



Vietnam Veterans of America  
Chapter 1106

## **Membership Meeting January 6, 2024**

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 Plant, Joe Robinson, John Vargas, Patti Ehline, Joe Dempsey, Lee White (Founder/Past President).

Excused: Tom Werzyn, Litta Plant-Schaper (AVVA)

Also Present: Kaitlyn McGullan, AVVA Member and Student Intern accompanied by her father, Shawn McGullan.

**Members Present:** Mort Anderson, Felix Armenta, Jim Bishop, Jim Blumberg, Don Boswell, Carol Brautigam, Bob Brown, Mike Bursynski, Wayne Buser, Donna Chaney, Dale Creason, Tony Croce, David Dawson, Joe Dempsey, Leland Eagleson, Bob Easter, Sally Ann Eaves, Alan Ebert, Patti Ehline, Rance Exline, Bob Ferguson, Barry Fiore, David Gaul, Dan Green, Leo Greunke, Lou Grounds, Ted Hanfelder, Warren Harrison, Mike Huber, Jack Hunter, Mike Karsh, Roger Lanphier, Ernest Ledvina, Walter Leuci, Marvin Lich, Chuck Luley, David Lyons, Larry Majors, Bob Mallin, Harry Montgomery, Mark Nickell, Milt Omoto, Gary Palka, Ed Phillips, Joe Plant, James Ponzi, Clarence Rebolledo, Coy Ritchie, Joseph

Robinson, Juan Romero, Murray Sallenbach, Ed Seiler, Charles Smith, Ron Smith, Phil Snyder, Mike Tarby, Garry Turks, John Vargas, Dan Wagle, Wendell Wallace, Gary Weston, Lee White, Lew Wood, David Woods, **Associate:** Alice Boswell, Jane Brown, Linda Croce, Ita Dempsey, Jean Eisenberg, Lonnie Hetterle, Claudia Hunter, Kaitlyn McGullan, Christine Omoto, Daniel Plant, Dora Plant, Susanne Sigona, Jai Smith, Leann Stelzer, Jim Williams,

**Introduction and Recognition of Guests and New Members:** New members introduced themselves.

**Guest Presentation:** Roderick (Tony) Thomas is the Director, Fort Logan National Cemetery Complex, (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, National Cemetery Administration). The Fort Logan National Cemetery Complex includes all national cemeteries in Colorado, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming, The VA goal is to provide national veterans burial sites for all veterans within a 75 mile radius. He emphasized that **all veterans** (except those with a Bad Conduct Discharge) **are eligible for burial in a national cemetery site.** His department works with every funeral home in Colorado. It is encouraged to "pre register" burial arrangements with the veteran's DD214. Mr. Thomas also mentioned the "Missing in America" Project in which volunteers are working to locate, identify and inter unclaimed veterans' remains for burial in a national cemetery. He gave a brief history of Ft Logan National Cemetery which started as a pioneer cemetery in 1895, became an Army cemetery, and then a Colorado State cemetery before being turned over to the VA in 1950. It is currently 162 acres and undergoing a \$9.5million dollar expansion.

**Member Notes:** Lonnie Hetterle re-emphasized the helpfulness of pre-planning. John Vargas reminded members of the Memorial committee white binders to help survivors with burial arrangements. An unidentified member mentioned the less expensive coffins and urns available through Amazon and other retailers other than funeral homes.

**Member Biography:** Ralph Lanphier gave us a detailed account of growing up near the Hanford Atomic Works in Washington State thru USMC OCS in 1960 and then amphibious training, especially in NATO, and his assignment as G2 and as a Watch Officer in Vietnam in 1962 followed by assignments including Quantico.

### **Special Presentations:**

Milt Omoto gave an explanation and history of The Chapel of the Four Chaplains and their Legion of Honor Program. He then presented the very prestigious **Chapel of the Four Chaplains Legion of Honor Bronze Star Medallion to Chaplain Garry Turks.** This is a rare honor given by the Chapel "in recognition of exceptional, selfless service on the part of an individual which contributes to the wellbeing of others at the national or world level."

John Vargas then presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Dr. Robert Mallin for his years of support to help members attend the Holiday Lunch.

### **President's Report (Dave Lyons)**

1. The SMF&R Board Room has been reserved for the 2024 year. We are going to assure that we can gain access to the gate and building when needed.

2. Thank you to John Vargas and thank you to all who helped with the Chapter Holiday Lunch. It was a great success and all feedback has been positive.

3. Next year is an election year for the Chapter. Elections will be held at the April meeting. Lee White will chair the Election committee.

4. John Vargas is resigning as Social Committee Chairman and we need volunteer to take that position. John will offer an instructional notebook and training.

#### **Vice President's Report:** (Milt Omoto)

1. Milt again addressed the need to have your picture taken so we can identify you for chapter events. Claudia Hunter takes pictures at every meeting; so see her to have your picture taken. When we post your picture, we include service identification. That helps when we need a service specific person for a project.

