



**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
WISCONSIN STATE COUNCIL**

State Council Meeting
Ramada Waupaca
Waupaca, Wisconsin

March 18, 2017

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES



Toxic Exposure Committee Meeting (Formerly Agent Orange Committee)

Toxic Exposure Committee was not held at this meeting. Updates will be provided on the WSC website (<http://vvawi.org/vet-issues/agent-orange-2/index.html>) and through emails – if you are not on the WSC email list please go to the website and go to **ADD ME TO MAILING LIST** located on the right side of any page.



Education Committee Meeting

Attendance: John Margowski, Mike Demske, Tom Hoffman, Pat Furno, Joe Eiting, Richard Lindbeck.

Margowski gave a presentation on who we are inviting from the VVA National Office, specifically regarding Drs. Tom Berger and Tom Hall. Mike Demske, Richard Lindbeck and John Margowski will be in Silver Spring, MD for the BOD/CSCP and Planning Committee meetings in April and will speak with the Drs. Berger and Hall regarding the attendance and program.

Drs. Berger's and Hall's presentation is about two (2) hours and they are not opposed to others coming in for the presentation. Dr. Hall suggested we invite EMT, Law Enforcement, Fire Fighters, Medical personnel to participate and learn about the effects of PTSD and Suicide Prevention.

Joe Eiting asked what are we going to do after Dr. Hall's presentation. Mike Demske informed the committee that WDVA has a suicide prevention program for recognizing potential persons at risk. The program is called QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) and while developed for the total community there is an element or emphasis on veteran centric issues.

Richard Lindbeck is trying to get a meeting with the new WDVA Secretary to see what programs are still on the table.

Pat Furno suggested that we have the conference as an overnight with the presentation from Drs. Berger and Hall, possibly others, on Friday afternoon and the State Council meeting Saturday or Sunday.

Cemetery registration could also be part of the program. Could this be something that we can do at a future SC meeting?

Joe Eiting suggested (bid) to host a follow-up to the program in the Appleton Area at the Bordini Center. Attract the professional people. Fire, Law Enforcement, EMT. Fox Valley Technical College is across the street from the Bordini Center and has a Suicide Prevention Program that could assist with the program if it is held in the Appleton area. There is a person that has a program on Suicide Prevention and hand out a challenge coin with the text number for referral. Joe also advised the Bordini Center could be used at no cost.

Discussion followed indicating that the WSC should have a small program first to see how it works out i.e., received then possibly work one in Appleton in the future.

Lindbeck said, "We need to have complete support from all the VVA Chapters in order to have this type of program. Without support we will not be able to conduct such a program."

Tom Hoffman asked, "Do we want to do a large program like Joe Eiting suggested or start with a small one?"

Bob Maves suggested we go with the small one and then expand if necessary. Friday have the conference and the WSC meeting on Saturday.

There was a discussion from all in attendance on the location, program content, size of meeting and the WSC Meeting. Would this count as attendance for the State Council? Yes.

There was a short meeting of the Conference Planning Committee and it was decided that we would have it in Waupaca.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00am

Wisconsin State Council Meeting

President Lindbeck called the State Council Meeting to order at 10:10 A.M. on March 18, 2017, in Waupaca, Wisconsin. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was offered to our POW/MIA's and active duty service members. The roll call of Officers, Directors and Chapters was directed.

President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary (Excused) and Wisconsin Directors from Regions 1, 2, 3 and 4 were present. Twenty-two (22) of the 25 Wisconsin VVA Chapters were represented¹: 005(4)#1, 101(2)#1, 115(3)#1, 206(3)#1, 220(2)#1, 224(3)#1, 236(2)#1, 256(4)#1,

¹ As per VVA WSC letter sent (October 6, 2014) to all VVA WSC Officers, WSC Region Directors, and VVA WSC Chapter Presidents, Officers and their delegates; it was declared that all VVA WSC Chapters must be represented at no less than one-half or 50 percent of the scheduled WSC Meetings – held quarterly during the calendar year. Failure to meet this minimum requirement will result in disciplinary action and VVA WSC suspension – refer to VVA Constitution and National Disciplinary Policy. The () following the VVA Chapters number (e.g., 007 (3)) indicates the WSC Region and the number following the # indicates the number of meetings recorded as attended in the calendar year as per the roll call.

An underline of the VVA WSC Chapter number (e.g., 009 (1)) indicates that they have been suspended in the previous calendar year and have as yet attended the minimum meetings for the present calendar year.

324(1)#1, 331(4)#1, 351(3)#1, 409(1)#1, 425(1)#1, 437(3)#1, 448(1)#1, 479(4)#1, 529(4)#1, 635(1)#1, 729(2)#1, 731(3)#1, 767(1)#1, 921(1)#1, and At Large (Greg Foye). Also present were VVA Region 6 Director Mike Demske and AVVA Wisconsin State Representative (635) Pat Furno. The President confirmed a quorum.

