



VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA  
WISCONSIN STATE COUNCIL

State Council Meeting  
September 12, 2015  
Firefox/Comfort Suites  
Waupaca, Wisconsin 54981

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

**Wisconsin State Council Meeting**

President Lindbeck Called the State Council Meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. on September 12, 2015. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was offered to our POW/MIA's and active duty service members. The Secretary completed the roll call of Officers, Directors and Chapters.

The Secretary Mullarkey took the roll. The following were present: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Directors from Regions 1 and 4. VVA Chapters represented<sup>1</sup> included: 101(1), 206(3), 220(1), 224(2), 236(3), 256(2), 351(2), 425(3), 448(3), 479(2), 529(2), 549(2), 618(1), 635(1), 731(2), and At Large (2). VVA Region 6 Director, Mike Demske (731) was also present.

The President confirmed a quorum.

There was no reinstatement of suspended Chapters. Chapter 768 (Waupaca) has been suspended by VVA.

President Lindbeck asked and appointed John Margowski as Parliamentarian and Mike Demske as Timekeeper.

The Agenda was approved without objection.

The June 2015, Minutes, were approved motioned for approval by Margowski and Demske with changes, specifically changes to VVA Chapters present at the 06/20/2015 WSC Meeting. A correction to the recorded amendment to Article 5 of the VVA WSC Bylaws was moved Heitman and seconded by Margowski to read,

“The Council shall meet March, June, September, and December. Should the Council determine that it would be in the best interest of the Council to hold a State Convention, the Convention shall be held in June or September with the determination to be made at the March meeting for the following year.”

Without further objection the Minutes were approved.

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<sup>1</sup> As per letter sent (October 6, 2014) to all VVA WSC Officers, WSC Region Directors, and VVA Chapter Presidents and Officers must have representation at half of the State Council's scheduled meetings. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. The () followed by the VVA Chapter # indicates the number of meetings attended in the calendar year i.e., 2015.

President's Report, Richard Lindbeck

The President attended the VVA National Convention in Springfield, Illinois and was proud to lead the Wisconsin delegation of 26 registered delegates, several being their first time at a VVA National Convention. In discussing the convention with the delegates I found how impressed individuals were with how the convention was run.

As a result of the latest election of VVA officers, Region Directors, and the At-Large Directors, the Board of Directors will have even new members.

- John Rowan, President
- Marsha Four, Vice-President
- Bill Meeks, Secretary
- Wayne Reynolds, Treasurer
- Mike Demske, Region 6 Director\*
- Dottie Barickman (NE), At-Large Director
- Dennis Andras (LA), At-Large Director
- Tom Burke (OH), At-Large Director
- Ron Morgan, (OR), At-Large Director
- Dave Simmons (WV), At-Large Director
- Craig Tonjes (FL), At-Large Director
- Mike Demske appointed John Margowski as his alternate.

I was honored to run Dottie Barickman's campaign. This was the fourth time I have been involved in a campaign and all were successful.

Demske, Margowski, Furno, and I did an Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting in Wisconsin Rapids on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, with another planned September 17<sup>th</sup> in Green Bay, having discussions with VVA Chapter 324, Milwaukee, for a Town Hall in 2015 with a possible venue at the Milwaukee County War Memorial.

The Moving Wall is coming to Germantown in 2016. Although the Germantown American Legion is sponsoring the event they will be looking for some assistance in getting the Wall.

VVA membership met the goal 75,000 by National Convention with a total of 75,359 in July. The FIRE SALE i.e., Life Membership for only \$100 will continue through December 31, 2015. As fellow VVA Members wouldn't it be *outstanding* if Wisconsin became a 100% Life Member State! Let us not forget about AVVA's FIRE SALE i.e., Life Membership for only \$100 running November through December 31, 2015.

We need to continue working on our congressional representatives to sponsor the Military Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015 – S901 and HR1769. Congress is back in session and lets contact them and keep them informed that we need to pass this legislation. Call. Write. Email. Make a personal contact when they are in the area. At this time only Rep. Kind has signed on to the bill.

***Old Glory Honor Flight***

The WSC will be working with **Operation Welcome Home** and the **50<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Program** for another **Honor Flight** in 2016.

The **50<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Program**, <http://www.vietnamwar50th.com>, asks the *Partners* (e.g., Wisconsin Broadcasters Association) to conduct at least two (2) events per year. Presently, Wisconsin has 22 counties as *Partners* in the **Program** with a goal of doubling the number by March 1, 2016.

