



Vietnam Veterans of America Wisconsin State Council

Approved Minutes
VVA WSC Fourth Quarter Minutes
Waupaca, WI
December 3, 2022

Guest Speaker

Dan Buttery
President and CEO
War Memorial Center.
Milwaukee, WI
warmemorialcenter.org



Brief Bio...

Dan Buttery stepped into his role as President and CEO of the War Memorial Center (WMC) on January 2, 2020. Buttery is the fourth President and CEO of the WMC in its 62-year history.

Buttery is a U.S. Army veteran and received the Bronze Star for 300 missions conducted in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Buttery has a strong passion for service and for supporting veterans and those currently serving in the military.

"I understand the sacrifice of those who serve. I've lost soldiers. I've had soldiers wounded," Buttery said. "I've seen the pain and the crushing impact on the families and the community that surrounds them. That's what this facility embodies."

A strategic and mission-focused leader with over 20 years of experience, Buttery has served as founder and past president of Fisher House Wisconsin, past Assistant Deputy Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs, and founder and president of HVT Marketing.

The War Memorial Center

*The mission of the WMC is to "**Honor the dead – serve the living.**"*

Dan Buttery provided a historical overview of the War Memorial organization established in 1944 following the end of WWII. Construction of the WMC began in 1955 and was dedicated on Veterans Day 1957 – now celebrating its 65th anniversary. (To learn more about the WMC go to warmemorialcenter.org).



"Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another."



The WMC was designed by Eero Saarinen (1910-1961) a Finnish-American architect whose designs span the world which includes the Gateway Arch in St. Louis, the TWA Flight Center at JFK International Airport, the main terminal of Dulles International Airport, and more.

In addition to sharing the [WMC's audio tour](#) option, Buttery shared that the WMC is establishing two permanent exhibits – The Wisconsin Medal of Honor Exhibit and The Wisconsin POW/MIA Exhibit. The Wisconsin Medal of Honor Exhibit is in the WMC as well as online – [Medal of Honor Exhibit Wisconsin](#). WMC is presently working to upgrade Lieutenant Ellen Ainsworth, the first female Silver Star Medal recipient, to a Medal of Honor recipient. The POW/MIA Exhibit, presently in development, will be the first permanent POW/MIA Exhibit in the United States.

The theme for the WMC in 2023 will be the “50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War, “POWs Coming Home” – Paris Peace Accords signed, January 27, 1973; the U.S. exits Vietnam.

Call to Order

President Demske calls the WSC Fourth Quarter Meeting to Order and requested the Secretary to take the Roll.

Roll Call

Executive Officers were in attendance, specifically President Michael Demske (0731), Vice-President Daniel Sciuti (0425), Secretary James Mullarkey (0425), Treasurer Patrick Craney (0425), and Richard Lindbeck Executive Director (0448). Also, in attendance were VVA Region Six Director John Margowski and At-Large Director Richard Lindbeck. The WSC Region Director in attendance was At-Large Director Greg Foye (At-Large). The VVA Chapters in attendance included: 0005, 0101, 0351, 0409, 0425, 0437, 0448, 0479, 0635, 0731, 1130, and At-Large. AVVA was represented by 0005, 0206, 0351, 0437, 0635, and At-Large. Representation was 50 percent a quorum was met.

The Pledge of Allegiance was delivered by members followed by a prayer by the WSC Chaplain Duane Canon.

John Margowski was appointed Parliamentarian and Richard Lindbeck was appointed Timekeeper.

Margowski motioned to accept the September 2022 Minutes as submitted; which was 2nd by Lindbeck, and passed without objection.

POW/MIA Committee Report – Duane Canon

Canon's Committee Report was moved to the top of the agenda due to an Honor Guard and funeral service for a VVA Chapter member. The Report will be placed on the WSC website.

President's Report – Michael Demske

The Color Guard from Oconomowoc was recognized for their representation of the Wisconsin State Council at The Wall in Washington on Veterans Day.



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Jack McManus supports Agent Orange/Toxic Exposure Town Halls as a major objective of VVA. He also wants VVA to emphasize the difference between **Memorial Day** and **Veterans Day** to help the general population understand those differences.

Committee Chairs shared information about a possible link between autism and [acetaminophen](#) [Click on acetaminophen for full information on the study and click here for meta-study – an abbreviated abstract is below.]. More information to follow.