Again, VVA Chapters as of December 3, 2016 who have attended only one meeting during the 2016 calendar year are VVA Chapters 005, 115, and 256 are suspended within VVA Wisconsin State Council until they fulfill their attendance obligation in 2017.

John Margowski was appointed Parliamentarian; Mike Demske was appointed Time Keeper.

Meeting agenda was approved.

President Lindbeck introduced Kewaunee County's Veteran Service Officer (CVSO), Jane Babcock to the State Council's VVA and AVVA representatives and guests who shared new literature on benefits and services through the VA and on a) War Veterans Pension Program and b) Agent Orange. With respect to the War Veterans Pension Program, Jane indicated there is an income supplements for war-time veterans; however, the amount varies based on marital status, and whether or not the veteran is housebound. Additionally, the surviving spouse, as indicated on the Draft Pension Inquiry Worksheet, is also entitled to a pension benefit based on VA criteria. [More can be found at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/pension/spousepen.asp>. On this page, it states the you can apply using VA Form 21P-534EZ; the **WSC strongly advises Veterans or surviving spouses contact and work with one of Wisconsin's CVSOs.**]

Jane shared that those Veterans stationed at Camp Lejeune (NC) indicated the VA's will provide benefits and services to those Veterans suffering from one of eight diseases, specifically leukemia, aplastic anemia (and other myelodysplastic syndromes), bladder cancer, kidney cancer, liver cancer, multiple myeloma, non-Hodgkin lymphoma, and Parkinson's disease. The VA is labeling these illnesses as presumptive conditions allowing veterans to provide only proof of their medical status, and not evidence the conditions are linked to a specific event or exposure.

Ms. Babcock also indicated that Veterans who were stationed at Fort McClellan are also being recognized by the VA for toxic exposure. In this case Veterans are strongly encouraged to contact a CVSO to get the latest information and direction from the VA.

Jane provided a number of brochures published by the USDVA (e.g., Summary of VA Dependents' and Survivors' Benefits; Summary of VA Pension Benefits; and Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors) and VVA (e.g., The VVA Self-Help Guide to Disability Compensation for Exposure To Agent Orange For Veterans And Their Families; Draft Pension Inquiry Worksheet; Has Your Child's or Grandchild's Health Been Affected by Your Military Service?); which were left on a large table outside the meeting room.

Motion by Tom Sachs (101) to accept Secretary's Minutes from the December 2016 WSC Meeting as submitted; 2nd by Duane Canon (437); unanimously approved. The Secretary will make the approved minutes available electronically on the WSC website (www.vvawi.org).

President's Report: President Lindbeck attended the National Board and CSCP meeting in Silver Spring, MD in January. The meetings were very informative and covered a range of subjects.

The main discussion dealt with the upcoming National Convention in New Orleans. It was advised that there are two hotels that will have rooms available. They are across the street from each other. The problem is parking for large vehicles that would need to park about 10

blocks from the convention site. There will be a shuttle to handle those that have the large vehicles.

Also in January I was invited to the State Capitol for the budget presentation. I had the opportunity to meet the new Wisconsin Secretary of Veteran Affairs, LTC Daniel Zimmerman. We had a nice discussion and I invited him to the Wisconsin State Council Meeting in March. Secretary Zimmerman could not attend this State Council, but has tentatively set the June meeting at The Highground to meet with us.

President Rowan called me two weeks ago and asked if I would consider taking the Credential Committee Chair for the National Convention. I did accept and look forward to the challenge of the position. I will ask the Wisconsin State Council to Pre-Register for the convention as it takes some time to register at the Convention.

VVA Finance Reports and VVA Election Reports need to be submitted to VVA National and the Wisconsin State Council each year. The sooner that the reports are turned in the easier it becomes to get verified for the Convention. The VVA Election Report must be submitted each year, even if you have elections on a two (2) year cycle.

I want to thank the Chapters for submitting all the Reports for last year on time and complete. The Suspension list from VVA National that recently came out had NO WISCONSIN Chapters on the list. Keep it up for the future.

At this time, I do not have the list of delegates that are available for the Convention, but should have it very soon. If your Chapter is not going to the convention you can assign the delegate to another Chapter or State Council for reassignment. I am sure that by the June meeting we will have a delegate account and I will have more information.

Vice-President Report: Vice-President Joe Eiting reported on a Sample Project of At Large VVA Members in the Greater Appleton Area. Joe contacted all Greater Appleton area life members to get them to transfer from at-large to a specific VVA Chapter and with only the exception of one (1) they all agreed to transfer. Please contact Joe if you are interested in learning how Joe did this project. Joe can be reached at capteiting@aol.com.

