

THE JOURNEY

Vietnam Veterans of America Inc. Chapter 227

The Dean K. Phillips Memorial Chapter

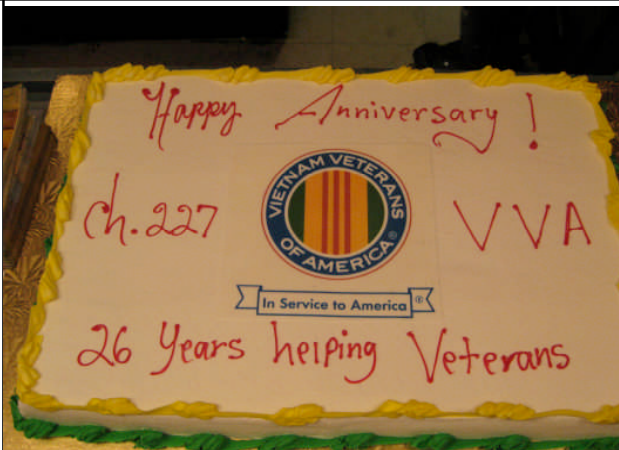
"Serving Veterans and the Community in Northern Virginia"

"Never Again Shall One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another"



In Service to America

November 2011



26 YEARS OF SERVICE

The chapter celebrated its 26th Anniversary at the October 20th membership meeting in grand style with a very informative presentation on the new management program for Arlington National Cemetery and delicious cake and ice cream.

Carl Beisel of SAIC Corp gave the overall program history and features from the official Assessment and Findings. Col. John Schrader and Major Nicholas Miller of the Army gave an update on the findings implementation. The assessment was performed free by the joint effort of SAIC Corp., Booz, Allen and Hamilton and Mitre Corp. after a legal hurdle had to be overcome in that the army could not accept free work.

The assessment determined that the cemetery accomplished its daily mission despite an antiquated and written based record keeping and processing system. The staff deserved a great deal of credit for a

job well done despite these deficiencies and an increasing daily funeral schedule. Major findings were under staffing, inadequate training, and a management system based on handwritten entries which caused unnecessary errors. The new IT system integrates all cemetery activities from cutting grass to final interment that allow instant access to those in need. The major feature is that the family of the deceased veteran can monitor the funeral's preparations, including a photo of the finished grave marker. Each grave marker has been photographed and its location entered into the cemetery GIS system. A new combined road and utility system increased the number of available grave sites within the existing cemetery. The rapid response is to restore the public and especially the veterans' community trust in the Arlington National Cemetery, "the People's Cemetery".

The celebration included the presentation of the Dean K. Phillips Award for Exceptional Service to Bruce Waxman. He is only the third person to have received the honor. See article on page 2 about the presentation.

Special thanks to Diane Ignatowski for providing the birthday cake and ice cream treat, and to Bill Dumsick for donating his 50/50 winning of \$33 to the chapter. Bob Ingram attended his first meeting as a new member. Hope to see more of Bob in the future.

NOVEMBER MEETING SPEAKER:

"DO YOU NEED A LAWYER?"

The November 17th membership meeting guest speaker is Rear Admiral Thomas A. Morrison, USN Retired, who will speak on "Lawyering in the U.S. Navy and Why Everyone Should Go to Law School" The presentation will provide an exceptional opportunity on why lawyers think as they do and how one can use this information if you need a lawyer. Admiral Morrison is a 28 year navy veteran with his last assignment as Assistant Judge Advocate of the Navy for Operations and Management. He is currently the Senior Associate Dean for Administrative Affairs at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

Come early to meet fellow members and enjoy a great dinner. Family members and guests are always welcome. Our meetings are alcohol and smoke free. The meeting starts at 7:30 P.M.

COME TO THE DANCE

The 2011 DMZ to Delta® Dance will be held on November 10th. The dance is the chapter's veteran outreach program to provide an economical and enjoyable evening for visiting veterans, their families, and chapter members. See the dance announcement on the next page.

If you cannot attend the dance, you can buy a ticket for a Gold Star Mother or just make a donation for the dance. Call Len Ignatowski (703-255-0353) to offer your services to work at the dance.



Bruce Waxman (l) accepts the Dean K. Phillips Award from Byron Sheldon, Chapter President at the October membership meeting. Photo by Len Ignatowski

DEAN K. PHILLIPS AWARD

Bruce Waxman, Chapter Vice President, was the recipient of the Dean K. Phillips Award for Exceptional Veteran and Community Service. The award is the chapter's highest level of recognition. The last recipient was Alan Wallace for his heroic actions as a fireman at the Pentagon heliport during the terrorist attack in 2001.