Wisconsin is one of seven (7) states that have found photos of all the Vietnam Veterans lost in the war. Some 18,000 photographs have been submitted to the Vietnam Wall commission for the project.

**SPECIAL NOTE: *Secret War in Laos***: Laos was and remains the most bombed country in the world. Bombing operations were every 8 minutes, 24 hours each day, seven days a week, for nine (9) years. That is a total of 589,680 bombings – not bombs!

Secretary's Report, James Mullarkey

The Secretary reported that VVA National has formally suspended VVA Chapter 768 (Waupaca) and formal notification was provided the VVA Chapter 768 President. VVA National will be informed of the dissolution of VVA Chapter 768.

The Secretary reiterated that VVA Wisconsin Chapters must be represented at a minimum of 50 percent of the called VVA WSC meetings. The following table indicates the VVA Chapters in Wisconsin and their representation as of the September meeting.

<b>VVA Wisconsin State Council</b>			
<b>Chapter Representation March through September 2015*</b>			
VVA Chapter	Mtg. Represent.	VVA Chapter	Mtg. Represent.
005	1	425	3
092	1	437	2
101	3	448	3
206	3	479	2
220	1	529	2
221	1	549	2
224	2	618	1
236	3	635	1
256	2	729	2
324	2	731	2
331	2	767	1
351	2	921	0
409	0	At Large	2

\* As per letter sent (October 6, 2014) to all VVA WSC Officers, WSC Region Directors, and VVA Chapter Presidents and Officers must have representation at half of the State Council's scheduled meetings. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.

The Secretary indicated that two VVA Chapters within the State Madison and Marshfield are in distress i.e., decreasing numbers in attendance, moves away from Wisconsin, etc. However, Madison representatives, at the meeting indicated this was misinformation. Jim Moore of VVA Chapter 549 (Marshfield) has informed the Secretary by telephone and letter

of their eventual dissolution. Moore will complete the necessary paperwork and suggest to the VVA Chapter 549 members to make a formal transfer to Wisconsin Rapids or move to At-Large. Moore indicated any remaining funds held by the Chapter would be transferred to the VVA WSC for Agent Orange Town Meetings.

The Secretary was informed of Col. John W. Webb's death on September 13, 2015. The obituary was provided online:

John W. Webb, age 83, of Sheboygan, passed away Sunday, September 13, 2015 of lung cancer. He was born January 16, 1932 in Greenbush, Wisconsin, the son of the late Edith and Harold Webb. He attended Greenbush Grade School until 1941 when his family moved to Sheboygan and then attended US Grant School and was a graduate of Sheboygan North High School, Class of 1950.

On November 1, 1952 John married the love of his life, Donna M. Graefe of Sheboygan Wisconsin at St. Luke United Methodist Church and they became partners in life and love in every way from that day forward and were able to celebrate their sixty-second wedding anniversary last November.

After their marriage John was employed at Kohler Co. for a short time and then worked for the Chicago Northwestern Railroad for a number of years. On January 6, 1958 John was accepted at the Sheboygan County Sheriff's Department where he served for thirty-three years, retiring on January 6, 1991. He held many positions with the department as Deputy Sheriff, Sergeant, Lieutenant and Highway Safety Coordinator. On April 14, 1984, Webb was appointed to the position of sheriff by the Governor due to the resignation of Sheriff Boeckmann. John ran successfully for election in 1984, 1986, and 1988 thereby serving for over six years as sheriff. He was awarded a number of citations for service to his community and to the law enforcement effort throughout Wisconsin.

John had a varied military career starting as a junior in high school when he enlisted in the Wisconsin National Guard. He served seven years as an enlisted man and in 1956 he attended the infantry officer's basic course in Fort Benning, Georgia, commissioned as a second lieutenant. He resumed his duties with the National Guard until he left for Vietnam in 1967 where he assumed command of the 442nd Transportation Company. During his tour of duty in Vietnam he was moved up to the position of battalion staff officer until he rotated back to the United States where he was assigned to Fort McCoy, Wisconsin and took over the position of commanding officer of the regular Army Headquarters Detachment. He was released from active duty in 1969 and returned to Sheboygan where he joined the local Army Reserve Unit. He served as battery commander for a short period of time and was promoted to major and was transferred to Milwaukee, WI to become a staff officer in the 3rd Brigade field artillery where he served until being promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and was reassigned back to Sheboygan to assume command of the 1st Battalion 3rd Brigade field artillery for five years. He again was reassigned to the 84th Division as Inspector General for the next two years. He was promoted to the rank of full Colonel in 1980 and became the commanding officer of the 3rd Brigade until his retirement in 1982. John graduated from the United States Army Command and General Staff College, the Transportation Basic and Advanced Officer Schools and the Army Infantry School. He received many decorations including the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster, Vietnam Campaign Medal with three battle stars, Vietnam Service Medal, Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Medal and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal.

