



**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
WISCONSIN STATE COUNCIL**

State Council Meeting
The HighGround
Neillsville, Wisconsin

June 18, 2016

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Agent Orange Committee Meeting



Attendance: Richard Lindbeck, John Margowski, Mike Demske, James Mullarkey, Tom Hoffman, Pat Ciofani.

Recorder: Richard Lindbeck

Called to order by Mike Demske at 9:00 A.M.

Mike Demske reported that Agent Orange Town Halls were done in Milwaukee and Eau Claire with one is scheduled for Appleton on August 6th. Many CVSOs have requested packets to hand out to Vietnam Veterans that come into their offices. Mokie Porter has sent packets to those CVSOs who have requested them.

Pat Ciofani proposed a possible site at the State Fair Park in Milwaukee.

Parking would not be a problem there.

It was suggested that we talk up the Agent Orange with others and see if they want to sponsor a program.

Richard Lindbeck reported that the program at Indian Summer in September may not happen. No information or contact from Nate Nez or the Native American Motorcycle Group to hold the event.

Hep-C is something that all Vietnam Veterans need to have checked since most of Vietnam Era Veterans received injections with the air gun.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50am.

Wisconsin State Council Meeting

President Lindbeck called the State Council Meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. on June 18, 2016, at the HighGround in Neillsville, Wisconsin. The Pledge of Allegiance was given by all present and a *moment of silence* was offered to our POWs, MIAs, and our active duty service members. The Secretary was then directed to take the roll call of Officers, Directors, VVA Chapter delegates, and guests.

The following were present: WSC President, WSC Secretary, and WSC Treasurer, WSC Region 2 Director, WSC Region 3 Director, WSC Region 4 Director, and WSC At-Large Director. VVA Region 6 Director, Michael Demske, and Wisconsin's AVVA Representative, Pat Furno were Present. The VVA WSC Chapters present¹ included: 092(2)#1, 206(2)#2/##2, 220(2)#1, 221(2)#1, 236(2)#1, 324(2)#1, 331(1)#2/##1, 409(2)#3/##1, 425(1)#8/##3, 437(2)#2, 448(2)#2, 479(2)#1/##2, 529(2)#, 731(2)#2, 767(2)#2, 921(2)#1, At-Large(2)#1. VVA WSC was pleased to have six (6) guests.

President Lindbeck appointed John L. Margorski as Parliamentarian, and Mike Demske as Timekeeper.

There was a motion by John Margowski and seconded by Mike Johnson to approve the Agenda. This motion was carried without objection.

The VVA WSC Unapproved Minutes of the March 2016 was motioned to be approved as submitted by John Margowski and seconded Thomas Hoffman. This motion was carried without objection. (These Minutes were made available via email using bulk mailer as provided on Election Reports and requests submitted via the VVA WSC email request option on vvawi.org and requests submitted to the Secretary at secretary@vvawi.org.) Following approval Minutes are posted to the VVA WSC website at vvawi.org.

President's Report: President Lindbeck, Mike Demske, and Joe Eiting presented an Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting on March 29th at King.

Mike Demske, Jim Hackbarth and President Lindbeck presented an Agent Orange Town Hall in Eau Claire, VVA Chapter 005. VVA Chapter 005 did an outstanding organizational operation resulting in a significant number of attendees.

The National BOB/CSCP meeting was held in Silver Spring, MD in April 2016. A major topic of discussion was the VVA's aging population and discussions for possible future changes. Included in the discussion was opening the membership door to Iraq/Afghanistan Veterans – further discussions are planned.

May 4th John Margowski, Mike Demske, Jim Hackbarth, Joe Eiting, Pat Furno, and President Lindbeck did an Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting in Milwaukee at the Elk Lodge for VVA Chapter 324. VVA Chapter did a great job in getting the word out.

June 2-5 Mike Demske, John Margowski, Pat Furno, and President Lindbeck traveled to St. Cloud, MN for the Region 6 Conference. VVA National was represented by President John

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 number of meetings recorded as attended in the calendar year as of 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. The number following the # sign indicates the number VVA members represented and ## the number of AVVA members.

