

VETERANS FOR PEACE, CORVALLIS, CHAPTER 132

November 23, 2009 Meeting Minutes

I. Introductions of those attending. Tony Wright, Bill Orner, Bob Stebbins, Jim Spain, Leah & Bart Bolger, Todd & Esmeralda Allen

II. Administration

-- Treasurers Report: Bart Bolger \$1165 in account, less \$400 (set aside) = \$765 useable funds

III. Past actions/events status and debrief

-- Veterans Day Parade in Springfield – 4 members of 132 attended along with 15 members of VFP 159. Small parade; relatively few parade watchers. Responses of onlookers to our contingent was generally favorable.

-- Albany Vets Day Parade: About 10 in our group; joined later by members of Albany Peace Seekers and others. Once again, the parade organizers cut off the end of our mission statement. Bob Stebbins agreed to write a letter to object and request they read the entire statement in the future. Bob had requested that they read the entire statement. He was told that his request would be forwarded to the appropriate person. Good turnout of parade watchers.

-- Truth in Recruiting: Bob to CVHS with Roger Weaver twice per month; not much interest from students lately. Philomath: Fairly major breakthrough – Bill Orner and Bart did the last session on November 17th. Our new sponsor in the Counseling Office has made it possible for us to set up our table just inside the main entrance of the school, where the recruiters are setting up now (not at the same time though). We got a lot of student traffic and a great deal of interaction, mostly positive but some negative. Much better exposure. PHS visits are on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Contact Bart if you would like to participate.

-- Training for men's cold weather shelter: VFP 132 is staffing the men's homeless shelter 6-12 Dec. The 1st shift starts at 6:45. Two volunteers staff this shift from 7-11pm. One volunteer sleeps over from 11pm to 7am. Bob will work the phones to fill the schedule. Bob will also check with Aleita about training our folks the first night. Bart will bring food bought with VFP account money on 6th. Bob will ask volunteers to bring food when he calls about shifts.

-- Second Saturdays concert fund raiser for Josh Hough at Sunnyside Up Café: Raised over \$800 for his travel and stay in the West Bank Palestinian territories.

IV. Action Team reports and planning

-- VFP response to Afghanistan troop surge announcement: We should at least do an enhanced vigil 24 hours after announcement. Leah is working on details of the local protest. We are awaiting plans from chapters 159 (Eugene) & 72 (Portland) to see if larger protests are desired, such as demonstrating at our U.S. senators' and representatives' offices? Bart will put out a reminder email to our membership for the Corvallis protest.

-- Corporation for National and Community Service Veterans Corp Project: The AmeriCorps funding (\$363M requested for FY2010) under the guise of the Veterans Corps program will support efforts including those that:

- ◆ Recruit veterans into service opportunities
- ◆ Assist the families of those deployed
- ◆ Connect veterans with educational opportunities and help them access their benefits
- ◆ Address the needs of veterans with disabilities
- ◆ Enlist veterans to mentor students from disadvantage circumstances

For more information see: <http://tinyurl.com/yhlgmnu> and <http://www.nationalservice.gov/>

-- Veterans History Project. This is a project of the Library of Congress to document the service of veterans using their own words, images, writings, etc. Maegan Prentice, a local videographer, has offered to make videos (for the cost of her materials, about \$35 per video) of your service experience for submission to the Library. See this site for more info: <http://www.loc.gov/vets/pdf/fieldkit-2008.pdf> or contact Bart Bolger.

-- 2010 Oregon Women Veterans Conference March 26-27, Seven Feathers Casino - Canyonville, Oregon. For more info: <http://www.oregon.gov/ODVA/wvc.shtml>

-- Speaker: Mary Beth Tinker, December 6 @ 7pm, First Congregational Church (UCC) on West Hills Rd. Members at the meeting discussed whether to participate in an honorarium for her. Consensus was not to. Ms. Tinker is an advocate for peace and justice, particularly relating to freedom of speech and other constitutional rights for children. She is famous for the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on freedom of speech in schools (Tinker vs. Des Moines). She is active in Truth in Recruiting and war resistance, as well.

-- Meet with other counties' VFP members: We discussed the proposal to meet with other VFP members from the surrounding area and with the new Chapter 159. Possible pot luck; possible meetup at a restaurant in Coburg?

-- GazaFreedomMarch.org – 100s coming to Gaza from all over the world 22-27 Dec to bring world attention to the siege and blockade of Gaza. Jessica Campbell from OSU & Corvallis is making the trip. There will be a potluck-fund raiser at the UU Tuesday, Dec 1st, 6pm, to help pay for her trip. We also

discussed local support actions during the march. Valori George is organizing an event in Corvallis to show support and possibly connect with Jessica via Skype. Supporters would like to generate press coverage to help remember the Gazan victims of the siege.

V. Scheduled Future actions/events

-- Recommended site to visit: <http://ourjourneytosmile.com/blog/>
“With love, we ask the 2009 Nobel Peace Laureate President Obama to answer the Afghan youth peace message....”

Important dates:

-- November 27: Holiday Parade, Corvallis

-- December 28: Next VFP meeting

-- January 8, 7pm @ the UU: David Swanson (“Daybreak”) book tour discussion and music by David Rovics. Sponsored by UU Peace Action Council and VFP 132.

-- Daily, 5:00 to 6:00 pm—Corvallis Peace Vigil, Benton County Courthouse

Respectfully submitted:
Bart Bolger, sub-scribe