



VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
WISCONSIN STATE COUNCIL

State Council Meeting
Ramada Waupaca
Ramada, Wisconsin
September 23, 2017

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES



Education Committee Meeting

Attendance: Joseph Eiting (Chair), Richard Lindbeck, Pat Furno, Mike Demske, John Margowski, and Jim Mullarkey

The Committee was convened at 9:00 A.M.

Joe Eiting (Chair) began by indicating the Veteran Suicide Prevention Program, composed of two parts – 1) PTSD/Suicide Prevention presented by Drs. Berger and Hall from VVA National and 2) QPR presented by Michael Crum, MSW representing the Center for Suicide Prevention. The formal head count for the program was 92 individuals; however, it was noted that more than 100 people were present with some neither registering or signing in.

Mike Demske raised the possibility of PTSD Teams similar to the AO/Toxic Exposure Team or “Team Wisconsin.” This was discussed further by the committee with the suggestion to come up with a framework and discuss the development of this type of team with Drs. Berger and Hall.

John Margowski shared that there was no evaluation form for the program. This could have been accomplished with or without the presenters input. For future education programs an evaluation program should not only be considered, but a standardized format developed so analytics can be reviewed and our efforts continuously improved.

The overall consensus of the committee’s discussion was that the Veteran Suicide Prevention Program was successful and its need truly demonstrated. However, as a new committee it needs develop both the ways and means for increased communication and coordination.

The Education Committee adjourned at 10:00 A.M.



Wisconsin State Council Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 A.M. by President Richard Lindbeck at the Waupaca Ramada in Waupaca, Wisconsin; which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence offered to our POW/MIA's and active duty service members. Lindbeck directed Secretary Mullarkey to take the roll call of Officers, Directors and Chapters.

President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Directors from Regions 1, 2, 3, 4, and At Large were present. VVA Region 6 Director Bob Grabinski, VVA At-Large Director John Margowski, AVVA Wisconsin State Representative Pat Furno, and VVA Agent Orange/Toxic Exposure Co-Chair Mike Demske. Eighteen (18) of Wisconsin's 25 VVA Chapters were represented¹: 005(4)#3, 101(2)#3, 115(3)#3, 206(3)#3, 224(3)#3, 236(2)#3, 324(1)#3, 351(3)#3, 425(1)#3, 437(3)#3, 448(1)#3, 479(4)#3, 529(4)#3, 618(3)#1, 635(1)#1, 731(3)#3, 767(1)#3, and 921(1)#3. The President confirmed a quorum.

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

A motion was made by Margowski to adjust the Meeting Agenda to remove Old Business; which was seconded by Demske and was amended without objection. The Agenda as amended was approved without objection.

The WSC Minutes from the June 17, 2017, held at The HighGround, were approved without objection.

President's Report: President Lindbeck shared he attended the VVA National Convention in New Orleans during which President John Rowan, Vice-President Marsha Four, Secretary Bill Meeks, and Treasurer Wayne Reynolds were elected for another two-year term. John Margowski was elected as At-Large Director and Bob Grabinski as the VVA Region 6 Director. Mike Demske was appointed to the Agent/Dioxin Committee (Maynard Katerlick, Chair).

I am proud to report that my first time as Credential Chair we had 844 delegates registered and only 18 registered onsite. I stressed pre-registration prior to the Convention and it made my job a lot easier. President Rowan reappointed me as the Credential Chair for the next Convention being held 2019 in Spokane, WA. I would suggest you plan now you are considering attending.

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.

The VVA Leadership Conference will be held in Palm Springs, CA in 2018. It is scheduled for late July and once again it will probably be warm. If you are interested or considering a leadership role in your VVA Chapter or the State Council it is greater opportunity to learn.

In late August, I attended the Air Force Security Forces Convention in Washington, D.C. At the time, I had the opportunity to go to Andrews AFB and met with the unit that I was assigned to in Oklahoma and shared with the Commander information on where the 11th Security Forces came from – the unit was unaware of its history prior to 1995.

On behalf of the WSC, I attended Indian Summer in Milwaukee to hand out information on Agent Orange/Toxic Exposure and shared information on benefits the Native Americans are entitled to for their military service. John Margowski, Jim Hackbarth and my wife also helped on Saturday of Indian Summer. We all got to attend the Grand Entry and as usual it was outstanding. There is a possibility that the WSC Agent Orange/Toxic Exposure team – Team Wisconsin, may be doing an Agent Orange Town Hall next year at Indian Summer.

