



Vietnam Veterans of America
Chapter 1106

Membership Meeting June 3, 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 Plant, Joe Robinson, Joe Dempsey, John Vargas, Tom Werzyn. Lee White (Founder/Past President), Litta Plant-Schaper (AVVA)
Excused: Patti Ehline

Members Present: Bruce Arndt, Jim Blumberg, Wayne Buser, Dale Creason, Tony Croce, Rockie Cuppari, Charles Daldry, David Dawson, Joe Dempsey, Bob Easter, Sally Ann Eaves, Alan Evert, Barry Fiore, Dan Graham, Dan Green, Leo Greunke, Lou Grounds, Pat Hammon, Ted Hanfelder, Warren Harrison, Mike Huber, Jack Hunter, Alan Jaffe, Mike Karch, Mike Katich, Bob Lee, Walter Leuci, Richard Lewis, Marvin Lich, Chuck Luley, David Lyons, Jesse Maldonado, Bob Mallin, Jim Martindale, Jim McGrevey, Don McNeely, Sr. Mike Messenger, Harry Montgomery, Tony Nickerson, Milt Omoto, Gary Palka, Ed Phillips, Joe Plant, Clarence Rebolledo, Randy Reed, Joseph Robinson, Dean Rollins, Juan Romero, Bob Rotruck, Carl Sanchez, Arthur Schneider, Ed Seiler, John Sheadel, Lee Skiles, Ron Smith, Charles Smith, Wain Stowe, Garry Turks, John Vargas, Wendell Wallace, Tom Werzyn, Gary Weston, Lee White, Lew Wood, Associates: Linda Croce, Ita Dempsey, Diane Graham, Claudia Hunter, Jean Jaffe, Bob Krech, Litta Plant-Schaper, Barbara Rotruck, Di Seiler, Jai Smith, Naomi Turks, Vieng Vongsakoun, Jim Williams,

Introduction and Recognition of Guests and New Members

Member Biography: No Member Biography today because we have two speakers.
Visit Us at: www.vva1106.org

Member Presentation: Vieng Vongsakoun, a Chapter member, former combat medic, currently a mortgage loan officer and head of "Voices for Colorado Veterans", spoke on the future continuation of the VVA legacy. He then spoke on the history, qualifications for, and benefits of VA Home Loans and clarification of the benefits of reverse mortgages.

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Guest speaker: Dan Strathman, former US Special Forces and veteran of four Iraq tours, spoke of "Advancing Warriors International" a non-profit which he runs along with his wife, Dr. Ellie Stevens. Ellie, a Board-Certified Psychiatrist, was medically retired as a USAF major after suffering Traumatic Brain Injury and PTSD. She is author of Unshackled: Finding God's Freedom From Trauma. "Advancing Warrior International" operates on the premise that many veterans and first responders know firsthand the toll that trauma can take but lack the knowledge of how to grow from it and move forward. This non-profit acts to help individuals through individual programs; trains churches to be more informed; and helps mental health providers to be more faith informed.

Special Presentation: The Chapter Chaplain's caps were presented to Chaplains Garry Turks, Joe Plant and Lonnie Hetterle with our thanks for their dedication.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Dave Lyons)

- Our Memorial Day Poppy Drive was a great success, though we had only four locations this year. Thank you to all who came out to help. The American Legion Auxiliary is going to order poppies for future drives.
- Today's Chapter Spring Food Drive donations will go to the Volunteers of America Bill Daniels Veteran Services Center. Thank you to all who donated.
- We are excited to partner with the "Vettes for Veterans" organization to participate in the Highlands Ranch Fourth of July parade. Joe Robinson will report later in the meeting.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Milt Omoto)

- Thank you to all who are in attendance and especially to those on ZOOM. - The 50th Vietnam War Commemoration in Washington DC (May 11-13, 2023) was an outstanding event and I encourage you to watch the video.
- Yesterday John Vargas and I delivered the socks from Fallen Heroes Sock Drive to Valor Point, a VA temporary housing facility for homeless veterans who are in transition to permanent housing. They were very friendly and very, very appreciative. See the pictures in the next newsletter. Thank you to those who donated

TREASURER'S REPORT (Mike Huber)

- Results of the Poppy Drive are not included in this report.
- We had an income of \$2,282 and expenses of \$5,453 for the month of May.
- Motion to approve the Treasurer's report was made by Joe Dempsey, seconded by Dave Dawson. Motion carried.

SECRETARY'S REPORT (Sally Ann Eaves)

- Thank you to Milt Omoto for covering for me at the last meeting.
- Minutes from the last meeting were distributed to members digitally.
- Motion to approve the minutes was made by Tony Nickerson, seconded by Alan Jaffe. Motion carried.

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BOARD MEMBER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

MEMBERSHIP AND COLOR GUARD (Dale Creason)

- Membership: We have 194 VVA members and 43 AVVA members.
- National membership is 89,990 of which there are 1435 women.
- Color Guard: Our Color Guard participated in the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Walks Colorado on May 13, at Centennial Center Park.
- We also participated in a Windcrest event that was excellent.
- Next week on Friday morning, we will participate in the American GI Forum at the Embassy Suites, Denver Tech Center.

