

VVA National Snapshot, April 2026

CSCP – There is a consolidation committee developed to look at AVVA rejoining VVA. Constraints are a 501c19 need (90% plus veterans); as a 501c3 we would lose our Congressional Charter! VA accreditation would be at risk.

Pittsburgh Proposal – Looking at reducing over all costs in D.C. That would mean relocating within the DC area or moving somewhere else. We looked at Pittsburgh; they have a number of orgs that want us there and are willing to do extraordinary actions to get us there. It represents our power on the hill for one; and a significant reduction in costs for us. Currently we are paying 64K for a building that has many issues that the owner won't fix. Pittsburgh offers us 7-8K sq ft for 11K a month. Will reconfigure the space to meet our needs-for free. Would sell current furniture to use towards move (about 15% of original cost). NFL and US Steel have offered funds to help us move.

Gov Affairs and Fundraising would remain in DC but move to a smaller facility. Not all staff would move, they have ties to this community.

Mission 75 – would allow post RVN military to join or ranks. Would open in 2027 after approval at or National Convention if approved. Congressman Ron Brown is an advocate for this. Training younger vets to be VSO's; must uphold our founding principal "Never again..." This would be a move forward to benefit a broader number of vets and provide a legacy of us and our 50+ years of existence. They would start out with a yearly membership cost of \$25-30 a year. VVA dues remain as is.

President feels once he became an officer, as it feels for other officers; they became an enemy; unwarranted considering they were in the trenches with us not that long ago.

Leader Conference attendance requires funds – AZSC officer attendance and Chapters; all require some funding assistance; what are you doing to fund them?

Mission 75 will have 2 sessions to clearly define the requirements and have it ready for presentation at Nat'l Convention for a vote.

Likely no BOD or CSCP at DC in AUGUST; may not have funds to cover travel and hotel! Have to look at Zoom or other live feed to save costs. Talk with your state council and plan the options. It was suggested that in person is more effective; so, States may have to pick up tab or a larger portion.

Vet Benefits Cmte – Free training coming for staff; VSO's, SC Presidents. John Riling VP.

Building rental – 2yr contract coming due with 3-month extensions until a decision is made on a move. Tom Burke, President.

Jim McCormick - 38 CFR update work; fi meds make your disability better, can VA reduce your benefits? “Ordinary activity” defined as status BEFORE meds. So what happens when you stop taking meds? This is the fight that lends us to clarify the substantiation of your disability and why 38CFR needs updates.

Toxic Exposure Task Force – ID connection with veteran and family members affected by your exposure.

Tinnitus was 0% for years-VVA fought to get the current 10%. And we are working on more identified potential disabilities. Vet Centers are helping to ID issues that were overlooked (or ignored) by VA or haven't been given a % for disability.

I would like to see a VSO stationed at a facility to capture these oversights as Vets come out of their appointments. Would close the gap on unpaid disability benefits.

More than 40% of VA unfilled positions more than 60 days are doctors. PA's fill a vital role in helping us.

VA Palm Beach

cut women's survivors claim assistance. Be aware of these changes in your area and report them to your state council. Tom Hall, our Chair, is working on this.

VA can't hire DRs because of pay gap on civilian side. Hospitals pay 150-200K with benes.

Combat Special Compensation getting updates. Info coming on when to reapply if rejected previously. Leader team works on language before it goes out for relook.

Could reach \$1B dollars in compensation awards this year. To help, we have a new draft Vets benefits handbook coming out.

2 VSO vacancies to fill due to deaths at state levels. VVOA covers 4 states. Must work on their funding. VVOA is looking to Disney and Pfizer for grants. VVOA works with VVA and that message must be reinforced.

Congress (some) looking at rating percentages to be retro to 1950-1970.

National Mtg Day 1

Opened meeting with a Native member blessing.

Walt Schumachers' convention book passed around for signatures.

Veterans Associates of America proposed as new joint name if we consolidate. Not widely supported. Our VVA would go away, if it remains as is, Mission 75 would go forward.

Leader conference would be the prep for the Convention and potential votes.

Richard Lindbeck is the new Legacy Chair. Taking over from Steve Williams.

Annual Finance reports due NLT 15 July.

Finance - \$650K in payouts per month. Still have 7.3 million in VVA account but depleting quickly.

AVVA – Operation Lifeline is new mission.

HHG/Fundraising report, Quentin Butcher – we are down 14% in revenue; other orgs are finding out this generates lots of funds and taking away from our mission. FY 27 budget passed so we still exist. Payments coming at EOM April.

Vet's benefits – 700m awarded already. Looking at 1B for first time. Suicide Prevention grants available. Redoing Vet Benes handbook. Working with Gov Affairs to get more success.

