

VETERANS FOR PEACE, CORVALLIS

Minutes of Monthly Meeting: January 25, 2010

I. Introductions of those attending. Bob Stebbins, Jim Spain, George Hutchinson, Bart Bolger

II. Administration

Treasurer's Report Bart Bolger -- \$1016 in bank; \$400 reserved; leaves \$616 available. Since Nov 1, 2009, we've spent \$181 more than we've taken in, mostly for homeless shelter food (about 1/2) and printing costs for fliers (events we co-sponsored). We're working on moving our account to OSU Federal CU. No charge for non-profit accounts. B of A is charging us a monthly fee.

Bart announced that Leah was not reelected for the national vice president at the most recent board meeting. She is still on the national board. Mike Ferner was reelected as president.

III. Past actions/events status and debrief

Truth in recruiting: Bob Stebbins reported on several good encounters with students at CV. He is going to check on the latest efforts at CHS, if any. He said the situation is difficult there (CHS) because TiR people are required to stay in the counseling center and there is very little chance for interaction with students. Bart said he was contacted by the president of Chapter 116, Mendocino County, CA, about our TiR efforts. Bart sent him electronic files of some handouts we've made for our work here, including the Enlistment Agreement and Web Resources handouts.

David Swanson concert and talk: Creation of discussion/action group around David's book: *DAYBREAK: Undoing the Imperial Presidency and Forming a More Perfect Union*. First meeting of discussion group Noon, Friday 5 February at the UUFC. Bart said many people have signed up for discussion group and there's a Facebook group to share thoughts about the book's issues. Bart mentioned that the link to the video of David Swanson's presentation here is posted on our web site: www.vfpcorvallis.org.

John Perkins (author of *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*) talk on Corporatocracy. Bob Stebbins attended the talk. Perkins described the role of corporations in the economies of poor countries and how they exploit the country's natural resources using the country's debt as leverage. Perkins recommended keeping an eye on these corporations. Bob asked him how to do that and Perkins responded with a number of web sites. To learn more, you can visit Perkins' web site: <http://www.johnperkins.org/>.

Gaza Freedom March solidarity action December 30 -- Good event. About 30 people showed up. We were able to chat online with Jessica Campbell, who had just arrived in Gaza City with school and other supplies for the victims of the Gaza siege.

Second Saturdays fundraiser for Measures 66 & 67 (\$387) -- Very well attended. Good music. Rep. Sara Gelser gave a very good synopsis of the importance of passing the Measures.

Meeting with Senator Merkley at fairgrounds -- Bob attended the town hall. There was a lottery for asking questions. He said no one asked about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Bob was able to ask Merkley about the wars briefly on the way out. Merkley did not respond directly but recommended contacting Sen. John Kerry who is working the war issues. We agreed this an insufficient response and a dodge.

IV. Future actions/events

Peace volunteer Kyla Lyon -- This person offered to volunteer on our behalf. Bart requested help in TiR at Philomath HS. Bart never had a response. Bob will contact her again to see if she's still interested. Bob

suggested she might work on identifying web sites of interest. Bart said it would be difficult to give sufficient guidance to produce a useful deliverable product of her efforts. Bart suggested using her for TiR instead.

Second Saturdays Concert--February 13th. Beneficiary: Haiti. Performers: Alex Hargreaves, Dave Storrs and Stephen Willis. -- Mark your calendars. Jim has heard Alex and his sister play fiddle and highly recommends their music.

Monadel talk February 27? -- Monadel Herzallah is the Founder and President of the Arab American Union. Bob said he would contact organizers (starting with Valori George) again to see what monetary support is required and get other details of the visit (e.g., where the talk will be held). Bob thinks they would like to get \$\$ for their airfare. Portland will also be raising money for them. We agreed we could offer a minimum of \$50 and maximum of \$100 from our treasury. Jim said we could also pass the hat during the talk. Bob has offered a place for them to stay. Volunteers are providing ground transportation.

Federal Spending: FCNL letter to Oregon Sens & Reps; VFP 132 sign on? -- We agreed to sign on to the letter. Bart will find out how to sign on.

HR 3699: Defund the war in Afghanistan. This bill prohibits funding for additional troops in Afghanistan war. There are currently 28 co-sponsors. Bart will draft a letter (to be signed by Bob as Chapter president) to Reps Schrader and DeFazio encouraging them to co-sponsor and help bring it to the floor for a vote.

Action at **Sustainability Fair** at CH2M Hill Alumni center on March 11? Bob commented on the connection between sustainability and peace. We all agreed that it would be appropriate to table at the event and that we should offer materials specifically addressing the linkage. Bob will find out if our Chapter would be welcomed by the fair to table. If so, Bart will contact other VFP chapters to gather materials.

Presentation on Afghanistan late March by Dana Visalli ? Work with UUFC PAC to co-sponsor? -- Dana Visalli has traveled extensively in Iraq and Afghanistan and would like to visit Corvallis for a talk in late March. This would focus on the following subjects regarding Afghanistan: History of the country, the people, women & children, the land, impact of war on people & land, economic context of the war, and the historical context of war. We agreed to work with the UU PAC to sponsor a talk.

Plans for **Benton County Fair booth** -- Bob received an invitation to participate again this year and Bob will respond.

Plans for **VFP national convention** August 25-28 Portland, Maine -- Bob & Leah Bolger plan to attend.

Plan to support "**Peace of the Action**" in DC March 13-March 22 <http://peaceoftheaction.org/> -- Leah Bolger plans to attend.

Local action for **anniversary of Iraq war**, March 19th? -- We agreed to work on some type of event, e.g., a march, special vigil before nightly vigil, street corner demonstration. George said we should make it clear why we're out there with signs citing the cost of the Iraq war, for example.

An "**Oh, By the Way**"...Jim raised a good issue...why is the attendance at our meetings dwindling so badly? We agreed to construct a **brief** questionnaire to determine the members' interests and preferences. Bart will draft this. We also discussed having social gatherings in conjunction with meetings, e.g., Pizza Night.

Important dates:

Friday, February 5th, Noon: DAYBREAK Discussion/Action Group, UUFC

Friday, February 5th, 7:00 pm: Gaza Freedom March debrief (Jessica Campbell), Multi-Cultural Literacy Center, 128 SW 9th St, Corvallis

Wednesday, February 10th: Protest Karl Rove. Portland.

Saturday, February 13th, 6:00 to 8:00 pm: Second Saturdays Concert, Sunnyside Up Cafe
Monday, February 22, 7:00 pm: Next VFP meeting

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