Rowan and VVA Treasurer Wayne Reynolds. While there was a good turn out for the Conference the SCs of Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska were unable to attend due to long standing prior commitments. Conferees received an excellent tour of Camp Ripley's Veterans' Museum and the Natural Resources Museum.

The National Leadership Convergence is planned for July 19-24, 2016 in Tucson, AZ. Those planning to attend need to get reservations in ASAP. After June 30th you must register at the Conference.

The next WSC Meeting is scheduled for September 17, 2016, at the Comfort Suites/Firefox in Waupaca, WI

VVA Region 6 Report: Mike Deske, VVA Region 6 Director, added to President Lindbeck's review of the Region 6 Conference held in St. Cloud. The major foci of the Conference was on Agent Orange, Hepatitis C (leading the discussion was a presenter California), and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Secretary's Report: James Mullarkey, VVA WSC Secretary, reiterated two pieces of information to taken back to VVA Chapters. First, VVA National has modified both the Financial and Election Report forms. With respect to the former the 990 receipt must accompany the VVA Chapter's Financial Report or it will not be accepted. Second, copies of the Election Report (2016) and the Financial Report (2015) with IRS data must be submitted to the VVA WSC Secretary.

The Secretary shared an Email from Laura Robinson regarding VVA Chapter 236...

"The Rock County VVA Chapter 236 went above and beyond for myself and my children on May 23rd. VVA Chapter members were at Craig High School to give a talk to my daughter's social studies class. We had just buried my father, John Leja, a Vietnam Veteran n Saturday. I was concerned it would be very hard for my daughter so I cam to the class. I wanted to explain the situation in case she needed to leave so that they knew she was not being rude. What happened next was amazing!

The support I received from the men was beyond what I could have asked for. They asked for me to get my son out of his class to join in with her class. They let him wear the field gear my Dad would have worn [in Vietnam]. Then after class they performed the flag folding ceremony and gave each of us coins as well as letting us keep the flag in honor of my Father.

Each of the men had genuine compassion for what we were going through. I had told my daughter that morning that Vietnam Vets look at each other as brother and the families of other Vets as their own. These men demonstrated this to my children beyond words. It is very hard to express all of this in writing.

I just wanted to say that these men truly helped my children and I through our grief!

Thank you for your service.

Treasurer's Report: Patrick Craney, VVA WSC Tresurer, provided VVA WSC Financial Report.

AVVA Representative Report: Pat Furno, Wisconsin's AVVA Representative, reported that AVVA has modified their membership fees to \$100 for those 60 years and older and \$175 for those under 60 years.

Pat gave a brief update on the In Memory plaque in Washington, D.C. The powers of moving this forward are moving slowly. At this point in time, it appears, the plaque will not be upright rather on the ground.

VVA WSC Region Director Reports: Regions 1, 2, and 4 had no reports.

Region 3's report as shared by Tom Hoffman...

"My report is going to be summed up in the following letter from the Teachers at Washington Jr. High School in Manitowoc, WI."

"God bless you all and please keep our Men and Women who are serving our Country in your thoughts and prayers."

From: "Romatowski, Mark
To: "Tom Hoffman"
Sent: Tuesday, May 24, 2016 10:11 AM
Subject: Some thoughts that Jim put to paper for us

I have studied history for many years and the Vietnam War has always held a special interest for me. For many years I have had the distinct pleasure and opportunity to get to know and listen to the Vietnam Veterans reveal their thoughts, feelings, and sentiments about the war. I admire these men with the highest of esteem and honor, words fail to thoroughly describe these feelings, but every year I am torn up emotionally that they still wrestle with the legacy of the war. The WWII generation is called the greatest generation for what they endured and accomplished in defeating fascism around the world. They deserve the title. I also think that the Vietnam veterans should also hold claim to that designation as well. The lessons of Vietnam will hopefully never be forgotten. In numerous ways their sacrifice has changed the way this country handles war and foreign affairs. The mistakes the leaders, media, and American's made during the Vietnam Era will, optimistically, never happen again. This country will never again turn their back on a generation of soldiers. Our Vietnam vets, through their sacrifice, have saved the lives of untold millions of soldiers presently and for generations to come by the lessons learned, as well as sheltered the many service men and women from the heartache of a country not appreciative of their sacrifice. Current American service members, as well as every citizen of this country, owes the Vietnam Veterans the ultimate thank you for not only did they serve honorably, with some giving the ultimate sacrifice, but they also endured the burden of a nations errors so that all of those brave men and women of the future do not have to.

