



Vietnam Veterans of America
Chapter 1106

Chapter 1106 Membership Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: September 5, 2020

Scheduled Meeting Start Time: 9:00PM

Meeting Location: ZOOM Video/Teleconference Host Michelle Mallin

Meeting called to order by President Lee White at 9:03AM

Meeting Topics

1. Welcome to the meeting by President Lee White
2. Invocation by Chaplain Garry Turks and Moment of Silence (for our MIA and POW)
 - And prayers for those in need including Karen Karsh and Sonny Gorsuch
3. Pledge of Allegiance (all)
4. Board Member Roll Call

Officers and Board Members Present on Call: Officers: Lee White (President), David Lyons (Vice President), Mike Huber (Treasurer), Milt Omoto (Secretary); Board Members: Joe Plant, Tom Werzyn, Patti Ehline, Chaplain Garry Turks, Dan Green, Ron Smith, Glen Payne, John Vargas; AVVA Liaison Representative: Litta Plant-Schaper (13)

Absences: none

5. Membership Roll Call Members Present on Call:

Wendell Wallace, Don McNeely, Bob Rotruck, Barbara Rotruck, Jim Bishop, Jesse Maldonado, Charles Smith, Suzanne Sigona, Jim Willams, George Nolly, Mike Vallow, Dan Wagel, Allen Jaffee, Jack Hunter, Claudia Hunter, Michelle Mallin, Steve Robertson, Bob Crago, Greg Goettsch, Joe Robertson, Jim Henderson, Norm Pozner, Warren Harrison, Cliff Butler

There were a total of 38 online connections

6. Chapter Meeting Minutes Approval

Motion to approve the VVA Chapter 1106 Minutes dated August 1, 2020 as transcribed, made by Dave Lyons and second by John Vargas; approved.



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7. Guest Speaker: Greg Goettsch, Qualified Listeners

Greg is a Navy veteran who served three tours in Vietnam; he is a member of VFW and DAV; Greg stated that he saw a need for veterans to talk to other veterans about issues; in 2016, he formed an organization called Qualified Listeners to listen to these veterans; a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, they train veterans (they have 14 volunteers) to listen to other veterans; they have engaged with over 1013 veterans in 1 to 3-hour sessions over coffee at a public location; their purpose is to just be an active listener; they primarily serve veterans in Colorado and Wyoming; they contact and visit veterans in hospice and veteran homes who cannot get out easily; they provide handicap equipment to veterans in need and partner with Home Depot for veteran home improvement projects; they are seeking regular donations from corporations at \$250 a quarter for ongoing support; they have contacted local fire departments to help move furniture and heavy objects.

There is an opportunity for Chapter 1106 to partner with Qualified Listeners for distribution of handicap equipment to veterans in need;

Contact them at (720) 600-0860, gregge@qualifiedlisteners.org; website: www.qualifiedlisteners.org

8. Welcome Chaplain Garry Turks to the Chapter Board of Directors

9. Oath of Office

The Oath of Office was conducted for those Officers and Board Members who were elected at our May meeting for the new 2020 to 2022 term.

10. Appreciation Award Presentation

A Chapter Appreciation Award plaque was presented to Jack and Claudia Hunter for their continued contribution to the Chapter; Jack manages the Chapter membership database of all member contact information, provides the sign-in sheets at Chapter meetings and sets-up and operates the meeting audio system; in addition, Claudia takes pictures of members which are assembled with member service branch and published to members.

Thank you Claudia and Jack!

Note: If you would like your picture added to the member photo compilation, send Jack a digital copy of your photo and he will include it in the next update.