Since joining the chapter in the mid-90's, Bruce has served in numerous leadership roles, including as the current vice president. He has managed the successful Vince Kaspar Awards program for several years, which showed that his second life calling was as a comedian as demonstrated in his role as the awards presentation M.C. He initiated and continues to expand the chapter's homeless veteran outreach. His most notable accomplishment was his successful effort in getting the "Welcome Home, Vietnam Veterans" proclamations by the Virginia Senate and House of Delegates and Fairfax County. He started this campaign without any encouragement after he learned about the national effort from a pamphlet that was distributed at the 2009 national VVA convention at a chapter board meeting. His effort en-

couraged two chapter members and two other chapters to have Arlington, Loudoun and Prince William Counties in Virginia and Montgomery County, Maryland to issue similar proclamations. He recently participated in a wheel chair wash at the D.C. Veterans Hospital.

HOLIDAY PARTY HOST NEEDED

A host for the Holiday Party on December 10th is needed. Call Byron Sheldon (703-850-3498) to offer your home for this annual chapter event. A \$300 grant is provided for the meat and beverages.

THE HISTORY OF THE WALL MEMORIALIA

by Bruce Waxman

At the September 15th membership meeting, Deury Felton, Curator of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection, discussed the history of the Memorial and the thousands of objects left at The Wall. He is a Vietnam War veteran and was seriously injured near the Cambodian Border while serving with the 101st Airborne Division IN 1967.

The practice and large scale of leaving items at The Wall marked the first time that such a practice was started. The practice has attracted interest from foreign museums. The legend is that the first object was a Purple Heart that was buried in the freshly poured concrete during its construction. Over 100,000 items have been left at The Wall with a record setting 5,000 in 2010. He remarked about the "social history" and "field expedience" of the collection, which contains many objects whose relationship to the Wall lack donor information, leaving the true story to conjecture. An exhibit of Wall objects, called "To Heal A Nation," at the Museum of American History on the Mall, was extremely popular, with long lines of people waiting to get in each day. Deury presented the chapter with two books about The Wall and the Vietnam War which were put into a drawing for those in attendance.

MINUTEMAN ALERT SUCCESSES

- **MEDICAL FURNITURE:** The alert quickly found a home for several home hospital furniture items including a hospital bed with rails and pull up bar, portable walker with basket, standup walker, an IV pole, an adult potty chair, a metal cane, transport chair with feet rest and cushion, an air mattress, and three wheel walkers. A friend of Byron Sheldon offered the items which were accepted by the St. Marks Catholic Church Community Outreach Committee, a chapter partner.
- **HOMELESS VETERAN SECURITY DEPOSIT:** The chapter's response to assist in the apartment security deposit for a single parent veteran with two children resulted in a \$945 grant. The chapter portion was \$600, while members, Alan Wallace, Jim Betthausen, Natalie Bohuslaw, David First, Bob Ingram and Pat Robertson contributed \$345 in response to a Minuteman appeal. Natalie and Pat are AVVA members. Thanks to all who contributed.

“DMZ TO Delta”[®] DANCE is on!

Vietnam Veterans of America Inc. ® Chapter 227

DATE: NOVEMBER 10, 2011

TIME: 8:00 PM TO MIDNIGHT

HOLIDAY INN ROSSLYN at Key Bridge

1900 N. Ft. Myer Dr., Arlington, Va.

I want to order _____ tickets at \$30 per person \$ _____

I cannot attend, but I want to purchase _____ guest tickets \$ _____
(Gold Star Mother, guest veteran)

I want to make a donation since I can't attend \$ _____

TOTAL PAYMENT: \$ _____

Ticket orders will be held at Will Call, which opens at 7:00 P.M.

NAME: _____ Email for future mailings: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE: _____

Questions, call 703-255-0353 or visit our website at www.vva227.org.

Please make your check payable to **Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. Chapter 227**, and mail your ticket order to:

Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.® Chapter 227,
c/o Len Ignatowski, 2408 Oak Vale Court NW, Vienna, Va. 22181

YOU CAN BE A MINUTEMAN TOO

If you want the opportunity to respond to chapter needs with a short response time, become a Minuteman by sending your email address to Len Ignatowski at grunt69@gmail.com. The alert not only includes appeals, but special offerings like movie previews and tickets to sporting events.