Our next State Council meeting is December 2nd; however, our Annual WSC Dinner and White Elephant Christmas Party is Friday, December 1st. Now is the time to clear the closet of the gifts you may want to re-gift or wrap Aunt Matilda's precious antique for an unsuspecting Dinner and Party friend.

Again, the WSC meeting will start promptly at 10:00 A.M. on December 2nd. Committee meetings such as Agent Orange, Education, etc. will be starting at 9:00 A.M. Hope to see you there and do not forget to contact Mike Demske (Mobile: 920-973-3909 or Email: Michael.Demske@yahoo.com) with so he can place the meal and beverage count to the hotel. Cost per person is \$17.11.

Associate VVA Report: Pat Furno, Wisconsin AVVA State Representative, shared that concurrent to the VVA Convention held in New Orleans was the AVVA Convention. President Sharon Hobbs, Vice-President Elayne Mackey, Secretary Nina Schloffel, Treasurer Kathy Anadras, and AVVA Region 6 Director Fran Davis (MO) will be serving 2017-2019.

The AVVA Convention has approved term limits to ten (10) years.

Chapters should be electing their AVVA Chapter delegate according to AVVA Policies and Procedures (www.avva.org). Please note elections will be held in April of even numbered years. The Wisconsin State delegate will be elected in June of that year concurrent with the WSC Meeting held at The HighGround in June. Technically, VVA and AVVA elections should occur simultaneously.

VVA Region 6: Bob Grabanski (MN) (GRAB1945@gmail.com), VVA Region 6 Director, shared his goal as director is to “attend every State’s meeting to learn what each State Council wants to do or accomplish in Region 6 and how he may assist in facilitating their goals.” As an example, Bob shared that Minnesota’s goal has been to spread the word about Agent Orange and Dioxin Exposure not only as it has impacted Veterans, but their children, grandchildren, and extended generations yet to be born. This goal required some level of funding that would allow the message to develop and grow. As a result, the State Council developed was a fishing lure with information on the packaging, and coloring reflective of VVA. Recognizing you had to have a “hook” for sales they came up with the tagline “Happy Hookers.” Now the Agent

Orange/Dioxin Team in MN is known as the Happy Hookers and they have an easy in to start discussing Agent Orange and Dioxin Exposure.

Bob shared that Mike Demske will be serving as the Region 6 Alternate and Richard Lindbeck and John Margowski will be serving with him on the VVA National Disciplinary Committee.

Although not finalized Bob indicated he is in the planning stages for a Region 6 Meeting to be held August or September 2018, in Ames, Iowa. Presently, two issues that appear to top the list are PTSD/Suicide and Household Goods. Please feel free to share additional issues to Bob directly or through your State Council. As more information and details are developed they will be shared through the WSC.

Secretary's Report: Secretary Mullarkey reported that while all of Wisconsin's VVA Chapters submitted their Election and Financial Reports to VVA National the Secretary is still missing reports which are required to be submitted to the Secretary.

Moreover, the Secretary has identified a number of VVA Chapters continue to use outdated reporting forms. VVA National has gone to great lengths to simplify the reporting forms required for Elections and Financials. In an effort to assist VVA Chapters the Secretary only provides the most up-to-date forms on the WSC website. At the December 2017 WSC meeting the Secretary will be asking what action needs to be taken to address this issue.

Per a request from the President, the Secretary will develop letters of appreciation to President Rowan for the Suicide Prevention Program presented by Drs. Berger and Hall. Similar letters will be developed for Dr. Berger and Dr. Hall. These letters will go out under the signature of the WSC President with Cc to accompany the September Minutes.

The Secretary shared that the present website 1) is not considered secure at this moment, mainly due to the links to VVA's WebWeekly and a few RSS sites and 2) is not mobile-friendly according to Google. To be mobile-friendly the site must operate on the computer as well as mobile devices such as mobile phone, smartphone, and tablet. To insure the information on the WSC website is secure the Secretary will contact our hosting provider and add the security option; however, full security will not go into effect until the new site is made available.

The Secretary has two goals in developing and launching the new site. First, the content and format will remain fairly similar as that which is on the present website. Second, the new website will be ready for launch NLT than March 2018. In accomplishing these goals anyone who has recommendations for improving the site should contact the Secretary (secretary@vvawi.org) with their suggestions. The Secretary would like to roll out a Beta Version the website mid- to late January.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Patrick Craney provided report through the end of August 2017, including Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the Six Months Ending August 31, 2017 and Cash Disbursements Journal June 1 to August 30, 2017.

