



Vietnam Veterans of America
Chapter 1106

Membership Meeting August 5, 2023

Meeting Location: South Metro Fire & Rescue Building, 9195 E. Mineral Avenue, Centennial, CO 80112 (Board Room). Zoom provided.

Meeting called to order by President Dave Lyons at 9:00 AM.

Invocation and Prayer: Reverend Garry Turks

Pledge of Allegiance: (All)

POW/MIA Chair Presentation: Dan Green

Moment of Silence: For all those men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice and for those still MIA. We also remember our VVA and AVVA members who have passed.

Officer and Board Member Roll Call: Dave Lyons, Milt Omoto, Mike Huber, Sally Ann Eaves, The Rev. Garry Turks, Joe Robinson, Joe Dempsey, John Vargas, Tom Werzyn. Patti Ehline (on ZOOM), Lee White (Founder/Past President), Litta Plant-Schaper (AVVA)

Excused: Joe Plant

Members Present: Don Boswell, Bob Brown, Wayne Buser, James Chisel, Bill Clark, Tony Croce, Charles Daldry, David Dawson, Joe Dempsey, Leland Eagleson, Bob Easter, Sally Ann Eaves, Patti Ehline, Rance Exline, Craig Fagerness, Bob Ferguson, Barry Fiore, Dan Graham, Dan Green, Leo Greunke, Lou Grounds, Pat Hammon, Jim Henderson, Mike Huber, Jack Hunter, Alan Jaffe, Mike Katich, Roger Lanphier, Cliff Lawson. Bob Lee, Walter Leuci, Marvin Lich, David Lyons, Larry Majors, Jesse Maldonado, Don Marsh, Jim Martindale, Jim McGrevey, Mark Nickell, Tony Nickerson, Milt Omoto, Gary Palka, Ed Phillips, Bill Pine, James Ponzi, John Powell, Tom Puckett, Clarence Rebolledo, Randy Reed, Joseph Robinson, Juan Romero, Bob Rotruck, Murray Sallenbach, Ed Seiler, John Sheadel, Phil Snyder, John Spradlin, Jerone Springs, Garry Turks, John Vargas, Dan Wagle, Wendell Wallace, Tom Werzyn, Gary Weston, Lee White, John Williams, Lew Wood, Associate Members Present: Alice Boswell, Jane Brown, Ita Dempsey, Diane Graham, Claudia Hunter, Jean Jaffe, Kaitlyn McGurran, Litta Plant-Schaper, Barbara Rotruck, Di Seiler, Leann Stelzer, Vieng Vongsakoun, Jim Williams,

Introduction and Recognition of Guests and New Members: New members introduced themselves and the President, Dave Lyons introduced Kaitlyn McGurran, new AVVA Member and our new intern.

Guest speakers were five of our six winners of VVA Chapter 1106 \$2000 scholarships. Gary Weston reiterated the purpose of VVA to revere our past and to encourage our legacy and a way to do that is through scholarships. He and Lou Grounds congratulated our winners and introduced them to the membership. The five winners present told of their college plans and read their winning essays. They are:

Faith Dolin, University of Alabama, Aerospace Engineering

Joella Grace Whitney, University of Oklahoma, Psychology and Chinese

Megan R. Bright, University of Northern Colorado, Elementary Education

Samuel Mendez-Vanacore, University of Las Vegas, Hospitality Management

Eden Grace Cingrani, University of Southern California, International Relations/ Global Economy

Brenna Albrecht-Reed could not attend as she has already departed for school.

Member Biography: Joe Dempsey told of his experience as a Medic in the Flight Surgeon's office at Davis Monthan AFB (AZ) and as Aeromedical Technician, serving aboard HH43 "Pedro" Aeromedical helicopters with rescue missions in Guam in '70 and at Tan Son Nhut AB in '72.

President's Report (Dave Lyons)

- The Chapter picnic is August 12. John Vargas will cover that later in the meeting.
- The Chapter, along with other Colorado chapters, donated to the repair of the Marine Memorial on 6th Avenue.
- Dave and Tony Nickerson will be attending the National Convention next week.
- Thank you to Bob Rotruck for all his work for the Chapter. He will be moving in the next few months and we are in need of volunteers to take over his duties as Newsletter editor, "blaster" of email announcements and as webmaster.
- Thank you, too, to Dale Creason for his work with the Color Guard and as Membership chairman. He is also stepping down. Thankfully, Alan Jaffe is going to take over the Membership duty and then Ron Smith and Dan Greene coordinate the Color Guard. We thank them for their dedication.

Vice President's Report: (Milt Omoto)

- Hello and thank you to all for attending.
- August 4th was the 223rd year birthday of the US Coast Guard.
- August 7th is Purple Heart Day
- August 10th is Agent Orange Day
- **Commitment:** A few people have signed up for various projects, events and have not shown up. The Board puts a lot of effort into scheduling and putting on events. By signing up and not showing up, it makes it hard to manage events like the 4th of July parade, Poppy Drive etc. **If you sign up, show up.**

- Thank you to Joe Robinson for his outstanding commitment to the 4th of July Parade. He showed up at 6am to coordinate our parade participation with the Central Colorado Corvette Club.

- Our September speaker will be Bobby Tiner from the Agent Orange Medal Foundation. He is coming from Myrtle Beach, SC with his wife to visit Colorado and speak to us. We have about 18 Chapter members who have received the medal and it will be interesting to find out more about the Foundation which is also working with the Department of Defense to institute the Agent Orange Medal as an official award of merit.

