

NERA Minnesota Chapter

4 February, 2012 Meeting Minutes

President Roger Jacobson called the meeting to order at 1138. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Present were: Roger Jacobson, Charles Berger, Don Bauman, Dave Drajna, Ron Campbell and Don Rask.

Secretary's Report: There were no minutes since the January meeting was the officer installation/winter social and no business was conducted.

Treasurer's Report: Charles Berger submitted the Treasurer's report. The balance on hand as of 31 December 2011 was \$3,008.26 with deposits totaling \$220.03 and expenses of \$518 (\$418 for dinners at the winter social and UVLC dues of \$100) Leaving a balance as of January 31 of \$2710.29.. There The Treasurer's report was accepted.

Membership Report: Don Rask presented the membership report. The Minnesota Chapter had 267 members as of 31 January as reported by the NERA National roster. .

UVLC (United Veterans Legislative Council) Report: Don Rask, along with Roger Jacobson, who also attended the UVLC meeting presented the information. A group of Hmong men where there asking for support to be buried in Minnesota Military Cemeteries since they consider themselves veterans contracted by the CIA to fight the Viet Cong in Laos and to provide support in extracting US pilots shot down over their territory, as well as, disrupting the flow of weapons from the North along the Ho Chi Minh trail. The 15th of February will

be the annual Veterans Day on the Hill. This event starts with a program in the rotunda of the Minnesota State Capital at 9 am.. Then veterans are encouraged to have made appointments with their state legislators to discuss veteran's issues. The MAG (Military Action Group) which is made up of several veterans groups have an agenda this legislative session of attracting defense contractors to relocate to Minnesota and bring long term stimulus to our economy; Exemption to extend property tax relief to spouse after death of 100% disabled veterans, which would have little to no financial impact to the Minnesota State Budget; Incentives to retain second career military members who would otherwise retire in other states. A bill has been submitted to the legislature that would protect volunteers in the Yellow Ribbon Program from liability issues. There are or shortly will be three counties with Veterans Courts, Hennepin, Washington and soon Ramsey County. Bldg 9, the new one, at the Minnesota Veterans Home will be opened in May or June. The new 400 space parking ramp at the Minneapolis VA Hospital is in the finally design stage and ground will be broken sometime late in the 2012. The Minnesota DAV along with the Minnesota Twins has distributed 2,100 coasts to needy veterans and family members. Did you know that the VA pays out over \$142 million dollars monthly in claims and other programs? Over 381 thousand Minnesota Veterans are being serviced by the VA. As a veteran, you may be receiving a letter from the VA asking you to participate in the million vet program for medical research. Its goal is to get the DNA from 1 million veterans, via a blood sample, that will be used in research to find clues to possible early detection of deceases so that they can possibly do preventative care for many ailments. You will soon be receiving as a veteran, a Veterans Benefits Handbook.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A.** An audit of the Treasurers books for 2011 was conducted on the 12th of January. The audit committee found no errors or omissions.
- B.** The organization finances were discussed at some length. Chuck Berger said that if we do not have an increase in income we could be **insolvent** within 5 years. Our mission is to support the local Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard community and we cannot do that with ever decreasing funding. The cost of publishing and mailing newsletters continues to climb even though we have cut back on the frequency of publication. Donations from our one and only source of income, the summer picnic/social raffle, have dwindled in recent years with fewer members and the economic times. We need for all to share the load and when it comes time for the raffle, let everyone contribute as much as possible.

New Business:

- A.** Nothing to report on Shipmates Welfare Report.
- B.** A motion was made by Chuck Berger to donate \$200.00 to this year's Navy Volunteer Week project at the Veterans on the Lake Resort in Ely, MN. The money would be used toward feeding the volunteers.

The motion was seconded by Don Rask and was passed by a vote of those present.

C. An anonymous donor contributed \$200.00 to NERA MN Chapter, to be donated by NERA MN Chapter, to the NJROTC Program at Harding High School in St. Paul. The Treasurer will send a check to that unit

D. The meeting schedule for remaining 2012 is as follows: March – No meeting, April 7th, May 4th, June 2nd, July – No meeting, August 1st (Summer Social), September 8th, October 6th, November 3rd, December 1st. Please mark your calendars.

E. A email only newsletter will be published later this month with up to date news and volunteer opportunities

ADJOURNMENT: President Jacobson adjourned the meeting at 13:15. There will be **NO** March meeting. The next meeting will be at 1130, April 7th, 2012 at the Fred Babcock VFW 5555 in Richfield, MN