Christmas Party: Mike Demske reminded the group that the Christmas Party date of **Friday, December 1st** is locked. The meal cost is \$17.11 per person. The Christmas Party schedule is:

- Social hour upstairs in Ramada Waupaca's local refreshment establishment at 5:00 P.M. (i.e., 1700 hours),

- Dinner following at 6:00 P.M. (i.e., 1800 hours) in the lower level, and
- White Elephant Gift Exchange following dinner – around 7:00 P.M. (i.e., 1900 hours) +/- 30 minutes or so.

Keep in mind the full WSC meeting will begin promptly at 10:00 A.M. (i.e. 1000 hours) on **Saturday, December 2nd**.

Please be advised, unless otherwise directed, Committee meetings begin promptly at 9:00 A.M. (i.e., 0900 hours) and should conclude by 9:50 A.M. (i.e., 0950 hours).

WSC Region Director's Reports:

Region 1: No report.

Region 2: No report.

Region 3: Tom Hoffman reported he had the privilege and honor to attend the VVA National Convention and again it was a very rewarding experience – camaraderie, as always, was special. The Convention carried on its normal business, a few debates, and voting. The weather was hot and humid but still much cooler than Nam!

I had the privilege to help John Margowski conduct a successful campaign for National At-Large Director. All the National officers ran unopposed and VVA Region 6 has a new Director from Minnesota (MN) Bob Grabinski.

One of biggest issues was discussion that two teams are in place to research and develop plans for the future of “our organization.” During the Leadership Conference to be held in 2018 in Palm Springs they will provide an interim report. However, the teams will be reporting out at the next National Convention in 2019.

Region 4: Bob Morzenti reported that there are two NEW VVA Chapters in the process of forming. The first VVA Chapter is in the Hayward, WI area. They are awaiting their EIN number (i.e., IRS Tax ID Number). The second NEW VVA Chapter is just in the development stages and they are located in Marinette, WI.

POW/MIA Committee: Duane Canon provide a wealth of information from the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, especially the recent accounting of seven (7) Americans; however, 1,600 POW/MIA and unaccounted for remain – 1,251 in Vietnam, 294 in Laos, 48 in Cambodia, and seven (7) in territorial waters. The latest statistical report is available at dpaa.mil or by clicking [here](#). A complete mapping of the unaccounted for is available by clicking [here](#).

VVA Chapter Reports:

VVA Chapter 005: James McBee, Secretary, reported a very busy quarter for the Chapter, especially in fundraising – 5th Annual Chicken Feed Dinner, booths at several county fairs, and the Northern Wisconsin State Fair. On September 20th, our members hosted a fundraising event at the Pizza Ranch where we bussed tables to promote both the VVA Chapter and our upcoming October fundraising event - \$189 from portion of proceeds, \$236 in tips, and \$245 in raffle tickets for the October event.

In October, we will host our Fall Festival Raffle and Chicken/Brat/Hot Dog Meal at the Eagles Club in Chippewa Falls – this is an exciting fund-raising event for friends and families.

The Mike Voth Memorial Chapter marched in the Mondovi 4th of July Parade and presented at other Veteran events.

We were pleased to send delegates/members to the VVA National Convention in New Orleans.

Our VVA Chapter was honored by Prestige Auto on August 16th as part of their yearly tribute to local Veteran organizations in the Chippewa Valley – we were one of eight recipients for 2017.

New members are joining both our VVA Chapter and AVVA. Presently our VVA Chapter has 147 members with additional applications being processed.

VVA Chapter 005 membership continues to look for ways to serve the community including volunteering at The HighGround, the Veterans Home in Chippewa Falls, serving on the Veterans Council, and participating in the formation of the *Veterans Tribute Park Trail* along the Eau Claire River.

VVA Chapter 224: Steve DeRuyter reported that the VVA Chapter's Honor Guard and Rifle Squad took part in several events in the past three months including Colors and marching at the Memorial Day Service with the Rifle Squad, Buglers for Echo Taps, and reading the names at the Memorial. The VVA Chapter's Color Guard presented the Colors before the Timber Rattlers Baseball Game, the opening of the "Greater Green Bay Labor Council" picnic, and the POW/MIA Recognition Day. The Color Guard and Rifle Squad presented the Colors at the July 4th ceremony in Green Bay and they along with the Buglers presented the Colors at the Annual Harley Ride at the Pearly Gates.