John was active in many community activities. He was an active member St. Luke United Methodist Church where he served as a Sunday School teacher for nineteen years, served on the board of trustees and other various committees. He was a member of Vietnam Veterans Association, the American Legion, VFW Post #9156, the Sheboygan Noon Optimist Club, the Democratic Party, YMCA, Sheboygan Yacht Club, Los Ninos Project in Tijuana, Mexico, and the

Snowbirds in Arizona.

John and Donna enjoyed traveling around the world and seeing as much as possible for, in Donna's words, "There is so much to be seen." Trips were taken to Germany, England, Norway, Sweden, Russia, Austria, Holland, France, Spain, Thailand, India, Argentina, and Guatemala. John was a member of the local chapter of People to People which he enjoyed so much. Many of the trips were the result of hearing about places around the world and he wanted to see them. John and Donna's involvement began with the People to People Esslingen student exchange program. They hosted a German student for six months and their son returned to Germany for six months. That was the beginning of a long and steady stream of exchange students in their home, a total of nineteen students have lived with John and Donna. One of the greatest memories is that the second generation of students from the same families have arrived. This was a blessing to John who loved each and every one of them as his own. John and Donna have traveled to far off lands to visit each of their former students over the years. John says, "What a wonderful life this has been!"

Survivors are his wife of sixty-two years, Donna; a foster daughter, Rhonda (Todd) Watson; grandsons, Brandon (Jessica) Watson, Skylar (Liz) Watson, Gabe Hawes; great-grandsons, Jordan Tollier and Aviar Watson; cousins, nieces, nephews, and other relatives and friends. He was preceded in death by his son, John Michael in 1975 and a daughter, Anne Louise in 1996.

#### Treasurer's Report, Patrick Craney

Treasurer provided the VVA WSC Balance Sheet (Unaudited) 08/31/2015, Six Month Statement of Revenues and Expenditure Compared with Budget ending 08/31/2015, and Cash Disbursement for the Period 06/20/2015 to 08/31/2015

#### AVVA Report, Pat Furno AVVA State Representative

- There are nine (9) AVVA Chapters throughout the U.S.
- The Wisconsin AVVA had four delegates attending the AVVA National Convention being held concurrent with the VVA National Convention in Springfield, IL.
  - Virginia Nuske shared that AVVA will be addressing Constitutional clarifications as well as changes to the By Laws. Additionally, the only contested office at this time appears to be the Treasurer.
  - The Scholarship format and materials for 2016-2017 was been finalized and is available.
- Life Membership \$100 *Fire Sale* between November 1, 2015, and December 31, 2015.

#### VVA Region 6 Report, Mike Demske, Director

- Mike shared that all committee chairpersons have been approved at VVA National.
- Agent Orange and the Toxic Research Act 2015 is critical for all Veterans and VVA WSC should be connecting with all VVA members in Wisconsin and any other VSOs they belong to get as many Veterans and family members.
- As part of Mike's report he presented the following VVA WSC calendar for 2016:

<b>2016 VVA Wisconsin State Council Calendar</b>	
<b>March 19</b> (9:00 A.M. AO Mtg. / 10:00 A.M WSC Mtg.)	Foxfire/Comfort Suites, Waupaca
<b>June 18</b> (9:00 A.M. AO Mtg. / 10:00 A.M WSC Mtg.)	The HighGround, Neillsville
<b>September 17</b> (9:00 A.M. AO Mtg. / 10:00 A.M WSC Mtg.)	Foxfire/Comfort Suites, Waupaca
<b>December 2</b> (Christmas Party) (Social 5:00 P.M / Dinner 6:00 P.M)	Ale House (Foxfire/Comfort Suites, Waupaca)
<b>December 3</b> (9:00 A.M. AO Mtg. / 10:00 A.M WSC Mtg.)	Foxfire/Comfort Suites, Waupaca

Mike Demske shared an Email from Marv Freedman, VVA Chapter 768, regarding ***The HighGrounds*** Persian Gulf Tribute. In addition to sharing VVA Chapter 220's \$1,500.00 commitment for the Persian Gulf Tribute the email is seeking other VVA Chapters to join in the sponsorship. Marv noted that, "A joint sponsorship would be a great way of demonstrating our commitment to VVA's founding principle – *Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another.*"

In addition to learning more about the [Persian Gulf Tribute](http://thehighground.org/persian-gulf/index.html) (or goto <http://thehighground.org/persian-gulf/index.html>), Marv would be pleased to respond to any VVA Chapter or party's questions regarding sponsorship.