Joe shared that his VVA Chapter 351 is sponsoring a Toxic Exposure Town Hall Meeting at the Bordini Center in Appleton on April 22, 2017, from 1:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M. Registration/RSVP can be done on the VVA Chapter's website (www.vvawi351.org) as well as www.Eventbrite.com. The facility will hold up to 400 individuals.

Joe reminded everyone that VVA Chapters must designate someone in their VVA Chapter to receive the VVA Chapter's Roster from National. To designate someone in your VVA Chapter contact Anissa Ellis at 1-800-882-1316 ext. 120 or email her at membership@vva.org indicate whether you want your roster sent via email or USPS. If via email you will receive the roster in Excel and PDF formats.

Secretary's Report: John Margowski highlighted four issues from the Secretary, specifically that VVA Chapter suspension letters were sent out to the following Wisconsin VVA Chapters: 005, 115, and 256 in December. This suspension will be in effect until said VVA Chapters attend at least two (2) VVA WSC meeting in 2017. Suspension prohibits these VVA Chapters from any fundraising activities or other activities related to fundraising (e.g., receiving donations, etc.). Failure of the VVA Chapter to abide by this restriction would result in Disciplinary Action.

Second, as authorized by the WSC, the Secretary sent out 2,207 via USPS postcards to every one of Wisconsin's VVA members. The purpose of this activity was threefold. First, to use the

VVA National Roster for Wisconsin VVA Members to Verify postcards would reach the member. Second, to determine of the members who received the postcards would respond via the WSC's website and verify their address and telephone number(s). Finally, to obtain the member's email address so information could be sent to WSC VVA members by means other than USPS.

To-date 394 (17.8%) of Wisconsin's VVA members respond through the WSC website to VERIFY their information and nearly 250 (11.3%) postcards were returned as undeliverable. Nearly 80 percent of Wisconsin's VVA members who received the postcards from the WSC elected to not respond.

VVA WSC Membership Postcard Survey		
Post Cards Sent	2,207	100%
Post Cards Received (Assumption)	1,957	88.7%
Post Cards Returned (Undelivered)	250	11.3%
Members Responded (Website)	394	20.1%
Members Responded (Telephone)	5	.3%
NO RESPONSE	1,558	79.6%

The site will continue to remain active until the end of May 2017.

Third, because of the request at the meeting in December 2016, the Secretary is now using Bcc: versus To: in bulk emails. This format should allay previous privacy issues members raised.

Finally, both annual reports to VVA National (i.e., the VVA Financial Report and the VVA Election Report) are available on Nationals website: <https://vva.org/docs/> as well as our WSC website <http://vvawi.org/info/forms/index.html>. **Please** keep in mind if your VVA Chapter is doing a two-year election cycle, your VVA Chapter must submit the VVA Election Report every year to both VVA National's Membership Department and the WSC Secretary.

Treasurer's Report: Patrick Craney share that the amount for "glass receipts" shown on the Balance Sheet is a direct donation from Magnusson Industries and came from direct sales of the VVA WSC glasses to bars, beauty shops throughout Wisconsin by Steve Pape.

Pat presented the proposed budget for 2017-2018. Bob Maves (236) moved to accept the budget as proposed; which was seconded by Tom Hoffman (731); and passed unanimously.

The Treasurer informed the body that three (3) scholarships, at \$1,500 each, have been awarded by the Scholarship Committee – Virginia Nuske, Chair.

VVA Region 6 Director's Report: Michael (Mike) Demske, VVA Region 6 Director, will be traveling to Washington, D.C. in a couple of weeks to discuss the future direction of VVA. Presently there are two (2) panels (Panel A and Panel B) that have been established to study what direction the organization should be taking. Panel A is looking at keeping the organization in its present format and suggest how to eventually dissolve VVA. Panel B is looking at how the organization should change its direction.

The Agent Orange/Toxic Exposure legislation was passed by Congress; National Institutes of Health has been tasked to pull information together on AO/TE but the proposed budget reduces the budget for this activity to \$0.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the VA will be reviewing the process to upgrade dishonorable discharges to general discharges so veterans can receive their benefits.

Mike shared he is running for VVA Region 6 Director for another term.

Mike let the group know that John Margowski will be running for VVA At-Large Director; Tom Hoffman and Jim Mullarkey are assisting with his campaign but he would appreciate any additional help anyone can provide. John indicated he will especially need assistance when he addresses each of the caucuses at the Convention in New Orleans.

AAVA State Representative's Report: Pat Furno (635) reported that AVVA membership is 9,255 nationally, 973 (10.1%) within Region 6, and Wisconsin's 326 AVVA members represent 3.52% national of national membership and 33.5% within Region 6.

Based on a question from the VVA Chapter representatives present, Pat shared that AVVA does not have separate chapters rather AVVA works through existing local VVA Chapters, and working independently, AVVA supports the needs of all Veterans, their families, and their communities.

