreat of 2005, scheduled tentatively for the weekend following Independence Day. They will be responsible for the production, but seek financial assistance, ideas, and suggestions for special speakers. Our budget includes a generous subsidy for the event and will be provided. Red Wing VFP is determined to provide an interesting seminar and camp without a deficit. Information will appear on our web site. Adjacent VFP chapters will be invited to attend. Housing is critical because of many conflicting events in and around Red wing during the summer months. The Red Wing chapter was assured of our interest and cooperation.

Nuclear Waste at the Arden Hills Superfund Site was discussed at a forum attended by the ubiquitous Mr. Heberle. A representative from the Atomic Energy Committee assured Alliant Tech Industries and those attending that the site has been cleaned, decontaminated, free of any irradiation; the water crystal clear, safe pure as the driven snow. Mr. Heberle and others had reservations. *Nukewatch*, <http://www.nukewatch.com/> at Luck Wisconsin will be informed for information and rebuttal.

Former activists/leaders of Vets for Kerry **along with members of VFP #27** are meeting Tuesday, 12/12/04 at noon in the Capitol Rotunda. Supporting the troops with proper equipment and arms is the topic with emphasis on the Mr. Rumsfeld's recent encounter with previously reticent GIs in Iraq. We are asked to participate.

Moving Day to St. Stephens: A date had not been set but you will be notified. Strong backs will be needed. Doug Drews will furnish tools reducing strain on aging spines and gnarled hands. **A motion was made by Doug Drews to move the VFP #27 general meetings to St. Stephens** starting in January, 2005. St. Stephens is located at **2123 Clinton Ave S.** - 1 block off of Franklin Ave. **Motion passed.** John Varone will inaugurate the sacred space.

Nominations: Pat Downey offered **the following officers for nomination for 2005: John Varone - President; Chante Wolfe - VP; Todd Erickson - Treasurer ; Bob Heberle - Secretary; Wayne Wittman - Membership; Tom Dooley and Jim Steinhagen: MAP delegates, MN Fair Trade Coalition delegate - Todd Erickson; MN Senior Federation delegate - Wayne Wittman.** Nominations were closed. **A motion was made by Pat Downey to accept the nominations. Motion passed.**

The meeting was adjourned happily at 2000 hours.

The history of an oppressed people is hidden in the lies and the myths of its conquerors. Meridel Le Sueur