VVA Chapter 224 held its Annual Harley Rally, raffle and golf outing – our largest fund raiser of the year. Proceeds were disbursed for five (5) \$1,000 scholarships, King Veterans Home Homeless Veterans Program, the Zablocki VAMC (Milwaukee), Being There Reaching Out, Old Glory Honor Flights, NEW Veterans Court, NEW Community Shelter, Festival Foods Gift Cards for needy Veterans, DAV, Howard VFW, Dean Opika Memorial Fund, and a contribution to Hurricane Harvey Relief through WSC.

Members took part in the annual Meet and Greet at the Brown County Fair, this year the DAV was recognized. Additionally, members joined Desert Storm Veterans in cleaning out a Vietnam Veteran's home that had been neglected for years – the Veteran has hopes of returning to the home after it is refurbished.

Several of our VVA Chapter members were chosen for the most recent Yellow Ribbon Honor Flight to D.C. and returned to a welcome home at the E.A.A. Convention in Oshkosh.

VVA Chapter 206: Indicated the report would be sent via email but mentioned they held a number of Brat Fries, was at the County Fair, presented at a POW/MIA program in Shawano with General Kohn, and presentation of the Ken Burns Vietnam War.

VVA Chapter 351: President Larry Cavanaugh reported the VVA Chapter stood down most of the summer, though we did have our Artifact Display at the airport for the Plane Pull Fundraiser benefitting Old Glory Honor Flight of Appleton. The nearly \$70,000 raised will almost pay for one Honor Flight. The Artifact Display will be moving to the Kaukauna High School followed by a mission at the Rawhide Boys Ranch south of New London.

Our VVA Chapter membership is still on the rise with 135 members up from 67 just two (2) years ago.

The VVA Chapter's POW/MIA Fundraiser on September 15th raised \$8,539.

VVA Chapter 437: Duane Canon shared the VVA Chapter and assisted and participated in the 4th of July assisted in Oshkosh. Also, during the 4th of July week the VVA Chapter worked with the AMVETS Post 7, of Oshkosh, in a concession tent during Sawdust Days. The VVA Chapter collected donations during this time for the Old Glory Honor Flight with donations of \$5,050.

In September, our VVA and AVVA Chapter donated to the Texas and Florida Hurricane Relief Fund, \$500 each, coordinated through the WSC.

Lt. Col. Michael Hert, U.S. Army (Ret.) was our speaker at the POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony held by our VVA Chapter. Lt. Col. Hert was deployed twice in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and three times supporting Operation Enduring Freedom. Lt. Col. Hert received the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, Meritorious Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Combat Action Badge. There were approximately 50 people in attendance at the Ceremony.

VVA Chapter 448: Frank Mueller shared his VVA Chapter had a great summer with monthly brat fries which were supported by the membership at each event. Also, in July we had our Annual Picnic with roasted pig and beer can chicken – what a feast! The turnout was outstanding and there was more than enough food for all. Frank Mueller brought his music along and there was live entertainment (if you're interested in learning more about the live entertainment join at next year's Annual Picnic).

The VVA Chapter was represented by Frank Mueller and Jim Hackbarth at the VVA National Convention – this was not their first convention and represented Wisconsin beyond reproach i.e., they had a good time.

Richard Lindbeck and Frank Mueller spent September 8-10 at Indian Summer at Milwaukee's Festival Parks handing out information on Agent Orange/Dioxin as well as benefits. John Margowski joined us to at the event to assist with Agent Orange and provide benefit information. We all attended the Grand Entry and it was a great experience. Indian Summer is held the first weekend after Labor Day.

Jim Bokelman and several other VVA Chapter members had the honor of presenting the Colors at the Slinger Raceway for the last Race of the season. Jim reported that the ovation as they entered the racetrack was overwhelming.

Allen Schossow, Jim Hackbarth, and Mike Strocner were on the Honor Flight to Washington D.C. on September 16th. Jim Bokelman, Sue Bokelman, and Richard Lindbeck welcomed them home at Mitchell Airport. There were two different Honor Flights on Saturday one for Vietnam Veterans and one for WWII and Korean War Veterans. The welcome home was OUTSTANDING.

VVA Chapter 448 made a donation to the Veterans affected by Hurricane Harvey in Texas.

VVA Chapter 618: HELP WANTED !!!

Our VVA Chapter is in need of assistance. One of the requirements for our VVA Chapter's scholarship is "Child of a Vietnam Veteran." Like most all VVA Chapters, VVA Chapter 618 is running out of children.