AVVA's National Convention is in New Orleans at the same time as VVA National Convention – non-elected Chapter representatives can attend AVVA meetings but cannot vote.

A new Region 6 AVVA representative will be elected at the AVVA National Convention. Pat may run for this position if enough voting Wisconsin delegates attend the Convention.

The next AVVA National Convention will be held in Spokane, WA in 2019.

VVA National Convention: President Lindbeck reiterated the dates for the Convention are August 8-12, 2017, in New Orleans, LA. The Convention will be located in the Sheraton New Orleans Hotel with overflow at the New Orleans Marriott. So far large vehicle parking (e.g., motor homes) is the biggest issue because parking is 10 blocks away and is unsecured; however, a shuttle will be available from that site to the Convention site.

The Convention is located three (3) blocks from Bourbon Street (<http://www.neworleansonline.com/tools/streets/bourbonstreet.html>) and 45 minutes from the airport – cost from the airport to the hotel is approximately \$44 roundtrip.

Taxicabs: Taxicab booths are located on the first level of the Terminal outside of Baggage Claim Belts 1 and 14. Passengers must wait in line at one of these booths for taxi service.

Taxi rides cost \$36.00 from the airport to the Central Business District (CBD) or French Quarter (west of Elysian Fields) for up to two (2) passengers. For three (3) or more passengers, the fare will be \$15.00 per passenger. Taxis are required accept credit card payments.

Airport Shuttle: Shuttle service is available from the airport to hotels and various other locations in the New Orleans for \$24.00 (per person, one-way) or \$44.00 (per person, round-trip). These fares include three (3) bags per person. Additional baggage may be subject to additional fees. Passengers can purchase tickets at the Airport at Airport Shuttle ticket booths located on the first level throughout the Baggage Claim area.

Airport Shuttle offers group rates. Large groups of fifty (50) or more people should call 1-866-596-2699 for reservations. Those needing Wheelchair-Accessible Service should also call 1-866-596-2699 for assistance. Please visit www.airportshuttleneworleans.com for more information.

Airport Limousines: A-Airport Limousine is the official luxury transportation service provider for Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport. Passengers can request service at one of the A-Airport Limousine's convenient kiosks located in the

Baggage Claim area. Rates range from \$58 for two (2) passengers to \$118 for eight (8) passengers. Rates depend on the number of passengers and the type of vehicle. Please visit the ticket booth on the first level throughout Baggage Claim. Please visit www.airportlimousineneworleans.com for more information or call 504-305-2450.

When completing your VVA Convention [Registration Form](#) use your VVA Chapter's number (e.g., 005, 256, 425, etc.) for "Chapter Affiliation Number", "Chapter/State Council", and "Representing Chapter #".

With respect to the **VVA Awards Banquet**, the WSC will reserve tables *if there is enough interest* (10 seats per table) – **DO NOT REGISTER FOR THE VVA AWARDS BANQUET ON YOUR VVA CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM IF YOU WANT TO SIT AT THE WSC BANQUET TABLE!** At **The HighGround** in June (i.e., the Annual Meeting and Picnic) President Lindbeck will ask for specific numbers of those going to the VVA National Convention and will be attending the **VVA Awards Banquet** and who would like to sit at the WSC Table(s) at the **VVA Awards Banquet**. Those who wanting a seat at the WSC Table(s) at the VVA Awards Banquet the cost is the same (\$50). If you choose to sit at the WSC Table(s) you send your money to the WSC – this will be explained at The HighGround during the WSC Meeting portion.

VVA Chapters can reassign their unassigned delegates to another Wisconsin VVA Chapter or to the State Council – this form is attached if receiving by email, available on the [VVA website](http://www.vva.org) (www.vva.org then go to the end of the page to click Resources and then click on Membership Information, Guides and Forms) and copies will be available at The HighGround in June.

REMEMBER: Two (2) VVA Chapter Officers (i.e., President, Vice-President, Secretary or Treasurer) must sign the National Convention Release Of Delegate form. This form only allows the release of those delegates from a VVA Chapter that are not attending (i.e., If your VVA Chapter has two delegates and only one person is going to the VVA National Convention as a delegate you have one delegate to release – complete the form releasing the x unused delegates to another VVA Chapter or Wisconsin State Council.) Unless truly committed to another VVA Chapter the WSC encourages VVA Chapters to release to the WSC for assignment.

DELEGATE CALCULATION

VVA Chapters receive one (1) delegate for 25 members, two (2) delegates for 50 members, and one (1) additional delegate for each additional 50 members in the VVA Chapter.

EXAMPLE A

1. VVA Chapter with 30 VVA members receives one (1) delegate.
2. VVA Chapter with 49 VVA members receives one (1) delegate.

EXAMPLE B

1. VVA Chapter with 54 VVA members receives two (2) delegates.
2. VVA Chapter with 99 VVA members receives two (2) delegates.