#### WSC Regional Director Reports

- Region 1, Tom Heitman, and Region 4, Robert Morzenti, Directors discussed the process by which the Terrence Sund burial funds request and misinformation was shared and disseminated with officers and directors. Once the total requested amount of \$1,008 was identified the amount was divided equally (i.e., \$336) among the VVA WSC, VVA WSC 501c(19), and Wisconsin Veterans Foundation 501c(3). This distribution will be facilitated through the VVA WSC Treasurer.
- Heitman moved and Morzenti seconded that that VVA WSC donate the \$336 as identified. The motion was carried without objection.

Chapter Reports – Reports provided the Secretary either by USPS, Email, or at the WSC meeting.

#206 – As submitted by Marshall Giese, President

The Shawano Area Viet Nam Veterans Chapter donate the proceeds two Brat Stands, four days in total, to Safe Haven a women's abuse center, a local food pantry, and two different family events.

The VVA Chapter sponsored a VVA member delegate and an AVVA member delegate to the VVA and AVVA National Conventions held in Springfield. As president of our VVA Chapter, this was my first time at a national convention and found it very well organized, attended, and informative. Upon my return I contacted Capitol Hill regarding the Toxic Exposure Act of 2015. Although I spoke to aides in the office of Senator Johnson and Congressman Ribble, I

reminded them, "Veterans vote!" To this date I have not received a response from either office.

At the end of September my wife and I will be travelling to Washington D.C. to help in a ceremony to clean the Vietnam Wall.

#448 – As submitted by Frank Mueller

The VVA Chapter has had successful brat fries, orange blossom sales, and a planned POW/MIA black blossoms sale in West Bend and Miller Park.

The VVA Chapter had our annual picnic, which was well attended.

Six (6) VVA Chapter members attended the VVA National Convention as delegates – for several this was their first convention and all indicated how impressed they were on the overall convention and how it was conducted.

The VVA Chapter on October 4<sup>th</sup> will be rededicating Veterans Memorial Park at Freedom Park in Newburg as well as a rededication of the 'Angel' statute. Following the program there will be a flag burning ceremony behind the Newburg Fire Department.

VVA Chapter 448 started a scholarship fund at Concordia College in Mequon. The fund is for Veterans attending Concordia, which has over 200 Veterans, enrolled this year. The scholarship program will continue to grow so Veterans can continue their education.

Tom Heitman, Frank Mueller, Jim Hackbarth, and Richard Lindbeck attended the Concordia College Scholarship program. VVA is the first to develop this type of scholarship and with some work other Veteran organizations (VSOs) will make donations to the program. Concordia College is the only college in Wisconsin with an American Legion Post in the college.

#479 – As submitted by Gary Moll

Held a successful Brat Fry in June and a second Brat Fry in early September, which was supported by DAV Chapter 31.

During our VVA Chapter's annual picnic we also conducted our quarterly meeting during which we donated \$500 to the Never Forgotten Honor Flight, sponsored two (2) life memberships for two Vietnam veterans with hardships.

#529 –

In this quarter the VVA Chapter has awarded three (3) \$500 scholarships to three (3) different schools.

This year's *Steak Feed* was a great success and as was the food we cooked for the yearly Loon Motor Cycle Club Party.

In addition to being in charge of the Memorial Day ceremonies this year the VVA Chapter was represented in two parades on the Fourth of July.

Sadly, our VVA Chapter members attended all Veterans funerals in our area – too many funerals for a count to be given.

#618 – As submitted by Jim Riesenberg, Secretary

VVA Chapter 618 Honor Guard participated several Memorial Day events in the City of Sheboygan. Several chapter members participated in our annual “*sharing the Vietnam experience*” at Horace Mann Middle School in Sheboygan.

VVA Chapter members joined with the 25 veterans organizations in Sheboygan County in placing more than 10,000 flags on the graves of fallen and departed comrades in 101 cemeteries through - out of Sheboygan County.

VVA Chapter Honor Guard posted chapter colors and provide tomb guard services as EAA Chapter 766 presented its ‘*Spirit of 45*’ program at the Aviation Heritage Museum at the Sheboygan County Memorial Airport. The program honored the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War Two.