What are your VVA Chapters doing? Grandchildren, nieces, nephews, who?

Your assistance and suggestions will be greatly appreciated. Please share your comments with you can find the telephone number or address of an officer or Board Member through our website at www.vva616.org. In advance, thank you for your assistance.

VVA Chapter 731: Tom Hoffman shared that the VVA Chapter's Color Guard was extremely busy this past quarter. In addition to being a big part of the Re-Dedication of Red Arrow Park in Manitowoc – the Park is for all Men and Women who served in the 32nd Red Arrow Division, we did a Patriotic closing for a show at the Manitowoc Civic Center, presented the Colors at the Cancer Fund Raiser at Meadow Links Golf Course, and our annual participation in the Smiling Moose Parade in Osman, WI which is a fundraiser for the Children's Hospital.

Our VVA Chapter held its annual Picnic at Lincoln Park in Manitowoc.

The VVA Chapter made more than a thousand dollars including \$500 to Relay for Life, \$400 to The HighGround, and \$250 to the Texas State Council for hurricane relief in Houston.

We showed off our freshly done food wagon at our annual fundraiser at the Manitowoc County Fair – it's beautiful!

VVA Chapter 767: Tom Banner and Jon Rybar teamed-up to explain their activities and accomplishments which included: their committee's progress on hosting "The Moving Wall" in Racine in May 2019; the continued commitment of VVA Chapter members hosting bingo games at the Union Grove Veterans Home in July, August, and September; the steadfastness of the members to maintain the Veterans Memorial at Pritchard Park in Racine; and the VVA Chapter's contribution toward funding the Women's Memorial at the Boland Hall of the Veterans Home at Union Grove.

A challenge the VVA Chapter faced at the 4th of July Parade was giving rides to the mobility challenged. We were fortunate when one of the wives offered a truck and trailer in her husband's honor.

New Business:

- Margowski informed the WSC that the two panels place at VVA National, of which he is on one, will do a presentation at the Leadership Council and will also be looking for input.
- WSC encourages the Second Annual Car Show with the need of a formal development and planning committee. This should be an actionable item at the December 2017 WSC meeting.
- Update on VVA WSC logo glasses was provided.
- Because of the hurricanes impacting Texas and Florida VVA Chapters are being encouraged through the WSC's VVA Chapters to send donations to the WSC Treasurer who in turn will forward donations in lump sums to the designated State Councils' Presidents with recognition from the donating VVA Chapters and the WSC.
- Household Goods Donation Program (HGDP) was discussed at length. In essence two things are known. First, Wisconsin does not have a VVA HGDP within the geographical confines of Wisconsin and has not had one in excess of ten (10) years. Second, there exists an undisclosed amount of money available to from VVA's HGDP to Wisconsin; however, the funds cannot be released unless the appropriate reports are submitted to VVA's HGDP.
 - The WSC would like to access the funds that are reportedly being held by VVA's HGDP.
 - Since we are in agreement that WSC nor any VVA Chapter within the WSC is not operating a HGDP the only Wisconsin can proceed to access the funds purported to be available through the HGDP is for all 25 VVA Chapters to agree that the WSC has their permission to obtain the funds statewide and make those funds available projects and/or programs that benefit charitable or common assistance(s) relating exclusively to VVA members. Thus, the first step in the process must be the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which would be signed by an officer from each VVA Chapter in the WSC. While the next step(s) would be defined by the WSC President and Treasurer the essential key is for the body to act on a motion to develop a DRAFT MOU for the next WSC Meeting in December.

Margowski motioned that *the Secretary DRAFT an MOU for each of the WSC VVA Chapter simply delinating action on the HGDP for Wisconsin.* Demske seconded the motion.

Discussion followed similar to that outlined above i.e., history, where the HGDPs could or couldn't be in neighboring states, other entities, etc. Finally, Brooks called the Question. All voted aye the motion was passed i.e., the Secretary will develop and have ready an MOU for the December 2, 2017, WSC meeting. Prior to the meeting the Secretary on behalf of the WSC Treasurer will develop a DRAFT MOU for the Elected Officers, Directors from the four (4) regions and At-Large Director. The MOU will be distributed for finalization at the December meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

James E. Mullarkey

James E. Mullarkey
VVA WSC Secretary

Attachments:

Letters of recognition and appreciation for Drs. Berger and Hall to:

- John Rowan, VVA President
- Dr. Thomas Berger, Veterans Health Council
- Dr. Thomas Hall, PTSD and Substance Abuse Committee