EXAMPLE C

1. VVA Chapter with 100 VVA members receives three (3) delegates.
2. VVA Chapter with 145 VVA members receives three (3) delegates.

EXAMPLE D

1. VVA Chapter with 150 VVA members receives four (4) delegates.
2. VVA Chapter with 176 VVA members receives four (4) delegates

Stipends: Delegates will be eligible for a stipend (e.g., VVA 2015 Convention in Springfield participating (i.e., on the Convention floor for meetings and floor votes, participate in Caucuses, and voting process) delegates were awarded \$400 per person. Representatives will vote on the recommended amount at the June meeting at The HighGround.

All delegates should bring a copy of their VVA Chapter's Election Report and Annual Financial Report, their registration, id pre-registered, and a copy of their DD214.

Pre-Register, **PREREGISTER, PRE-REGISTER** to avoid waiting in V_E_R_Y long lines.

State Convention Committee: President Lindbeck informed the WSC that the Convention has been set for Friday, September 22, 2017, at the Ramada Waupaca located in Waupaca, Wisconsin. The Convention's topic will be Veteran PTSD and Suicide Prevention. The Convention format will be an educational meeting (i.e., the presenters will provide information on the topic followed by either a structured or unstructured Question and Answer session). The main speakers are specialists from VVA National, specifically Drs. Berger and Hall. Please see the Education Committee's Report above for additional information.

Success is dependent on every one of Wisconsin's VVA Chapters to get the word out and any information produced to every element of their communities including other Veteran Service Organizations (e.g., American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, etc.). However, our speakers are opening the door to Veterans of all Eras, Veterans families, community members, caregivers, and First Responders, and more. Do we have a Veteran population to draw from in Wisconsin?

According to Veterans Data Central (Census Bureau Analysis 2010-2014) Wisconsin has more than 395,931. This data reports 35.6 percent (140,951) are Vietnam Era, 13.3 percent (52,658) are Gulf War I Veterans, 9.8 percent (38,801) are Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans, and 26.8 percent (106,109) Veterans are considered "In Between Conflicts". And just think VVA has about 2,500 members. Truly, Wisconsin has a Veteran population to reach out to!

Greg Foye (At-Large) motioned, "To discuss holding a State Convention on Friday, September 22, 2017 with appropriate materials for attendees." Maves (236), suggested a friendly amendment to "hold" vs "discuss holding". This motion with the friendly amendment was 2nd by Tom Sachs (101).

Discussion followed with Margowski sharing that Dr. Hall has changed the thrust of the audience from Veterans to Non-Veterans. Others added in addition to educating Veterans and Non-Veterans there exists a whole health care profession in Wisconsin within and outside of the VA. Another reiterated Friday, September 22nd is an excellent day for first responders and other professionals to attend since this may be a part of their regular work week; they might also be able to use attendance as continuing education credit (unit) or CEU. Further discussion included holding the Convention Saturday or Sunday; calling this a "seminar" rather than "convention".

The motion as amended (i.e., "The WSC to hold a State Convention on Friday, September 22, 2017, with appropriate materials for attendees.") was passed.

President Lindbeck appointed Vice-President Joseph Eiting to act as head i.e., Chair of the Education Committee; the Convention Committee i.e., John Margowski, Mike Demske, Tom Hoffman, Pat Furno, and Richard Lindbeck will report to Eiting.

Standing Committees:

POW/MIA Committee: Duane Canon, Committee Chair, provided a brief overview of the latest on POW/MIA returns, specifically 15 accounted for Wisconsin Vietnam Veteran remains returned, and 26 unaccounted for from Wisconsin (March 2016) and a recent report of 43 total recoveries of WWII through Vietnam, including American volunteers since our last December 2016, meeting. [NOTE: The latest reports are located on the WSC website.]

Canon added a said refrain from the Defense POW/MIA Accountability Agency in February 2017...

“Of the remaining 1,261 [unaccounted for] Americans in Vietnam, 477 are in a ‘non-recoverable’ category. This means that as a result of rigorous investigation, we have conclusive evidence the individual perished, but don not believe it possible to recover his remains. On rare occasions, new leads can arise that bring a case back to active status.”

Scholarship Committee: Virginia Nuske, Committee Chair, extended her thanks to those of VVA Chapter 206 in Shawano who make up the Scholarship Committee. This year the Committee received 15 applications which was composed of 12 direct decendants of Vietnam Veterans (frandparents), two (2) relatives of Vietnam Veterans (uncles), and one (1) with no famililal ties.

This year (2016-2017) the Committee awared three (3) scholarships. The awards went to students from New London (to attend UW-Oshkosh), Wrightstown (to attend UM-Twin Cities), and West Bend (to attend Concordia University).

Virginia requested one or more local VVA Chapter member(s) be in attendance at the award scholarship presentation(s). Please contact Virginia at your earliest convenience (Email: muskerv@frontiernet.net or Phone: (715) 524-2487.