VETERANS EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (Joe Plant)

- During the month of May, we assisted 11 veterans with applications, deposits and rent for a total of \$2,891.71. This was all approved by the board because April and May are tough months and we usually spend more to help our veterans get off and stay off the streets. We have had a significant success rate with the social workers who help our vets. Thank you for your support.

CHAPLAIN'S REPORT (Rev. Garry Turks) As said before, I am so honored to be in the room with

you veterans.

- Remember your Buddy Checks. It is so important that we check on each other and that we know we will check on each other.
- Thankfully, we have no one in the hospital at the moment.
- We do have members with on-going health and wellness issues to be remembered.
- Remember we have chaplains, including women, in attendance if you need to talk to someone.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS (Tony Nickerson)

- Tony gave President Lyons a thank you note from the family of Carlos DeHerrera which was read to the membership. It expressed appreciation for representation by the Chapter at Carlos' funeral.
- Reporting the following actions from two State Council meetings with Chapters 1071 and 1075 last month:
 - Women Veterans Day is declared to be June 12, 2023.
 - In addition to burial in National cemeteries, veterans can be buried in state cemeteries. That burial is free in the state of Colorado.
 - The VA announced last month that VVA will now have accredited Veteran Service Officers (VSOs).
 - The National VVA Convention will be held August 8 - 12, 2023 in Orlando. It is most important that we be represented by our delegates and represent our Colorado organization.
 - Regarding the dissolution of VVA, National Vice President Tom Burke made the statement that National VVA will be viable for at least the next seven to eight years. Dissolution

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plans will be a focus of the National Convention. In the event the National organization is dissolved, we will determine our own future as an organization.

SPEAKER'S BUREAU (Tom Werzyn) The Speaker's Bureau will resume activity with the resumption of school in the Fall.

GRANTS AND FUNDRAISING (Milt Omoto)

- Household Good Program is a good fundraiser for us by donating any unused or unwanted household items, clothing and so on. Donated items must be small enough for one person to carry and load; no televisions, large furniture, large appliances. You can schedule a pick up online (Google: PICKUPPLEASE or click <https://pickupplease.org/schedule-a-pickup>) and they come to your house to pick up. It is quicker than it used to be, now 6 weeks down from seven. We get monthly checks from this program. Not every state has this program so we are fortunate in Colorado.
- The King Soopers Community Rewards program is also another source of income on a quarterly basis. If you shop at King Soopers you can sign up for the program and indicate VVA Chapter 1106.

CHAPTER EVENTS COORDINATOR (Joe Robinson)

- Fourth of July: Highlands Ranch Fourth of July Parade - Chapter 1106 and the Corvette Club "Vettes for Vets" have both registered for participation in the parade. The parade will begin at 9:00 AM and we, Yellow Shirts, have to be at the Target Store parking lot at the Highlands Ranch Town Center - Sergeant John Stiles Drive - at 7:00 AM for staging. Our line-up will be: first the Chapter 1106 banner, followed by our Color Guard and then the Corvette Club (one each red, white and blue) cars carrying a few of our members. So far we have 21 Corvettes committed to carry Chapter members. Other members will be walking behind with back up cars for those who need. Signup sheets are in the back of today's meeting, be sure to sign up.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE (Gary Weston)

- We have 14 applicants for our six \$2000 college scholarships for Cherry Creek School District high school seniors. Interviews will be conducted next week and selections shortly after.
- Karen and Jim Bishop donated another \$2000 to our scholarship fund and are involved in the applicant review process.

SOCIAL (John Vargas)

- Our Quilts of Valor and Pam Weber were the subject of an excellent article written by Tom Werzyn and published in the last VVA magazine. Be sure to read it.
- The theme for the August 8th Chapter picnic will be Hawaiian.

PROMOTIONAL (Joe Dempsey) AVVA shirts are here. If you have shirts that you ordered, please come get them. Also come back and buy stuff. The more we sell, the more we can get.

VOICES FOR VETERANS (Warren Harris)

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- We did a presentation at the VA Mental Health Summit.
- We maintain a relationship with the Voices for Vets Mental Health Council of Eastern Colorado.

FORMER PRESIDENT (Lee White)

- There are quality puzzles available in the back for anyone.
- I'll be covering for Joe Dempsey and Dale Creason next month so I'll be handling both Membership and Promotional.

AVVA Litta Plant-Schaper

- Name tags are available here.
- The Young Marines are having an auction and I will have flyers for that.

ROUNDTABLE

- Tony Nickerson added that the National VVA is at 89,990 members with a goal of 90,000. Prior to losses this month, the Colorado chapters actually took the National numbers to over 90,000
- Barry Fiore reminded the membership of the June 30th Veterans Stand Down at the Arapahoe County fairgrounds from 10 AM to 4 PM.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Next VVA State Council Meeting: Saturday, June 10, 2023
- Next Board Meeting is Saturday, June 24, 2023, 9:00 AM on ZOOM.
- Next Membership Meeting: July 1, 2023 at 9:00 AM,
- Independence Day: July 4, 2023, Highlands Ranch Parade

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

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