2. The Texas RoadHouse fundraiser was very successful and we have been given \$1750 in gift cards some of which will be distributed to our fundraiser volunteers; including the Poppy Drive, to Buddy Callers, and to Kaitlyn McGullan, our Volunteer Intern.

#### **Treasurer's Report** (Mike Huber)

1. We had a very good month with \$4347.06 income..

2. Expenditures were \$8912.57. This included the December Holiday Lunch.

3. Motion to accept the Treasurer's report was made by Phil Snyder and seconded by Joe Dempsey. Motion carried.

#### **Secretary's Report** (Sally Ann Eaves)

- Motion to approve the December 2023 minutes was made by John Vargas and seconded by Lee White. Motion carried.

### **BOARD MEMBER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Membership** (Phil Snyder and Jim Blumberg)

1. As of November 30, 2023, VVA National membership is 91,100. There were 260 new VVA members and 59 new AVVA members. 122 VVA and 7 AVVA members passed.

2. Colorado has 885 members in three chapters and At-Large.

3. Chapter 1106 has 203 VVA and 44 AVVA members totalling 247.

#### **Social Committee** (John Vargas)

1. Thank you to all who helped with the Holiday Lunch but first a thank you to John Spalding who prints out thank you cards and never accepts payment for them. Also thank you to Milt Omoto, Tom and Valerie Werzyn for their special help. Thank you to Dave Lyons, Mike

Huber, Joe Plant, Litta Plant-Schaper and to Kaitlyn McGullin (and her father) and so many others who made the event special.

2. We have membership packets made up for those who might convince someone to become a member of VVA 1106. Each Board member has a packet and we have more packets for any members who are interested.

3. John also reminded the members of Veterans Service Officers, the Forgotten Heroes Program, and of the Agent Orange Medal.

#### **Veterans Emergency Assistance Program (Joe Plant)**

1. This past month we helped 7 veterans with rent (5), a rent application, and help with an Xcel bill.

2. We also provided one power chair and one wheelchair..

#### **Chaplain's Report (Rev. Garry Turks)**

1. Thank you to all of you for the honor I received today. I do have a role with a number of organizations and we go through the course on the Four Chaplains in our training. I am humbled.

2. We are fortunate, as an organization, to have so many chaplains in our membership.

3. We have three members in a sick/shut-in status.

4. Remember Buddy Checks. They are so important to our well-being. We always need more volunteer callers.

#### **Grants and Fundraising (Milt Omoto)**

- A reminder of the significant results from the VVA House Hold Goods and the King Soopers Community Rewards program,

#### **Chapter Events Coordinator (Joe Robinson)**

- We are exploring the opportunity to visit the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs sometime this Spring. Let me know, by the end of February, if you are interested.

#### **Scholarship Committee (Lou Grounds)**

1. Lou is replacing Gary Weston as head of the committee. Thanks to Gary for such a great job during his tenure.

2. Mike Karsh is helping on the committee.

3. We could always use more volunteer help.

4. We will be contacting the high schools in Arapahoe and Douglas Counties in March to let them know that we have six \$2000 scholarships available. Applicants need to apply and write an essay on the Vietnam War.

#### **Promotional Items (Joe Dempsey)**

- All the jackets are in, including the larger sizes, and are available to buy for \$65 and \$70.

#### **Voices for Veterans (Warren Harrison)**

- We are at a constant level of activity, always with new people to talk to. Not too much to report.

**Veteran Health and Women Veterans** (Patti Ehline)

- A recent Urgent Care visit cost a lot of money, so I am now studying the process for getting reimbursement for emergency medical care. Will let you know.

**WEBMaster/Newsletter** (Mark Nickell)

1. The next deadline for submitting articles for the Newsletter will be the end of February.
2. Send articles to [mnickell2004@msn.co](mailto:mnickell2004@msn.co)

**Lee White** (Founding president)

1. Has put together Membership Packets that each member ought to take to help recruit new members.
2. Packets include: 3 VVA applications (membership: \$50 Lifetime), 2 AVVA applications (\$20 per year or \$100 Lifetime), 1 transfer form, 5 business cards and some brochures.
3. Each Board member has a packet to keep in their car for when they meet prospective members BUT it is really up to each member to help increase our membership.

**Roundtable Discussion**

**Jack Hunter:**

1. Jack Hunter made a motion to reimburse Jim Williams for the annual ZOOM fee of \$149. John Vargas seconded the motion. Motion carried.
2. Jack wanted to thank Hannah (his grandson's friend) who came from Arvada to help run the cameras and ZOOM for the group.
3. Thank you to all who brought chairs to today's meeting.

**Dan Green** wished to explore the possibility of returning to the Cherry Creek Schools meeting room. While that is not feasible at this time, it remains a possibility.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** (Dave Lyons)

1. Next Board Meeting is Saturday, January 27, 2024, 9:00AM Online.
2. Next Membership Meeting is Saturday, February 3, 2024 at 9:00AM, here at the Fire District Board Room.
3. Please continue to stay in touch with each other.
4. Thank you for attending. Thank you for your support. I look forward to working with you again this year.

**MEETING ADJOURNED** by Dave Lyons, President, at 10:45 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*