WSC Region Directors Reports:

Region 1: (Jim Hackbarth) No Report

Region 2: (Mike Johnson) No Report

Region 3: Director Tom Hoffman shared in his report that it is this time of the year that middle and high school history and social studies teachers get to that part of U.S. History called the Vietnam War. “How well they cover it is anybody’s guess.”, Tom lamented. It is up to us, brothers and sisters, that the teachers and most of all the students “don’t just blow it off.”

The thing is, the Vietnam War is who those students’ grandparents, uncles and aunts and grand-uncles and anuts were all part of. It was a defining time in our American history – war, social change, and more.

What I am saying is, “Get out there and let all of the schools in your VVA Chapter’s area know you we are here to help and that you we real live history to the students.”

As Education Chairman in our VVA Chapter, I have contaqcted all schools in Manitowoc County and let them know what we can do and it has paid off. Last year (2016) we were contacted by seven (7) of the nine (9) middle and high schools. I am working on the other two (2) – a little harder nut to crack, but I am not giving up.

We need to keep the history of the Vietnam War alive, we are all that are left to tell the story. Please do not let all those men and women who died in Vietnam or as a result of Vietnam be forgotten. It is up to us to keep their memories alive and Vietnam in our American History.

As Vietnam Veterans and members of VVA we say, ***“Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another.”*** Moreover, never will the Vietnam Veteran abandon its brothers’ or sisters’ memories or commitments made to this country.

Region 4: (Bob Morzenti) No Report

VVA Chapter Reports:

VVA Chapter 005: Joe Heil, Treasurer, reported the VVA Chapter now has a website (www.vva5.org) which everyone is encouraged to visit and check out calendar and photos of our events.

Our Annual Chicken Feed is planned for October 1st at the Eagles Club in Lake Hallie, WI.

A fundraiser resulted in \$7,500 of which \$5,000 was donated to DAV to purchase a van to take Veterans to their doctors’ appointments at the Minneapolis VAMC.

VVA Chapter 206: Marshal Giese, President, reported that they had a representative of the Old Glory Honor Flight at their December meeting. Mr. Andy Brgiman and his wife have eleven (11) VVA Chapter 206 members signed up to go on a flight this year, hopefully.

Our VVA Chapter’s Spring Fling dinner was attended by 35 on February 11th during which we did the “Empty Table” ceremony honoring the fallen, POWs and MIAs. Our guest speaker was Mark Goebel, involved with the *Patriot Guard*. It was a wonderful evening of reminiscing and socializing.

Our VVA Chapter has Brat Fries coming up – Spring and Summer is here!

VVA Chapter 224: Steve DeRuyter, reported at our Christmas Party we welcomed all members and Gold Star families; a week’s worth of food and paper products and gift cards were delivered to 38 needy Veterans and their families; our Honor Guard presented the Colors before three Monster Truck programs; and following the delivery of scholarship applications to high schools throughout Brown County we have received 22 applications and we award five (5) \$1,000 scholarships each year.

Members continue to visit Veterans at local nursing homes.

Donations were made to the following from proceeds of the Annual Harley Raffle and Run and the Annual Golf Outing: Being There Reaching Out, Old Glory Honor Flight, NEW Community Shelter, NEW Veterans Court, Zablocki VA Christmas gift program, Quarterly deliveries to the King Veterans Homeless Shelter, and our annual contribution to WBAY’s Cerebral Palsy Telethon.

VVA Chapter 256: John Brandenburg, President, reported that the VVA Chapter donated nearly \$4,500 (two \$1,000 scholarships, nearly \$1,000 in Christmas gifts to needy children, as well as the USO, Food Pantry, Friends First, Salvation Army, and Camp American Legion); our Honor Guard assists American Legion Post 89 in funerals (21 this year); The VVA Chapter will lay our 16th Honor Stone at The HighGround in 2017 – we have honored 32 of our VVA members.

VVA Chapter 351: Larry Cavanaugh, President, reported that the VVA Chapter’s Orange Blossom and POW/MIA fundraisers resulted in \$22,000 in donations; they had 14 missions with the VVA Chapters Artifacts Display; our membership drives/activities have resulted in 53 new

members a total membership of 120; the VVA Chapter donated \$5,000 to Fox Valley Veterans Council who distribute it to Veterans organizations throughout the Appleton area; two (2) \$1,000 scholarships; planning a Toxic Exposure (Agent Orange) Town Hall on April 22nd at Fox Valley Technical College's Bordini Center; and we held our VVA Chapter's Annual Valentine's Day Dinner as well as a boat cruise on the Waupaca Chain 'O Lakes.