Prenatal and postnatal exposure to acetaminophen in relation to autism spectrum and attention-deficit and hyperactivity symptoms in childhood [[Eur J Epidemiol.](#) 2021; 36(10): 993–1004]

The potential causing or contributing role of early acetaminophen exposure on Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC) and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is inconclusive. Researchers aimed to study this association in a collaborative study of six European population-based birth/child cohorts. A total of 73,881 mother–child pairs were included in the study. Prenatal and postnatal (up to 18 months) acetaminophen exposure was assessed through maternal questionnaires or interviews. ASC and ADHD symptoms were assessed at 4–12 years of age using validated instruments. Children were classified as having borderline/clinical symptoms using recommended cutoffs for each instrument. Hospital diagnoses were also available in one cohort. Analyses were adjusted for child and maternal characteristics along with indications for acetaminophen use. Adjusted cohort-specific effect estimates were combined using random-effects meta-analysis. The proportion of children with borderline/clinical symptoms ranged between 0.9 and 12.9% for ASC and 1.2 and 12.2% for ADHD. Results indicated that children prenatally exposed to acetaminophen were 19% and 21% more likely to subsequently have borderline or clinical ASC and ADHD symptoms compared to non-exposed children. Boys and girls showed higher odds for ASC and ADHD symptoms after prenatal exposure, though these associations were slightly stronger among boys. Postnatal exposure to acetaminophen was not associated with ASC or ADHD symptoms. These results replicate previous work and support providing clear information to pregnant women and their partners about the potential long-term risks of acetaminophen use.

Treasurer's Report – Patrick Craney

As the Treasurer stated, “The WSC still has cash in the bank.” He presented his report to the delegates.

The reimbursement (i.e., \$4,000) from VVA National for the Wall Color Guard on Veterans Day should be coming as an ACH (i.e., direct deposit) to the State Council checking account. When received he will mail a check or ACH that amount to the Treasurer of VVA 0635. The VVA 0635 Treasurer should be collecting and tabulating additional Color Guard expenses, according to the guidelines established at the September meeting, and forwarding a bottom line amount to the WSC Treasurer who in turn will forward by check or ACH to the Oconomowoc Chapter Treasurer.

Vice-President's Report – Dan Sciuti

Dan discussed his attendance at the 6th Annual Veterans Bonanza in Lacrosse on November 5, 2022. Dan also provided a handout to those in attendance. Vendors at the event included insurance companies, employment agencies, Medicare, and VA support organizations. Dan listed 13 of the vendors in his handout: VA Caregiver Support, 2-1-1, Minnesota State Veterans



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Cemeteries, VETSNET (Wisconsin Veterans Network), Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Administration, Veterans Crisis Line, VA-Community Care, Delta Dental (Veterans Affairs Dental Insurance Program), Can Do Canines (Assistance Dogs), Homes for Heroes, Inclusive - Home Modification, and Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing.

Secretary's Report – Jim Mullarkey

A number of election and financial report submissions are missing; please submit them to Jim ASAP.

Jim reminded everyone that when an obituary is sent to National and to him, he researches the veteran and writes an obituary, then puts it on the vvawi.org site under the "In Memoriam" tab. Please contact [Jim](#) if you have anything you would like to have included in the website obituary.

Jim asked anyone who hasn't already done so to complete the survey (at vvawi.org) for Dr. Whittle's PTSD research project. Also, please share this ask and information with any Vietnam and/or Vietnam Era veterans – even if they are not VVA members.

Please **send** your Election and Financial Reports to Jim Mullarkey, Secretary at jmullarkey@vvawi.org or jmullarkey@mac.com. Jim will accept hard copies at 8541 West Redwing Drive, Franklin, WI 53132. A serious number are still missing.

Remember anything you want to be included on the WSC calendar please email the Secretary. Your reports and Newsletters will be added to your VVA Chapter information.

The meeting schedule for 2023 was discussed; corrections were made to previously published information as needed. Finalized meeting dates are March 18, June 24, September 23, and December 2, 2023. All meetings, except June 24, will be held at Comfort Inn and Suites, Waupaca. The annual Christmas party will be held on December 1, at 6:00 PM. Hotel rooms may be reserved for Friday and Saturday nights at Comfort Inn and Suites (rates are \$99/night plus taxes) for all meetings.

If you move, you must notify National to continue receiving your copy of The Veteran. The change of address form can be found at vva.org under resources.

If you wish to have your status as a veteran included on your driver's license, you must go through the Wisconsin DMV; your County Veterans Service Officer can help you with starting the paperwork. Note: If this is your first veteran request, please have your DD214 in hand.

VVA Region Six Director – John Margowski

Jack McManus discussed VVA's legacy. He emphasized Chapters stressing "what it means to be an American" when doing school presentations. Guidelines for the internet were also discussed.

Veterans Voice of America (a 501(c)3) possibly taking over open VVA claims was discussed. The veteran must approve the transfer of any claim from VVA to Veterans Voice of America. Transferring claims would occur only if/when Veterans Voice of America becomes accredited.

VVA is NOT recommending **ANY** attorney and is unable to "endorse" an attorney. However, VVA and Bergmann and Moore have reached a Memorandum of Understanding regarding filing Camp LeJeune claims. A veteran can file a claim through the VA but a family member cannot since they are not a veteran, therefore, the family member may want to consider filing



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through an attorney. Bergmann and Moore have agreed to discuss what options the veteran has on filing their Camp LeJeune claim.

The April Board meeting included a discussion regarding continuing Leadership Conferences. Concerns were expressed regarding cost and how successful they are since they usually lose money; a review of this will continue.

Please re-read the Working Group I report. A Resolution and Constitution Committee will be formed to restructure and streamline VVA; there will be more to come at future meetings.