Several years ago, then Sheboygan County Veterans Service Officer and current Chapter Secretary, Jim Riesenberg organized a special Vietnam Veterans Father’s Day presentation at the Sheboygan County Veterans Memorial. The presentation at the county memorial is very similar to the annual Fathers’ Day Rose presentation put on by the VVMF at “The Wall” in Washington DC.

The City of Sheboygan Veterans Day program is a joint presentation of the nine veterans organizations in the City of Sheboygan with participation by North & South high schools, on alternating years, and VVA Chapter 618 members participating in an animated “*Empty Chair*” presentation.

VVA Chapter 618 partners with members of the local DAV and TREA Chapters in a Flag Day program presentation at Sunny Ridge Health & Rehabilitation Center. These same groups also gather for a special Veterans Day program at the Center.

VVA Chapter 618 participated financially to the expansion project of the Sheboygan County Veterans Memorial and in the Plymouth Police Department K-9 unit establishment.

#### Old Business

- Mullarkey advised everyone how much he appreciates the electronic and written information he receives from VVA Chapters to include more content in the Minutes and post to WSC website.

With out objection the motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 12:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

*James E. Mullarkey*

James E. Mullarkey  
Secretary





## Agent Orange Committee

Called to order by Richard Lindbeck at 9:05 A.M.

Members present: Richard Lindbeck, John Margowski, Jim Mullarkey, Tom Heitman, Robert Piaro, Pat Craney, Pat Furno, and Bob Morzenti.

The Wisconsin Agent Orange Committee had planned to do a mini Agent Orange Town Hall meeting at the June meeting held at The HighGround; however, it was more of a *fusion* of a mini meeting, this is what we normally do, a sharing of materials, a request for more Town Hall facilitators, and a Q&A. While the intent i.e., a mini Town Hall meeting may not have been met the awareness level was increased substantially, information was received positively, and the potential for even more Town Hall meetings was increased substantially.

Team Wisconsin was in Wisconsin Rapids and facilitated the Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting, which was well attended with a total of 84.

Green Bay's Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting is still scheduled for September 17<sup>th</sup> with Team Wisconsin facilitating.

There is a concern among the Team Wisconsin facilitators that the packets/folders being received from National are not consistent or complete – with forms missing.

The Team raised the need for everyone over the age of 18 whose parent or grandparent served in the effected areas should be encouraged to file a claim. Since there is no specific claim form the Spina Bifida form was suggested as the key form. When encouraging someone to do submit the claim, the person must be made aware that the claim will most likely be denied; however the claim will be recorded. The importance of this action is that the claim is recorded.

Team Wisconsin facilitators and AO Committee members again raised the issue of needing more facilitators – the core of Team Wisconsin cannot be the only people doing these meetings. Some recommendations to increase the facilitator base included:

- A letter to all VVA Chapter presidents to share with all members and AVVA members: explaining Team Wisconsin, specifically its role in facilitating Agent Orange (AO) Town Meetings, the goal of an AO Town Hall Meeting, the role(s) of the facilitator before, during, and after a Town Hall Meeting, and how Team Wisconsin members would mentor new facilitators.

[Further clarification may have to be made as to how to reimburse for any out-of-pocket expenses a potential facilitator may incur for his/her observations/mentoring.]

- A similar letter to every Wisconsin At-Large member could be developed and sent.
- At the discretion of the AO Committee (and if required National) all materials (i.e., the packet/folder with all forms) used by Team Wisconsin in doing a Town Hall Meeting could be placed on VVA WSC's website.
- Develop a facilitators operational manual (i.e., the who, what, when, where, why, how, etc.) of not only establishing a Town Hall Meeting with a local VVA Chapter, other Veteran organizations, VSO, community groups, etc., public relations,

marketing and advertising, identify key leaders in the Veterans community, establishing the Town Hall team and their roles at the Town Hall Meeting, including CVSOs, establishing the location, date and time of the Town Hall Meeting(s), getting all materials ready to be distributed, how to begin a meeting, the role of the facilitators at the meeting, getting audience participation (i.e., getting their story out), how to wrap-up a meeting, sharing the next step for those who came to the Town Hall.

The AO Committee as whole agreed that VVA WSC's Team Wisconsin needs to get endorsements from other Veteran organizations and Veteran Service Organizations supporting not only the Agent Orange initiative, but the Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting initiative. Endorsement and potential partnerships with these other organizations may also broaden Team Wisconsin's base while expanding its reach to Veterans and the Veterans' extended families.

Meeting adjourned at 9:48 A.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

*James E. Mullarkey*