



Vietnam Veterans of America
Chapter 1106

Membership Meeting March 2, 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 Mike Huber

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.

In Memoriam: The members present participated in the memorial to honor fallen brothers Robert James Fitzgerald (US Army) (10/22/1950 - 1/13/2024) and Leo Max Greunke (US Air Force) (6/16/1941 - 2/09/2024).

Officer and Board Member Roll Call: Dave Lyons, Milt Omoto, Mike Huber, Sally Ann Eaves, Joe Plant, Joe Robinson, John Vargas, Patti Ehline, Lee White (Founder/Past President)

AVVA: Litta Plant-Schaper

Also: Kaitlyn McGullan, AVVA Member and Student Intern

Excused: Joe Dempsey, Rev Garry "Chappy" Turks (Chapter Chaplain), Tom Werzyn

Members Present: Bruce Arndt, Martha Baker, Jim Blumberg, Carol Brautigam, Bob Brown, Wayne Buser, James Chisel, Dale Creason, Tony Croce, Rockie Cuppari, Charles Daldry, Byron Daniels, David Dawson, Leland Eagleson, Bob Easter, Sally Ann Eaves, Alan Ebert, Patti Ehline, Bob Ferguson, Barry Fiore, David Gaul, David Gaul, Dan Graham, Dan Green, Lou Grounds, Pat Hammon, Warren Harrison, Mike Huber, Jack Hunter, Alan Jaffe, Mike Katich, Roger Lanphier, Cliff Lawson, Walter Leuci, Marvin Lich, Chuck Luley, David Lyons, Jesse Maldonado, Jim Martindale, Jim McGrevey, Bruce Miller, Milt Omoto,

We currently meet the first Saturday of every month at 9:00 AM at South Metro Fire and Rescue Building, 9195 E. Mineral Avenue, Centennial, CO 80112

Visit Us at: www.vva1106.org

Gary Palka, Chuck Perkins, Ed Phillips, Joe Plant, Jim Ponzi, Tom Puckett, Randy Reed, Coy Ritchie, Joseph Robinson, Juan Romero, Murray Sallenbach, John Sheadel, Charles Smith, Ron Smith, Phil Snyder, Jerome Springs, Mike Tarby, John Vargas, Dan Wagle, Lee White, John Williams, David Woods, David Yates. **Associate:** Cindy Ackerman, Jane Brown, Linda Croce, Lonnie Hetterle, Claudia Hunter, Jean Jaffe, Kaitlyn McGullan, Dora Plant, Susanne Sigona, Jai Smith, Leann Stelzer, Jim Williams

Guest Presentation: Guest Cliff Lawson, noted for his photo portraits of veterans, presented the first half of a video recording of an interview with US Army Major (ret) Robert T. White who, as a lieutenant on his second Vietnam tour, was flying an OV1C aircraft on a visual reconnaissance mission in Vietnam when shot down by hostile ground fire; crashed about 20 miles southeast of Tra Vinh City, Vinh Binh Province, South Vietnam and was taken prisoner by the enemy National Liberation Front Forces. In this portion of the video, we are given a background on Lt. White through his capture by the enemy, though a US Coast Guard crew was close enough to see him eject and nearby American forces couldn't get to him. The second half of the video will be presented at the April meeting.

Member Biography: Ed Phillips told his story as a member of the US Army in Vietnam. Originally to be assigned to an Infantry unit, when he arrived in Vietnam he was diverted to a Joint (multi service/dual national) Military Intelligence unit. He was assigned to "road analysis" collecting intelligence and passing on recommendations for travel to friendly forces. Each American was teamed with a South Vietnamese partner. Ed's partner did not speak English and he did not speak Vietnamese; it made for an interesting assignment but they found a way to communicate that worked well and completed several interesting missions. Ed also told of being in Denver for a Veterans parade in 1982 when he was caught up and joined the parade and how that, along with the dedication of the Vietnam Memorial Wall that same year made him realize that the American acceptance of the military had changed since his return from 'Nam.

President's Report (Dave Lyons)

1. Thank you to all who were able to join the February meeting via Zoom; this was the first time in Chapter history that we had to cancel a membership meeting due to weather

2. Mike Huber, Chapter Treasurer, has decided to step down due to personal reasons; thank you Mike for your outstanding support to the Chapter. Mike may have found a possible volunteer for his position.