Treasurer's Report (Mike Huber)

- Mike provided the Treasurer's report for month ending July
- Motion to approve the Treasurer's report made by Jack Hunter and seconded by Tom Werzyn. Motion carried.

Secretary's Report (Sally Ann Eaves)

- Thank you to Milt Omoto for preparing the Secretary's report last month.
- Motion to approve the July minutes was made by Alan Jaffe and seconded by Tom Werzyn. Motion carried.

BOARD MEMBER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership and Color Guard (Dave Lyons for Dale Creason)

- With Dale Creason having to step down, thank you to Alan Jaffe for coming forward to help with the membership part of the job.

Veterans Emergency Assistance Program (Mike Huber for Joe Plant)

- During the past month, we were able to assist 9 veterans for \$1690.61.

Chaplain's Report (Rev. Garry Turks)

- Again, Chappy stated he is honored to be in the room with so many yellow shirts. He is especially moved because of his experience as a Marine and mortician and also because of the support of so many of our members who suffer from PTSD. Having a room full of people who understand gives one peace of mind and makes one feel safe. He is especially appreciative of our encouragement in the things that he does.

- One cannot imagine the importance of Buddy Calls. Even if we have to call just one person, that means 60 people in this room receive a call. A single call can make a big difference to someone's well being.

- Our sick list stabilized for a while but is now starting to increase. Chappie visits sick members each month but respects the requests for anonymity. Just know they need help and prayers.

- We need to pray for each other and for our land.

Government Affairs (Tony Nickerson)

- August 4th is Purple Heart Day. The Purple Heart is a US military decoration. It has a storied history. It is the oldest military decoration. The first medal, then called the Badge of Military Merit, was awarded by George Washington to those who suffered combat injuries or died in battle for our protection. A day set aside to honor the award was started in 2014.

- Be sure to explore the benefits you have earned from your service to the USA. One example is: you can go to the Commissary and Exchange with just your health ID card.

- We received a call to honor a 102 year old WWII veteran who recently passed. His service will be August 9th. Discussion of particulars followed and some members had already planned to attend. (Dan Green stated during Open Discussion that we will have four Honor Guard members in attendance.)

- The National VVA Convention this week-end will affect the future of our organization. An email from the National headquarters stated that the VVA Constitution contains no authority for the dissolution of the organization. That authority comes from New York law. New York does not want to take anything from us as an organization. Procedures for dissolution are simple and easy to follow and there is no plan to do that now. We are a 90,000 member organization and growing. New members and even new chapters are coming on board. We continue to operate and receive donations. We have approved a million dollar budget for this year and just hired an executive manager. **We do not plan to dissolve at this time.** We are not going anywhere.

Speaker's Bureau (Tom Werzyn)

- The Speaker's Bureau will be up and organized when the students get back to school.

- We will coordinate with the Cherry Creek School District and possibly Aurora schools.

Grants and Fundraising (Milt Omoto)

- Please continue to support the Household Goods Program. It is a steady income source for us.

- Please continue to support the King Soopers Community Rewards Program. It is easy to sign up with them in person or online. We receive a donation every time you shop there. We've received \$481.06 with just 45 households participating so far.

Chapter Events Coordinator (Joe Robinson) (The President again thanked Joe Robinson for coordinating the participation in the 4th of July parade.)

- Thank you, also, to all those who participated. Maybe next year we'll have even more representation.

Scholarship Committee (Gary Weston) (The President thanked Gary and Lou Grounds for their excellent administration of the Scholarship process and for our presentation today.)

- Thank you to the membership for attending and listening to our students.

- These essays and views preserve our legacy.

Promotional (Joe Dempsey)

- We have a nice challenge coin box for display of your challenge coin for \$6.
- VVA Chapter 1106 Challenge coins are \$10.
- There are also shirts for sale in the back as well as a few select hats.

Veteran Health and Women Veterans (Patti Ehline on ZOOM)

- Patti will send out an email from Janelle Beswick, the Congressional Liaison for the VA Eastern Colorado Healthcare System: there is a virtual Q&A on August 22nd.
- VA and community partners are available to help you. Simply schedule an appointment to speak with the VA and get one on one service.
- The PACT Act ends August 9th.
- Be sure to read the emails.
- We are pursuing the expansion of benefits for children of Agent Orange affected veterans. There is a form to fill out on VA.GOV.

WEBMaster/Newsletter (Bob Rotruck)

- It has been a privilege to serve as your webmaster, blaster, and newsletter editor.
- Now we need replacements for all three jobs.

Former President (Lee White)

- We have birthday cake here for all to honor all the birthdays of the last quarter.

Social (John Vargas)

- Thank you to Gary Weston and Lou Grounds for the great job with the Scholarships and good presentation today.
- Thank you to Chaplain Garry Turks for all you do with visits and calls.
- Thank you to Jack Hunter for help with the Buddy Call program. John had all the buddy Callers who were present stand up and be acknowledged. He emphasized the importance of just a phone call to someone's well being.
- Thanked Bob and Barbara Rotruck for all they have done for the Chapter.
- Provide a recap of meeting discussions.
- Led extensive discussion of the upcoming picnic, August 12.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Chapter Picnic is August 12, 2023, 10AM
- The next Chapter Board meeting, August 25, 2023, 9:00 AM on ZOOM.
- Next Membership Meeting: September 2, 2023 at 9:00 AM,
- Patriot Day is September 11

MEETING ADJOURNED by Dave Lyons, President at 10:33 AM.

This Chapter Membership Meeting minutes submitted by Sally Ann Eaves, Chapter Secretary

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Circulation Notice: These minutes may contain sensitive and/or personal information; therefore, please use discretion when sharing this information with non-VVA members.