That makes them part of the greatest generations in my book.

Jim Bukowski
Mark Romatowski
David Bukowski

Mr. Mark Romatowski
9th Grade American History Teacher
Washington Junior High School

VVA Chapter Reports:

VVA Chapter 206 as reported by Marshal Giese, shared the VVA Chapter since the last VVA Wisconsin State Council meeting has been very active. On April 2nd we presented the colors for a cancer relay walk in Shawano. This annual event always brings out a lot of people. Participating in the walk are not only sponsors but also a great number of survivors who tell their stories.

On May 27, 28 & 29 we sold brats at a store in Shawano. This was very productive for us. This is also one of our annual events. We gave two \$500.00 scholarships this year to graduating seniors at the Clintonville School District. We are also a part of the Dollars for Scholars in the Shawano School District. Our Chapter gave \$5,000.00 to the endowment fund.

On Memorial Day, Chapter 206 was in charge of setting up the parade along with the program that followed in Shawano. This program always has a large crowd. I and my wife Sue presented the wreath during the ceremony. Our Chapter firing squad participated next. The weather was perfect. Our chapter was also in charge of the afterglow what followed.

On June 9, 10 & 11 we served brats again. This time it was at Charlie's County Market in Shawano. This was also a popular event.

We have 42 members in our VVA Chapter of which 10 did all the work for the brat fries along with 3 wives. "Thank You" to everyone who worked to make this event a huge success.

VVA Chapter 220 as reported by David Shaw, our VVA Chapter made a total of \$3,000.00 in donations directly from the Chapter as well as individual contributions, specifically \$1,400.00 to the HighGround (VVA Chapter), \$1,500.00 to individuals (contributions), and \$100.00 to the John Bell Chapter of DAR (VVA Chapter).

VVA Chapter 324 as reported by Pat Ciofani, shared they donated \$300 to the February Stand Down, hosted an Agent Orange Town Hall (see above), both donated to and marched in the Memorial Day parade, donated \$500 to Chuck Theusch's ongoing work in Southeast Asia and founder of the Library of Vietnam Project – covering Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

VVA Chapter 425 as reported by Joseph Deloria, Sr. indicated they had six (6) fundraising events, issued four (4) scholarships, was Color Guard at the Memorial Day parade, sent four (4) packages to deployed service member Patrick Curley, and will have a booth at the Waukasha County fair.

VVA Chapter 437 reported that in April the VVA Chapter had nomination and elections of officers and board members for VVA and AVVA representative follow by their installations.

The VVA Chapter donated \$500 to the HighGround for their new Welcome Center.

In May we had a guest speaker, Ed Demler, chaplain for the Winnebago County Jail Ministry, who served in the U.S. Marine Corps. He offered his services to any veteran that needed a minister for their funerals at no cost.

Our VVA Chapter is getting new polo shirts and looking into new spring jackets for both the VVA and AVVA.

We donated \$500 to the Camo Quilt Project that makes lap quilts for those that are serving overseas and veterans in nursing homes and \$100 to the Military Veteran Museum in Oshkosh for their Bin of Books Project to purchase books related to the different wars and distribute them to school-age children.

One of our members, Dennis Cartwright, attended a memorial in Neenah at the Isle of Valor honoring two veterans from Menasha that received the Medal of Honor. Also, the veteran's monument that was at the library was moved the Isle of Valor which is now a national monument

Our president, Duane Canon was the master of ceremony for a memorial service at the Lakeview Memorial Park Cemetery honoring those that had passed away from the past year, both veterans and from the public.