3. Update to set-up a table at the VA hospital on the concourse level and provide information about the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1106 and the VVA Household Goods program. We will need volunteers for this project.

4. Reminder that our Chapter Elections will take place at our April Membership meeting; our By-Laws state that you have to be present to vote; ballots will be available at the April meeting; Lee White is our Elections Chairman; if you are interested in running for an Officer or Board position, please see Lee to get your name on the ballot. All positions are for two-year terms.

5. David Yates is going on the April 18-20 Honor Flight #46.

Vice President's Report (Milt Omoto)

1. Thank you to all of you who are here and on ZOOM.
2. You may have noticed that we have bagels today. We are varying our refreshments to see what is most appreciated.
3. If your picture is not on the back board, please see Claudia Hunter to have your picture taken. We need it to know who you are.
4. The Board approved the funding to support four \$2000 college scholarships this year and we have an anonymous donor who donated an additional \$2000 so we can now award five \$2000 scholarships.
5. **Next month (April Membership Meeting) is Officer and Board Member Elections. Please be present to vote.** Results will be sent to National Headquarters.

Treasurer's Report (Mike Huber)

1. February income was \$2382.31.
2. February expenditures were \$3434.92.
3. Motion to accept the Treasurer's report was made by Milt Omoto and seconded by Joe Robinson. Motion carried.

Secretary's Report (Sally Ann Eaves)

- Motion to approve the February 2024 minutes was made by Patti Ehline and seconded by Jack Hunter. Motion carried.

BOARD MEMBER AND COMMITTEE REPORT:

Membership (Jim Blumberg)

1. As of January 31, 2024, VVA National membership is 92,092 That is a significant increase. There were 174 new VVA members and 71 new AVVA members. 230 VVA and 15 AVVA members passed.
2. Colorado has 900 members and AVVA has 109 members in three chapters and at-large.
3. Chapter 1106 has 205 VVA and 46 AVVA members totalling 251.

Social Committee (John Vargas)

1 John called **Tony Thomas**, Director of the Fort Logan National Cemetery Complex up and presented him with a **Certificate of Appreciation** for his excellent presentation to the Chapter at the January 6 Membership meeting. Tony is a new member of 1106 Chapter AVVA. He has new information to relay to us.

Tony Thomas: Thank you for the honor. I just want to mention that it was meeting veterans like you and knowing what you went through when you returned from Vietnam that inspired me to seek help I needed when I returned from Iraq and Afghanistan.

There has been legislation passed that you need to be aware of. There is a **Burial Medallion** that is a medallion that can be put on a veterans' gravesite or grave stone and it is paid by the government. **If the government provides that medallion and pays for it, you give**

up the right to a military gravestone, which means you give up the right to burial in a National Cemetery. So many veterans questioned that legislation as not being properly vetted that the legislation is being revisited and I will let you know of any changes.

Veterans Emergency Assistance Program (Joe Plant)

1. This past month we spent \$2000 to help four veterans whose Social Security checks were delayed.
2. Expenditures for this fiscal year which ended on Feb 29 amounted to \$24,264.00 of a budgeted \$28,000.00.

Grants and Fundraising (Milt Omoto)

1. A reminder to enroll in the King Soopers Community Rewards Program as we receive donations from that.
2. Safeway has a Community Giving Card Program using reloadable cards. Prior to making any purchases you can reload a gift card at Customer Service or at the checkstand and then you pay for your purchases with that card. Each card can be reloaded in any amount from \$5 to \$500 and reloaded as often as you decide. Chapter 1106 will offer \$10 reloadable cards at a future meeting for those who might be interested. They then reload the cards for purchases. This will be on a trial basis to see if we want to continue the program.
3. Remember to support the VVA Household Goods Program through "Pick UP Please".

Chapter Events Coordinator (Joe Robinson)

1. We are still exploring the opportunity to visit the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs. We need a group of more than 10 people to get the group discount so I will determine the interest at the next meeting. We are looking at a possible May date to visit.
2. There is interest in having CPR training available for the Chapter. We will discuss this at the next Board meeting and let you know.
3. At the back table today are applications for the PGA HOPE golf lessons offered to veterans. It is a program conducted by the PGA and supported by the VA and is free to veterans. (<https://www.pgareach.org/services/military/>)

Scholarships (Lou Grounds)

1. We are getting the word of our five scholarships to the 11 schools in Douglas County and the 9 schools in Arapahoe County.
2. We will have an input to the newsletter.
3. We will need volunteers to review the student applicant essays. If you are interested see Lou Grounds.