Gov Affairs -Great team; 1K plus engagements with Congress. 501c19 and c3 can be workable together; just remember the composition of each for members. Can share our reports although marked Confidential (within VVA).

Comms – Thanks for RVN event submissions = 3m views of FB. Vets remembrance held at apex of the wall, that rarely happens. Tom Burke and VA Secty joined the Wall event.

250th @ Wall on July 4th; conflict with ceremony at Arlington Cemetery at same time.

VVA has a new medal for 250th. Webpage has new musical section – check it out.

Membership – 93, 549 members VVA, 11,783 AVVA, 957 dual members

22 chapters overdue 2025 reports (non for AZ) pending suspension

Emailed checklist guidance sheet on how to submit reports.

John Riling VP – 50yr legacy and we have 1 member here that his member number is 150! VVA is part of all our lives. We now have a chance of continuing our legacy with Mission 75.

He is dedicating 3-4 hrs a day 7 days a week for VVA, AND runs a business besides. The President dedicates 5-7 hours a day.

Need to know who the new state council presidents are and how to contact them. Our real legacy is veteran benefits and veteran affairs we've established over 50 years.

Bill Meeks, Nat'l Secretary – ensure he has a good email; state councils, only 27 on current suspension list, normally runs in 50's in non-election years. Leader Conference agenda on website; seminars on handbook updates; Honorary Memberships – not seeing many, look at potential candidates.

Dottie Barickman, Nat'l Treasurer – Revenue sharing (old member rebates program) 2027 currently the last year funded. Travel Policy under review. Human Resources – looking at benefits and efficiencies. Revenues are down. Last month of revenue payments -budget ends 28 Feb 2027.

Anthony – 1 May, revenue sharing payment ends (758K a year). Is your EFT on file; no checks mailed. HHG FY 27 disbursement schedules coming soon with new payment schedule coming EOM April. Return on Investment (ROI) for VVOA is currently around 15,000 %. Good job Mark McCabe.

Vet Admin/Vet Svcs- consolidating some offices, promoting hiring of doctors. 28 items to complete to volunteer at VA.

VVA/AVVA Consolidation – Presenting as an option on handout; can file in DC as a 501c3 and would kill our national charter; name change to Veterans and Associates of America; looking at Mission 75 potential; presenting a plan and info at Leader Conference for consideration.

Legacy Task Force (LTF), Steve Williams – NY professor joined the group; Archivist helping LTF; Texas Tech has lots of information stored already; thinking about renaming – Vietnam Veterans of America Historical.

Women Vets – Did an update on suicide prevention; did update with women's legislative priorities; talked about current women in military issues (MST, healthcare); National Cemetery burials; working on a River Cruise for Women Veterans; Memorial Day events that include women veterans; funds generation through sale of pins and coins. Made a call for a Vietnam nurse or surgeon who served in RVN as a speaker: Barry Rowland email: barryrowlandksu77@gmail.com 22nd reunion for Thailand, Laos, Cambodia Brotherhood (TLCB) in San Antonio Sept 26th 2026.

Day 2.

Membership Affairs at BOD – Finance reports coming due; Election reports turned in; suspension lists being generated- how to guidance sent out to chapters; best practices for fundraising include General Raffle, 2-\$500 gift cards from Walmart; RVN poppies; buy food coupons for \$500 from Frys, Food City and raffle them off; check with local businesses to see what they can donate like Walmart if you're a C3 (get to know their manager). Do the raffle for 90 days, <500 tickets at \$10 each. Silent auctions work also. Take time to review member rosters and send change data to membership.

Use veteran events to attract members, Memorial Day, Vets Day, and others.

Tom Burke spoke about our future: name stays the same; Mission 75 given in some detail; 2026 Ldr Conference in Jacksonville Florida and there will be 2 sessions on Mision 75 to present details and prepare members for a vote at the Convention.

Gov Affairs – You are owed; be an advocate for you and listen to those around you. Many of you have the same issues; consolidate by numbers those with same or similar issues and make your voice heard on the hill.

We hold quarterly Zoom meetings – tune in.

AVVA is a voice multiplier, especially since the start of dual memberships.

Donations to 501c19 are tax deductible. C-19 is a voice to the public and Govt. A C3 s a support network. Both have influence.

Some vet organizations never recognized us as war veterans in previous years. Because of our power on the hill, they are beginning to.

Mission 75 – why wouldn't younger vets want to be part of us? Look at how much we've done for our vets! VVA is a brand name, well known on the hill as an advocate for ALL vets.

For survival we rewrote our By Laws, removed Natl references, reapplied for 501c19, refiled with the Corporate Commission. Procedure published in Veteran magazine to restart with free EIN from IRS using IRS Form 1024.