VVA Chapter 425: Joseph Deloria, Sr., President, reported that the VVA Chapter has secured its application to participate in Waukesha County's State Fair; our members sent ten (10) Christmas packages to service members who were deployed; 32 members and guests attend our Annual Chapter Dinner which was a delightful gastronomical experience; annual elections are planned for April; and we are planning to send our two (2) allotted VVA delegates and AVVA representatives to the National Convention in New Orleans.

VVA Chapter 437: Duane Canon, President, reported the VVA Chapter's Christmas projects were mainly donations to the Christine Ann Domestic Abuse Center, two (2) community food pantries, Veterans Home at King Homeless Veterans Program, Day by Day Warming Shelter, Salvation Army, Bella Medical Clinic for domestic abuse, and VA Voluntary Service in Tomah. At the same time the AVVA (VVA Chapter 437) provided meals at the Day by Day Warming Shelter once a month November 2016 through April 2017.

On December 7th, our VVA Chapter attended the Pearl Harbor Ceremony at the Elks Club.

Our VVA Chapter are presently reviewing and updating our VVA Chapter's By-Laws – the last update was in 2009.

In February, our AVVA donated \$500 (i.e., Ten (10) \$25 gas cards and ten (10) \$25 grocery cards) to the VA Office in Oshkosh.

Our March VVA Chapter meeting preliminarily approved an Orange Blossom drive May 19-20 coinciding with Armed Forces weekend.

VVA Chapter 448: Frank Mueller reported that the VVA Chapter had an excellent turn out for their mid-December Christmas Party.

Planning is already underway for the summer season starting with Brat Fry Fundraisers and numerous parades.

Loyalty Day² is in West Bend this year on April 29th. This VVA Chapter will participate along with the VFW and the American Legion.

² Loyalty Day was first observed in 1921 as "Americanization Day" to counterbalance Labour Day on May Day (May 1), celebrated in other parts of the world. On May 1, 1930, about 10,000 Veterans of Foreign War members staged a rally at New York's Union Square to promote patriotism. Through a resolution adopted in 1949, May 1 evolved into Loyalty Day. Observances began on April 28, 1950, and climaxed on May 1 when more than five million people across the nation held rallies. In New York City, more than 100,000 people rallied for America.

On July 18, 1958, the Congress designated May 1 of each year as Loyalty Day to foster loyalty and love of the country. According to the Legal Information Institute, the President is requested to issue a proclamation, calling on United States government officials to display the flag of the United States on all government buildings on Loyalty Day, and inviting the people of the United States to observe Loyalty Day with appropriate ceremonies in schools and other suitable places.

Memorial Day will be quite busy with the West Bend Parade, VVA WSC President Lindbeck is the keynote speaker; then another parade in Newburg.

The VVA Chapter has several Orange Blossom activities during the summer months.

VVA Chapter 479: John Willman, Secretary, reported that Wausau has been rather busy as they are affiliated with many of other Veterans organizations in the area. At the January meeting, more than 26 individuals attended the VVA Chapter meeting along with AVVA representation (Joy Foye). The "Bowl-A-Thon" held in Marshfield raised money for The HighGround, truly successful.

The VVA Chapter approved sending \$250 to the VVA WSC for a booth/table that will be set-up at the VVA National Convention in New Orleans.

Member of the VVA Chapter met three brothers returning from Honor Flight #28. They were also met by local and area wide print and TV media.

The VVA Chapter has grown by two members in the first quarter of 2017.

Along with more than 120 others, I attended a Town Hall meeting at the Tomah VA Medical Center which was being conducted by the new executive director Ms. Victoria P. Brahm. Ms. Brahm had all of the Center's Department heads and medical staff in the auditorium for this meeting which was extremely informative and highly positive. In fact, if an issue came up at the meeting it was directed to one of the department heads or medical staff to ensure it was addressed immediately. In addition to Tomah VA Medical Center directors and staff the Town Hall also invited Mr. Larry Hill, Adjutant for WI DAV and Ms. Renee Oshinski, Network Director for VISN 12 – VA Great Lakes Health Care System. Overall, this was a very helpful and informative meeting. Moreover, it was great to meet so many of our younger Iraq and Afghanistan veterans in the audience – they expressed surprise at how much was being done for them.

Of *special note* is the "Veterans Cup of Coffee" being held every Wednesday at Denny's Restaurant in Wausau. Although just a time to meet and "shoot the breeze" it has developed into more than 250 vets with a steady 60-90 every coffee day. While we still "shoot the breeze and share war stories" we are also discussing services and benefits of the various organizations. For example, I have shared information on toxic exposure that has effected Vietnam Vets and their extended families as well as our young Vets exposed to depleted uranium and "burn pits." This is an activity other VVA Chapters should consider.

VVA Chapter 729: Dennis Emery reported, from a Newsletter, the VVA Chapter had a Veterans Appreciation Dinner February 17th; a Flag Retirement Ceremony at Castle Rock Resort is planned for June as is a Legacy Stone Placing at The HighGround. Summer parades are being planned as well as a Poppy Day in September. VVA Chapter 729 donated \$200 towards Adams Veteran Memorial. Three fellow members who were lost in July and December 2016 and January 2017 were remembered in the report.