Promotional Items (Lynn Stelzer for Joe Dempsey)

Just know that Lynn is standing in for Joe and has the items in the back.

Voices for Veterans (Warren Harrison)

1. We are active and there are members present.
2. This week we are attending a nurses conference.
3. We will participate in the State NAMI walk on May 5th.

Veteran Health and Women Veterans (Patti Ehline)

1. Be sure to check your emails for emails I send out to include information from the Regional VA, the possibility of a Virtual Health Resource within the VA, and a recent email with all kinds of information important to you.
2. The VA has awarded 760,000 claims under the PACT ACT.

3. Patti called up AVVA member **Leann Stelzer** and presented her with a **Certificate of Appreciation** for the many silent and thoughtful ways she gives back to the community especially through her sewing skills. **Leann Stelzer's** comments, "During the Vietnam War all we could do to support you were to send letters, packages etc. I just thought I'd keep that support going. Thank you."

4. Thank you for your recent donations for the Bill Daniels Center. We will continue to have drives for them.

5. I sent out information on the Welcome Home Veterans celebration March 23 in Castle Rock.

Founding/Past President (Lee White)

1. Lee has several membership packets available for recruiting new members.

2. The Poppy Drive for Memorial Day will be May 25th. Lee has been able to negotiate with the American Legion in Parker to buy 5000 poppies for the drive. We hope to have the Poppy Drive at three King Soopers Market locations.

Roundtable Discussion:

Dave Lyons reminded members that for many, this is the 10 year point when many of the VA cards need to be renewed.

Warren Harrison recommended a book, The Women by Kristin Hannah, as a novel giving a realistic perspective of women nurses serving in the Vietnam War. Several members also recommend reading it. (Secretary's note: This is a very popular book. For the audio version alone, there is an 18 week wait on Libby)

Jack Hunter gave quite a testimonial on his many positive physical tests and recent favorable medical exams. He went further, though and requested a CT Cardiac Scoring test. From that test he was immediately hospitalized as that test showed he was close to having a major heart attack. His lesson to us is to be proactive. Get a **CT Cardiac Scoring Test** done. You may have to pay a nominal fee and may need your doctor's recommendation but get it done! He emphasized that you have to go beyond cholesterol levels and ask for cardiac screening. It is very important to be proactive and get tested. Our intern, **Kaitlyn McGullin** reinforced the importance of Jack's testimony based upon heart issues suffered by her mother. She also encouraged members to get tested.

Jean Jaffe: The CCSD Retired Association is presenting a Women Veterans Panel on April 30, 2024 at 6:30PM at the American Legion, Post 1. Both Patty Ehline and Sally Ann Eaves are panelists. All VVA and AVVA members are encouraged to attend. Veterans attend free and others are asked to donate \$15 toward the association scholarship fund.

Barry Fiore

1. Mentioned that Monday, Mar 4 is "Hug a GI Day".

2. He also encouraged members to make use of the Colorado State TABOR refund of property tax refunds for veterans though it amounts to the same as that refund for seniors. You get one or the other, not both.

3. We are working with the Forgotten Heroes people to put together a book of biographies of members. Contact him if you are interested in adding your bio.

4. He also thanked the membership for their support following the passing of his wife.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: (Dave Lyons)

1. March 25 is National Medal of Honor Day
2. March 29 is Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day
3. The next Board Meeting is Saturday, March 30, 2024, 9:00AM, on ZOOM
4. The next Membership Meeting is Saturday, April 6, 2024 at 9:AM. Your attendance is encouraged as it is the Election Meeting to elect Chapter 1106 Officers and Board members.
5. Please continue to stay in touch with each other.

Thank You to Jim Williams and Jack Hunter for making this ZOOM meeting possible.

MEETING ADJOURNED by Dave Lyons, President, at 11:18 AM.

This Chapter Membership Meeting minutes submitted by Sally Ann Eaves, Chapter Secretary
Published 3/07/2024

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