Town Halls were discussed. It is important to have a County/Tribal Veteran Service Officer (i.e., CVSO / TVSO) Officer at the Town Hall. It is also important that the C/TVSO be familiar with the PACT Act to answer questions on it from attendees.

When attending the National Convention, all delegates should read all proposed amendments. It is also very beneficial to attend committee meetings and bring up questions there before the amendments are brought to the floor.

VVA National At Large Director – Richard Lindbeck

Richard reinforced that Jack McManus wants to see VVA go back to its "roots".

Aircraft carriers have been removed from the blue water navy designation.

The VA did a study on toxic exposure to sarin gas which affects only the reproductive system. They are now questioning their own research on the topic.

If a veteran files a Camp LeJeune claim with other than the VA, the attorney fees and commission percentage and potential offsets can substantially reduce the final amount the veteran receives.

Honorary life membership for Koreans who served in Vietnam is being discussed.

The Minority Affairs Committee is looking at how to get more Native Americans to join VVA.

VVA is also looking at how to help incarcerated veterans re-integrate when they are released from prison.

Toxic Exposure and the PACT Act will need to be discussed in the 118th Congress.

VVA membership dates have been changed, the new dates are 11/01/1955 to 05/07/1975 (in-country veterans only). Richard recommends you begin using the new application form found at vva.org since it includes the new dates.

Senators Baldwin and Collins have introduced a bill to provide health care for reserve members called up for active duty.

According to the VVA Membership Committee, there are two and a half (2 ½) years of money left to reimburse VVA Chapters for membership dues.

Veterans Affairs Committee (VAC) /Council of Veterans Programs (CVP) - Vern Larson

The next VAC/CVP meeting is scheduled for December 15th.

Vern discussed the not-for-profit (\$125,000 each) and entrepreneurial grants (\$100,000 each). The grants are being reviewed so they can be distributed. All grant recipients are



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501(c)3's and must serve veterans. The entrepreneurial applicants are new/innovative groups. Vern can be the point of contact if anyone has questions.

The MIA bill needs our support; we need to lobby our legislators to support the bill.

AVVA Report - Pat Furno

AVVA Region 6 Director, Rick Talford, has resigned; Barbara Coan, the Region 6 Deputy Director, was installed in the position.

By-law change submissions for the August 2023 AVVA National Convention are due by 4/1/23. Contact Pat with any ideas, questions, or concerns.

Committee Reports

Legislative - Dan Sciuti

Since the mid-term elections were occurring, legislative activity was limited but the following items are worth repeating. Copies of both these items can be found at vva.org.

The Major Richard Starr Act (S 344): Contact your senators and urge them to support this act which allows a veteran with a combat-related disability and fewer than 20 years of service to receive retirement pay, without reduction, while receiving disability compensation.

The Camp LeJeune Justice Act (CLJA): VVA's National Board signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Bergmann and Moore to offer screening services to VVA members, their friends, and families to advise them on whether or filing a CLJA claim is in their best interests.

Agent Orange Committee -

The Committee recommended the State Council make a donation of \$500 to the Appleton Chapter for its upcoming Town Hall meeting on April 29, 2023. The motion came out of committee so no second was needed; the motion was passed.

Old Business:

VVA WSC calendar for 2023: All meetings will be in Waupaca; the June meeting will be at a local park (exact location to be determined).

New Business:

Richard Lindbeck made a motion to send a donation \$1,000 to the Florida State Council for the latest hurricane; seconded by Vern Larson; the motion passed without objection.

For the Benefit of the Order:

Pat Furno (AVVA) distributed a Milwaukee Journal Sentinel article about a homeless Vietnam veteran whose body was found in the Wausau area.

Mike Demske shared that several members of Veterans Voice of America are former VVA National employees.

Richard Lindbeck, Chair of the VVA Credentials Committee, reminded everyone that to be seated



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as a delegate at the 2023 VVA National Conference all VVA Chapter Election Reports and Annual Financial Reports must be submitted to and received by VVA National and VVA WSC prior to the Convention.

Jim Mullarkey reminded those in attendance that Article V Section 3 of the WSC By-Laws reads:

§3 Chapters are required to have at least one delegate present at half the Council meetings each calendar year; failure of a Chapter to meet this requirement shall result in the automatic suspension of that Chapter's voting rights at the State Council meetings until that Chapter is following the attendance requirement. If the Chapter fails the attendance requirement in the following calendar year the Council will invoke Article II Section 3(A)(2) of the VVA Constitution (2021).

During the pandemic, this Section of Article V was in abeyance; however, with the lifting of COVID restrictions in Wisconsin and the WSC delegates meeting again this Article will be reinstated at the first meeting in 2023.

Richard Lindbeck moved to adjourn the meeting, it was seconded by Dan Sciuti, and Mike Demske approved.

Respectfully submitted by,

James E. Mullarkey

James E. Mullarkey, Secretary
VVA Wisconsin State Council

Joy Foye

Joy Foye
AVVA At-Large Member



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