On Memorial Day our VVA Chapter is in charge of the Memorial Day Procession line up – during the Procession members of our VVA Chapter would go to the crowd and thank many

veterans for their service. Following the Procession, we participated in the program at Riverside Cemetery.

For June we are getting ready for the 4th of July parade in Oshkosh – our VVA Chapter is in charge of getting the parade lined up. We are one of the last ones in the parade where we march to Menominee Park. Once there we meet at the Veteran's tent where the VFW Band plays patriotic songs and end with each branch of service songs.

Our VVA Chapter in concert with AMVETS Post 7 of Oshkosh in the Veteran's tent for Sawdust Days – we will be collecting donations for the Old Glory Honor Flight during that time.

VVA Chapter 479 as reported by Gary Moll, donated \$250 to the Edgar Schools, September 24, 2015 when the Wall was at the Edgar School District. Coordinated by Colin Hanson — 5th Grade Teacher at Edgar; participated at the Ghost Army Presentation held at the Edgar School Gymnasium — November 10, 2015; donated to and participated in the Veterans Day Ceremony in Wausau held on November 11, 2015; donated \$100.00 to Hmong Veterans Memorial; Holiday Party was held on January 2016; donation of \$50.00 to the Highground for Bowling Fundraiser; quarterly Business Meeting with election of Officers and Board of Directors was held on April 24, 2016; held a Brat Fry in Stratford on May 6, 2016, netting over \$700.00; participated in the Wausau Memorial Day Parade and the Stratford Heritage Days Parade; VVA Chapter Annual picnic planned July 31, 2016, at AMCO Park for VVA/AVVA/Family & Friends. Brat Fry (Planned) for September, 2016.

VVA Chapter 731 reported the education Committee and the Color Guard was very busy since the last State Council meeting presenting programs at Wilson Jr. High Manitowoc, Mishicot High School Mishicot, Washington Jr. High Manitowoc, and Valders High School Valders.

The Color Guard did Programs at Washington Jr. High Manitowoc, Wilson Jr. High Manitowoc, and Valders High School Manitowoc, at the program at Valders the VVA Chapter gave a Plaque to Bob Evans a long time US History teacher, about to retire, for being a great Advocate of Veterans especially Vietnam Veterans. The Color Guard also did a Program for the Elks in Manitowoc on Flag Day. A program for Thrivent Financial was conducted by Color Guard at the Manitowoc Airport, Honoring the American Flag. The Chapter gave out four \$1,000 Scholarships to Students at 4 different area High Schools, Lincoln, Roncalli, Lutheran, all of Manitowoc, and a Student at Mishicot High School, Mishicot.

Old Business:

Reminder of the availability of the Libby glasses with VVA Logo and the Wisconsin State Council imprint. Information is available on the VVA WSC website at the News tab and then Fundraising Opportunity (<http://vvawi.org/news/fundraising-opportunity.html>).

New Business: John Margowski as part of the VVA WSC Nominating and Election called the Wisconsin State Council elections for all offices. Following the elections the representing state delegates from the respective VVA WSC Regions must meet to elect their Region Directors.

Margowski called elections closed by requesting from the body any additional nominations from the body as each office was being identified for:

President: Richard Lindbeck, motion to elect by unanimous agreement made by James Mullarkey and seconded by Patrick Craney and moved to carry without objection by John Margowski.

Vice-President: Joe Eiting, motion to elect by unanimous agreement made by John Margowski and seconded by Greg Foye and moved to carry without objection by John Margowski.

Secretary: James Mullarkey, motion to elect by unanimous agreement made by John Margowski, seconded and moved to carry without objection by John Margowski.

Treasurer: Patrick Craney, motion to elect by unanimous agreement made by John Margowski and seconded and moved to carry without objection by John Margowski.

Following a short recess the body returned with the election of the VVA WSC Region Directors:

Region 1: Frank Mueller

Region 2: Mike Johnson

Region 3: Tom Hoffman

Region 4: Robert (Bob) Morzenti

At Large: Greg Foye

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Mullarkey, Secretary
VVA Wisconsin State Council