

**MINUTES OF THE HAMDEN VETERAN'S COMMISSION,
SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITY ROOM, MILLER COMPLEX,
Tuesday, September 13, 2011 at 5:30 p. m.**

Commissioners Present: Mr. Best, Mr. Conway, Mr. DiSorbo, Mr. Johnson, Mr. McCarthy
Mr. Oakes, Mr. Ortoleva, Ms. Pavlis, Mr. Shultz

Absent: Mr. Laffin, Mr. Weil

Guests: Mr. Curtis, Ms. Park

Approval of Minutes of June 13, 2011 – APPROVED AS WRITTEN.

Mr. Oakes reported this is the 12th year for the HVC. We started in the Fall of 2000, so we've just begun our 12th year. He also thanked Mr. Ortoleva for introducing us to Harry Garofalo, owner of Shop Rite stores.

Shop Rite Stores – During the month of July donations were collected at the Shop Rite stores in Hamden, West Haven and Stratford. Mr. McCarthy and others put in many hours during the month of July. He stated that he had “plenty of help” from the OEM, Elks, Jane Parks & Abner Oakes. They raised \$31,050.00 in July. They're looking for a total of \$40,000!

Fisher House Fund Raising - Pasta Dinner – Sunday September 18, 2011 – Elks Lodge. Tickets are \$10/pp and proceeds go to the Fisher House CT. Mr. Conway presented a check for \$100 from the Jewish War Veterans. Mr. Oakes noted a donation that will be coming from Post 150. Mr. McCarthy hopes the spaghetti dinner will raise between \$4,000-\$5,000.

Eagle Scout Project – Mr. Ortoleva spoke of 'an ambitious project' being done by Eagle Scout Anthony Cardo. He is working on interviewing WWII Vets, putting the interviews on DVDs and sending them to the Library of Congress. Heidi Voight will be asking questions of the veterans. Recording will be done at HHS. He is looking to speak with someone from airborne. Mr. DiSorbo offered his assistance with the interviews.

Mr. Conway offered a contact of his, Robert Smith, Army Air Corps, as a potential interviewee. There was brief discussion about the HVC donating some money to help Mr. Cardo with his project.

Hamden Public Schools “Heroes' Project” – Dan Levy, Principal of HMS, sent a letter to all teachers in the district regarding the “Heroes's Project”. All the Hamden schools are involved. Their project is for Fisher House. Mr. Oakes distributed the letter sent to all teachers. In commemoration of the 10th anniversary of 9-11 students are asked to participate in art, music or writing projects with the theme of “what it means to be a hero”. Their artwork will be donated to the Friends of Fisher House CT. Students at the MS are also selling bracelets-proceeds to Fisher House.

Veterans' Day Ceremony, November 13, 2011 - 11:00 at the monument. There is a dinner at the Elks following the ceremony.

Hamden Middle School Auditorium – Update at next meeting.

“Wreaths Across America” - Update at next meeting.

Wal*Mart Community Contribution -Mr. Oakes reported there is a new online procedure for

contribution requests.

Update HVC Contact List – Clerk Gaiolini distributed copies for review. Updates noted and revised Contact List will be distributed at next meeting.

Veterans' Commission Jackets Available – Mr. Oakes informed all that HVC Jackets are now available. The price is \$70 and you can place your order and give payments to Jane Parks at our next meeting.

Mr. Oakes reported that Bob Sullivan (PW Tree Crew) asked the HVC's permission to take down the tree at Freedom Park. The existing tree will be removed and a spruce or pine will be put in its place. Mr. McCarthy suggested there be a re-dedication when the new tree is planted.

Mr. Ortoleva presented a flag and plaque (certification of authenticity) that was given to him by Lou Nescott. Mr. Nescott works for the government. He was in Afghanistan, based at Camp Leatherneck. The flag he donated to the HVC flew over the Marine base in Afghanistan. After a brief discussion it was agreed the flag should be placed on the wall at the Middle School.

Mr. Best spoke of his experience speaking with the students at Bear Path School. Ms. Pavlis commented on the school visits done around Veteran's Day. Mr. Shultz noted that over the years the number of students that raise their hand when asked if they have a friend or family member in the service has gone up! 75-80% of the students put their hands up now. Mr. Oakes added that during any service or ceremony at the monument, you can see kids pointing at family/friends names on the wall.

Mr. Curtis spoke on his organization VetsLink. He distributed copies of newspaper articles that appeared in the New Haven Register and the Advocate as well as 2 fact sheets.

Ms. Pavlis spoke on the University of Colorado and a “masterful program” in place for veterans and children. Mr. McCarthy spoke of the University of Michigan study that proved “beyond a shadow of a doubt that there were chemical weapons in Iraq”.

Ms. Pavlis noted that she is working on putting together a book on WWII. She is looking for people in CT to include in her 'examples of people'. Mr. McCarthy offered Mr. Johnson and Billy Gargano. Mr. Oakes suggested using the list Guy has for VAD. Ms. Parks mentioned a member of the Elks who is a Pearl Harbor survivor.

Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 6:27 pm.

Submitted by: _____
Deborah Gaiolini, HVC Clerk