11. President's Report: Lee White

- Chapter "Buddy Calls" continue monthly to contact each member to see how they and their families are doing and if there are any needs
- An article submitted by Board Member John Vargas was published in the recent issue of the VVA Veteran; it is reproduced at the end of these minutes;



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- VVA's Louisiana State Council has established a Disaster Relief Fund to help VVA members in the state who were affected by Hurricane Laura, which caused widespread damage and destruction on August 27; the Chapter 1106 Board will discuss donations to this Relief Fund;
- The November Poppy Drive fund raiser is still tentatively scheduled for November 14th; Lee contacted the Parker King Soopers and they have granted permission to setup a donation table at that store for this date; however, we will need to establish guidelines to protect both members and the public;
- Lee has ordered Chapter yellow shirts
- The Chapter Board Meeting was held on August 29th; the next Board meeting is yet to be determined;
- The next Chapter Membership Meeting is scheduled for October 3rd

12. Vice President's Report: Dave Lyons

- Reports that "Buddy Check" calls are going well and appreciates those Board members making these calls
- He stated that we are one of few Chapters doing these calls and continuing with regular (online) Board and member meetings
- He forwards any updated contact information to Jack Hunter

13. Treasurer's Report: Mike Huber

- At the end of August, all 6 scholarship checks have cleared the bank
- The Chapter currently has \$11,110.84 in Checking and Savings accounts total
- No Household Goods Program funds were received for August

14. Secretary's Report: Milt Omoto

- Thanked Glen Payne for distributing meeting minutes monthly and continuing to email information of importance and interest to members

15. Board Member Reports

- a) Patti Ehline. The most recent ECS update will be emailed to members; the next VA Town Hall is scheduled for September 8th with the Director of the VA Hospital;
- b) Ron Smith. The Chapter Color Guard will participate in an Elks Club event; he contacted the King Soopers on Himalaya regarding the Poppy Drive and they are not accepting requests at this time;
- c) Dan Green. The Color Guard will practice at Jay Quiring's back yard for the Elks Club event; Dan reported that two members have moved to Texas, Jim Hemphill and Dennis Homrighausen
- d) John Vargas. September 18th is Air Force Day; it is also National POW/MIA Recognition Day; John recognized Chapter member wedding anniversaries; Flu shots are available at Walgreens at no charge; VA hospitals are also offering flu shots at no charge to veterans;



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- Patti advised to see the report that was recently sent out to members on flu shots; ensure that you get the one for elderly adults.
- e) Glen Payne. Glen reported that Mike Karsh of the Scholarship Committee has scheduled the first meeting of the Committee to discuss plans for the current new school year; the Committee has three new members
 - f) Tom Werzyn. Presented a proposal to establish a working group (a Committee appointed by the Board) to investigate the formation of a 501(c)(3) separate organization that will operate in parallel to the current Chapter organization; this will greatly open opportunities for grants and fundraising; the Committee will regularly report progress to Chapter members;

Motion. Lee made the motion to for establishment of this committee and was second by Wendell Wallace; the motion passed with no objections from Members

Tom thanked Michelle Mallin for her involvement and guidance to the group

- g) Garry Turks asked to be notified when any member is sick, shut-in or needs assistance

16. Committee Reports

- a) Dave Lyons, Membership. The Chapter has 157 regular members and 39 Associate members for a total of 196; we are targeting over 200 by year end; Dave stated that an organization in Northglenn provides free labor if you supply the materials; contact Dave if interested;
- b) Patti Ehline and Warren Harrison, Voices for Veterans. Warren did not attend the recent meeting due to a hospital exam appointment;
- c) Milt Omoto, Grants and Fundraising. We are cautiously continuing with plans for the Fall Poppy Drive for November 14th; as a Chapter, we should continue to support the VVA household goods program despite not receiving recent funds; they accept donations of clothing, household items and small furniture; call or schedule pickup online;
- d) Bob Rotruck, Newsletter. He has received positive feedback regarding the recent Chapter newsletter
- e) Glen Payne, Scholarship. Nothing further to report
- f) Ron Smith, Chapter Events. Nothing further to report
- g) Joe Plant, Veterans Assistance Program. The Chapter assisted two veterans in August; one to assist with monthly rent and one to get off the street; there are three veterans that need assistance this month
- h) Glen Payne, Social Committee. No social events are currently planned;
- i) Dan Green, Color Guard. Nothing further to report.

