

## **MESSAGE FROM THE SC STATE COUNCIL PRESIDENT**

Greetings fellow vets.

March Madness has passed and madness it ever was. The exciting finishes and close finishes were fun to watch. My bracket predictions were busted early. I had Kentucky winning the whole thing, not going out right away. Maybe next year. A fun time.

Now preparing for the April VVA Conference of States Council Presidents and National Board meetings two weeks off from this writing. Last VVA actions until the Leadership Conference in Reno in August and the next routine National meetings in October. My tenure as CSCP Chair is over in August or October. I am not running for re-election. The VVA Constitution with the recent change to four conferences a year is not clear on the date so our upcoming meeting should clarify that. Either is ok with me. The VVA has a new chief Congressional lobbyist, James L. McCormick II, retired Army. He has a Silver Star and numerous other combat and civilian award and is a recent veteran. He is former Commander of the National Order of the Purple Heart with a great resume. Our Congressional activities are at the heart of our operations so this is of major importance.

Jack McManus recently testified before the Joint Congressional Veterans' committees and related among other things the VVA's push for the VA to abide by all areas of the Pact Act and, among other things, to pass current legislation to authorize combat vets to receive compensation for disabilities and federal benefits concurrently. *(See Below Page 3 of the Newsletter)* Another interesting action is to authorize incarcerated vets to get VA payments over 10% placed in a trust so they can get them after release. A complete listing is elsewhere on our Web Page. The CSCP also is looking at stolen valor. There is an individual who falsified his DD 214 to get membership. He wears several silver star and numerous other unearned awards at VVA events. He did not serve in Vietnam. His fraud does not include any claims for monetary benefits so criminal action may not be available but our folks are taking action. Whatever, I find it most distasteful for folks to use the VVA as a vehicle to proclaim false heroism or bravery. The CSCP also will look at fidelity insurance for our officers. Our constitution requires chapters and councils paying unless individually absolved. The VVA in the meantime has provided such insurance across the board. We do not need to do this. A change to the constitution is in the works for our New Orleans convention in 2025. Remember if you have an event there is event liability insurance. The event must be reported in advance. Not routine meetings but special events. Information for this is on the web site. See Information and Resources and in the Area for State Council Information and Forms, the bottom item called Liability insurance.

Finally, the CSCP will look at the Board's approval of stopping all our VA claims appellate work. The VVA has authorized the movement of our appellate attorneys to a private law firm with some payments to that firm to close out our ongoing claims appeals. This, in consonance with the shrinking of our ability to process claims throughout the US, is a harbinger of shrinking our corporate VVA activities as we age.

Have a great spring in our beautiful state. In the Midlands, Easter weekend was magnificent with blooming azaleas and dogwoods. Enjoy and as seniors get state park passes. We recently visited beautiful Edisto Beach Park. Too cold for swimming but the beach was uncrowded and fun. The hanging moss on the oaks on the beautiful drive to Edisto is worth the trip.

Be safe and be sure to take advantage of your annual Medicare health exam.

Very respectfully

Sam Brick, SC VVA State Council President and Chair of the Conference of State Council Presidents.