VSO Training – Look at claim charts to pass along to Vets. Was claim chart input at AZ Legislature? DIC and spouse survivors' info open at meetings/seminars? Cali has a rapid response team to advocate for vet claims and legislation going through their lawmakers and attend hearings. What about AZ since we became a VVOA entity?

AZ State vets fund? Provide monetary assistance for medical emergency needs; appliances; readaptation of bedroom, kitchen, and baths after increased mobility restrictions.

Handout embossed pens for awareness of help in VA Facilities with Chapter/State contact info. Everyone takes a free pen when available. Option to business cards stuck in a pocket or billfold.

A plan to get VSO's to contact vets in care facilities?

SC meetings – funding will become an issue-look at online links to save money and/or reduce to two in person meetings a year. Spring elections and fall before the conference or conventions.

Fish and hunt licenses – disabled vets can get free or reduced rates. Park entry fees are reduced for state and national parks.

Mission BBQ – will provide food for an event once a year. Make contact and ask.

Suicide Prevention Grants – several states have gotten dollars. N.Y has a Foundation for this, out-of-state possibilities?

Request a PSA test – VA stops after 70; our risk increases after 70!

Red, White, and Blue is a strong young vets org – any linkage to your chapters? Invite as a guest?

Vet cremains, VSO's or chapter members going to ensure no vet is buried without veterans in attendance.

Membership Cmte – Terry Rangel: Only AVVA can request the AVVA rosters. 2 new chapters waiting on Charters. AZ lost a chapter, any effort to save them?

A housekeeping email was sent on how to do housekeeping for submitting reports. You get it?

Excel rosters are now operational; PDF has no issues.

501c3 gets no insurance coverage from VVA for events.

Some spouses not reporting vet deaths supposedly to keep getting the Veteran Mag! Vets in care facilities can get it for free! Reported deaths can be found in the Vets magazine.

Transfers on the last page.

VP Riling - Canadian vets have asked to join VVA; can as honorary members if they served in RVN.

Mission 75 discussion on dues - \$75 annual dues? When approved to join on broad scale expect to see billboards with that message; on-line also.

Fred Gasor, NY- Proposed to give out a free VVA membership like in October or November to draw more RVN vets in. Chapter funds; approval by BOD? Per Constitution the Prez can waive fee. Plan to introduce this at Leader Conference for the entire VVA. Finance committee look at funding dollars?

PTSD/Suicide Prev – introduced a guest, Bethann Carbone who talked about Memory Training Protocols and Service Dogs providing deep pressure care. Can look for this in Med world to see more info. Dogs interrupt thoughts/dreams as a distraction.

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy improves against symptoms, brains microstructure and functionality in Vets with treatment resistance post-traumatic stress disorders. 90 day program. Psychiatric Med prescriptions issued by Nurse Practitioners and PA's for MEDICARE beneficiaries – Temporary help only.

Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation Treatment – helps with PTSD.

Essentials of Informed Consent to Psychedelic Medicine – some hazards associated.

PTSD has triggers – do you know what yours are? How do you cope? AZ had a funded program – now unfunded. Talk with state reps to refund.

Dr Molly talked about PTSD, dementia, and nightmares. Hyper oxygenation treatments help preserve blood cell health and helps target brain issue areas. A 90 day program.

You should take a group approach to publications assisting Suicide Prevention programs and funding. VVA Web Weekly has helpful info. Should also look at Behavioral Health Physician Assistants to help and reduce wait times in conjunction with ratios in Behavioral Health and Vet Centers.

Females should learn self-breast exams for early detection. Males at 70 and above should request PSA tests, if you have a high PSA request biopsy and MRI – MEDICARE pays.

PTSD cellular level research of the prefrontal cortex of veteran brains vs non vet brains revealed differences across neurons, microglia, blood vessels and more.

Gulf War vets Toxic Exposures are at higher risk of suicide and other mental health issues. Those tested had 50% higher odds of suicide ideations; 83% higher odds of probable PTSD; 28% higher odds of depression; and 22% higher odds of alcohol use disorders. RVN vets should get same or worse outcomes.

Suicide Prevention – research that seeks to improve the understanding of suicide and prevent suicidal behaviors. Covers a wide range of studies from preclinical to clinical and health services research. Includes diverse methods and approaches such as genetic analysis, pharmacological treatments, innovative technologies, observational and epidemiological studies. Emphasizes risk ID and impact of community factors like family, caregiver support, education, public service announcements, recreation, housing, geospatial location, and employment on suicidality.

National Center for PTSD – VA described as “worlds leading research and educational center of excellence on PTSD and traumatic stress”. Has 6 VA academic centers primarily for research/training/education and sets standards for PTSD treatment.

End of Report.