17. Roundtable

- a) David Yates wants to thank those Chapter members who assisted with the cleanup of his flooded basement
- b) Bob Crago reported on a book recently published by Fleet S. Lentz, Jr., Col, USMCR, titled "A Backseat View from the Phantom." Fleet was assigned to the Western Pacific and served in the Vietnam conflict in 1972-1973 flying 31 missions in the F-4. Lentz retired from the Marine Corps in 2000 with thirty-one years of affiliated time and 1500+ hours in the F-4. He



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- also worked for thirty-two years in civilian commercial aviation at the management and executive levels. Fleet lives in Centennial, Colorado; Bob plans to submit a book review to the VVA Veteran; he will also ask Fleet to speak at one of our Chapter meetings;
- c) Joe Robertson, PGA HOPE. Joe reported that the PGA Hope program that was planned at Wellshire Golf Course is postponed for the year; however, interested members should contact Joe to sign-up in preparation for next year; the program introduces the game of golf through a developmental 6-8 week curriculum, taught by PGA Professionals trained in adaptive golf;
 - d) Patti reported that there are plans to construct a new senior veterans housing near the current VA hospital in Aurora; also, to please continue with awareness of PTSD and Agent Orange among veterans;
 - e) Member Jim Bishop had something to say, but unfortunately, we could not hear him;
 - f) Charles Smith will discuss with Lee the possibility of presenting at the next Chapter meeting.
18. Membership in Sickness or in Need of Support
- a) Joe Plant has visited Sonny Gorsuch several times now in addition to Chaplain Turks; Sonny has lost much memory but appears to be physical fine; Joe and Chaplain Turks are the only ones from our Chapter who can visit Sonny;
 - b) Member Jack Paulson was recently released from the hospital and is now at home;
19. Announcements
- a) The next Colorado VVA State Council meeting is scheduled for September 12th;
 - b) The Elk's Summer Picnic – 9-20-20 (Cancelled)
20. Drawing (by Litta Plant-Schaper)
- Drawing for Emergency Road Kit
WINNER: Steve Robertson! Litta will ship it to you;
21. Other
- Day in History: The end of World War II in the Pacific occurred on 2 September 1945;
 - There is a new VSO at the Arapahoe County Veterans Service Office; Josh Medina
 - In the future, the Zoom meeting invite to Chapter meetings will be in a separate email from the meeting agenda to avoid confusion.



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The Next Chapter 1106 Membership Meeting is scheduled for October 3, 2020 – online via ZOOM

The membership meeting was adjourned by declaration with no objections by President Lee White at 10:15AM

This Chapter Membership Meeting minutes is submitted by Milt Omoto, 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.



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From the VVA Veteran Online, September/October 2020 Edition (Membership Notes section)

Article submitted by John Vargas

South Metro Denver, Colorado, Chapter 1106 “has not allowed COVID-19 to slow us down,” John Vargas, a chapter board member who is on the chapter’s Scholarship Committee, said. “Sure, it’s created a few changes in the way we help veterans and the community, but we’re moving right along.” For one thing, the chapter has been holding all its board and membership meetings via Zoom. “They’re still held on a monthly schedule,” Vargas said, “with positive results.”

The chapter also put in place a program—called The Buddy List—in which board members reach out regularly to all chapter members. Once a month and just prior to Zoom meetings, each board member makes at least ten telephone calls. “Some individuals were ill, some didn’t have access to Zoom, and some were quarantined or hospitalized due to COVID-19,” Vargas said. “Members and their families and caretakers receiving these calls were thrilled that someone cared enough to call them.”

The chapter’s Scholarship Committee—Vargas, Mike Karsh, Glen Payne, and Jim Marcille—couldn’t make personal visits to schools this spring, but they spread the word about the scholarships by phone, in the chapter newsletters, and through dozens of mailings. “What appeared bleak, turned into the best year ever,” Vargas said. The chapter received nearly 60 applications from high school seniors. The committee reviewed them carefully, then selected 13 students to interview. Six were chosen to receive \$2,000 scholarships. They all read their winning essays to the chapter via Zoom.