VVA Chapter 767: Tom Banner, Secretary, reported that from December to March the VVA Chapter had a "Pastie Fund Raiser" which netted \$500; several activities at Union Grove Veterans Home including a Ham Dinner and Bingo for Fairchild Hall, Bingo and Ice Cream Bar Christmas Party for Boland Hall, and an ongoing Bingo at Boland Hall once a month.

The VVA Chapter donated \$200 to the Recreation Committee at the Veterans Home in King and awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to a graduating senior after sending out 24 application packets to guidance counselors in public and private schools in Racine and Kenosha Counties.

VVA Chapter 767 also provided an activities packet with pictures which could not be included or scanned. I am asking VVA Chapter 767 to send me either a scanned copy via email or a PDF. When received I will include on our VVAWI.org website.

VVA Chapter 921: Frank Konieska, President, reported that the VVA Chapter just started their Annual Crossbow Raffle which ends in August. This is a major fundraising activity which allows us to assist/support our local Veterans and make donations local Veteran assistance programs such as Veterans Outreach Tiny Houses for Vets and food in the Racine area; we support the Union Grove Veterans Home Family Picnic in July and the Christmas Party.

Our VVA Chapter members attend and provide Honors to no next of kin funerals at the Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery.

Members of VVA Chapter 921 participated in Project 22 – Veteran Suicide Prevention Program hosted by UW-Milwaukee.

Old Business:

VVA WSC Car Show – President Lindbeck reported on the status of the First Annual Car Show being held at Ho-Chunk Casino and Hotel in Wisconsin Dells on July 14-16, 2017 (the Ho-Chunk designed Car Show flier is an image and PDF attached if receiving Minutes via email, available on the [VVA WSC website](#), and fliers will be made available at The HighGround in June.

- If 200-400 cars enter the Car Show, Ho-Chunk is projecting the VVA WSC would receive between \$10,000-\$20,000
- VVA WSC is responsible for purchasing dash plaques and trophies (estimated cost to VVA WSC \$2,500)

Tom Sachs (101) moved to allot up to \$2,500 for dash plaques and trophies for the VVA WSC Car Show; which was 2nd by Frank Mueller (448) and carried by the body.

Tom Hoffman has VVA WSC pins and patches available for sale.

The HighGround, Jim Ottman (331) provided an update on The HighGround:

- May 13, 2017, is the Helicopter Expo; rides for all Vietnam Veterans (weather permitting) with a suggested donation to The HighGround
- The Military Working Dog tribute is completed and sitting on a trailer on-site; which will be dedicated at a later date.
- Welcome Center model is available and located in the Education Center. The museum for The Holocaust has been removed from the plans; however, the guard tower and accompanying elevator have been paid for by private donors (value of approximately \$80,000-\$90,000)
- Kirk and Nancy are retiring on July 1, 2017.

New Business:

- *Milwaukee Timeshare Solicitation:* President Lindbeck is reaching out to anyone who has heard of this offer, specifically individuals would bid on a specific date for a timeshare at the Wisconsin Dells and any money raised would be given to VVA WSC. If you know of anything regarding this solicitation please email our Secretary, Jim Mullarkey, at Secretary@vvaWi.org.
- Toxic Exposure Town Hall to be held at the King Veterans Home on March 28, 2017, beginning at 10:00 A.M. This Town Hall is to honor Vietnam Veterans living at King.

- Time For Us Camp (flier is image and PDF attached if receiving Minutes via email and available on the [VVA WSC website](#)). They would also like to eventually set up a camp for children of veterans.
- AARP tax preparation reminder
 - one of the members reminded everyone AARP will help with your taxes for no charge
 - mentioned veterans who are 100% disabled receive 100% of their property taxes back
 - may also be eligible for homestead credits
- Reminder for all Veterans to be tested for Hep-C; some VA medical facilities automatically perform test, others don't – Ask if it isn't offered to you!
- Mike Demske shared that our VVA WSC Holiday or Christmas Party is Friday, December 1, 2017 at Ramada Waupaca. Discussions to-date regarding cost is \$15 for a buffet or \$18 for a sit-down meal and no decision has been made on which option. The menu for the dinner consist of chicken and pork roast.
- No specific date on a VVA Region 6 Meeting.

Jim Ottman (331) moved for adjournment; which was 2nd by Tom Sachs (101).

Meeting was adjourned at 1:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

James E. Mullarkey

James E. Mullarkey
VVA WSC Secretary

Joy L Foye
Recording Secretary

Please Note:

These Minutes would not be available without the assistance of Joy Foye serving as Recording Secretary for the VVA WSC quarterly meeting.