CHAPTER BRIEFS

- **FAIRFAX CITY FALL FESTIVAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH BOOTH:** A large crowd at the festival resulted in over 20 membership packages being given to veterans and spouses on October 8th. Special thanks to Len Ignatowski, Ron Ball, Jonathan Olson, Sharon Celesnik and Paul and Cyndy Stancliff for staffing the booth. Cyndy encouraged two spouses of deceased Vietnam veterans to attend our October meeting, while a visiting South Carolina veteran was given information. Len and Ron made the emergency tent setup after Joe Celesnik had an emergency medical condition, but he has recovered from it. Thanks to Sharon Celesnik for alerting everyone about the emergency and helping at the booth in the afternoon. Dr. Steve Nettles of the Vet Center was on hand to answer benefits and counseling questions. The booth's cookie jar raised \$28 for Suits for Vets.
- **DRY CLEANER NEEDED:** The Suits for Vets program is in need of a business that will clean the donated clothing at a reduced price or free. Call Chuck Harris at 703-463-7326 if you can help.
- **SPEAKERS NEEDED:** The chapter is in need of meeting speakers for March through June 2012. The speaker can be you about your Tour of Duty or someone that you know on a topic of interest (Vietnam War, veteran outreach program, other wars (WW II, Korean, Iraq, etc.)). Call Len Funk at 703-820-8118.
- **LAMB CENTER COMMUNITY OUTREACH:** Special thanks to Byron Sheldon, John Runyon, Len Ignatowski, Fran Knouse, Sharon Celesnik, and Bruce Waxman for their hotel toileteries donations to the Lamb Center, a daytime homeless service center. The items allow individuals to have their own personal toileteries when using the center's shower facilities.
- **WHEEL CHAIR WASH:** On September 24th, Bruce Waxman represented the chapter at Chapter 641's Annual Wheel Chair Wash at the D.C. Veterans Hospital. About 24 wheel chairs were washed and oiled. The event marks a continuation of joint operations between the two chapters in serving veterans and active duty military personnel.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH: Soup Drive

For the November 17th membership meeting, Diane Ignatowski, AVVA Representative, is asking that members bring cans of soup, Halloween candy, and non-perishable items to stock the winter food pantry of the Lamb Center, which serves as a day time homeless shelter. The shelter provides time and space for Vet Center staff to assist homeless veterans. Any questions, call Diane at 703-255-0353.



Lyons VAMC Combat PTSD Class visit to The Wall as part of their healing. Photo by Bill Shugarts

PTSD CLASS VISIT

On October 19th, the chapter hosted another visit to The Wall by the Lyons VAMC Combat PTSD class. Len Ignatowski, Ben Buckley, and Bill Shugarts were the hosts. The class consists of veterans from the Vietnam War to the current wars.

The service includes the veterans marching to The Wall's apex. The singing of the national anthem by one of the veterans is followed by a prayer and moment of personal meditation. The class leaves its class remembrance plaque at The Wall.

Then Ben gave his inspiring welcome to The Wall, and Len Ignatowski welcomes the veterans by presenting the American flag/Veteran flag lapel pin to each of the veterans. Bill served as the official photographer.

After the service at The Wall, the veterans visited the WW II Memorial, the Korean War Memorial and the new Martin Luther King Memorial. The hosts stay to see if anyone wants to talk or to have someone to walk with.

Lois Beck had volunteered to escort two woman veterans

through the Women In Military Service to America Museum, but the adverse weather forecast forced the two veterans to cancel their visit. Lois has asked Rodney Smith, the PTSD Class Advisor, to ask the two veterans if Lois can mail museum information and register the two veterans in the museum data base. The weather cooperated by not raining during the visit.

ELKS LODGE 2188: "ANNUAL VETERANS DINNER

Elks Lodge 2188, a chapter Minuteman Alert partner, invites all veterans and family members to a free dinner on Sunday, November 6, 2011 at their lodge at 8421 Arlington Blvd. (Rte. 50), just outside the beltway. Dinner time is 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM. The guest speaker is SFC Hugh Conlon IV from "Warriors Speaks." Any questions, contact Ken Hensley of the Veterans Committee at ken.hensley@cox.net or 703-644-1149. If you attend, please wear something that identifies your chapter affiliation.

CARE PACKAGES FOR TROOPS

The chapter's new partnership with Mitre Corporation, "Remembrance Care Packages for Troops", campaign resulted in a record setting collection of \$ 4100 and the sending of 251 care packages to troops in Afghanistan and Iraq. The troops are family members or employees of Mitre Corporation, but the quantity allows sharing with fellow soldiers. Also, special packages are prepared to meet the needs of female troops in the field. In some cases, officers and senior NCO's distribute the packages to their troops. Chuck Harris is the chapter's point-man on this project.

Vince Kaspar Prizes for Excellence in the Arts

The 16th Annual Vince Kaspar Prizes for Excellence in the Arts is officially opened. The chapter and the Memorial Day Writers Project sponsor the program to recognize local high school talent in poetry and visual art. Prizes for each medium are \$200 for 1st Place, \$100 for Second Place, and \$50 for Third Place.

The contest is open to all high school juniors and seniors who reside or attend school in Arlington and Fairfax Counties, the Town of Vienna, and the cities of Falls Church, Alexandria, and Fairfax. The deadline is March 3, 2012 and the awards will be presented at the May 2012 membership meeting.

Art judges are needed for this year's contest. Entry submission directions and "frequent asked questions" are on the chapter webpage at www.vva227.org. Questions or art judge recommendations can be directed to Bruce Waxman at 703-323-0269 or email at bruce_waxman@vva227.org.

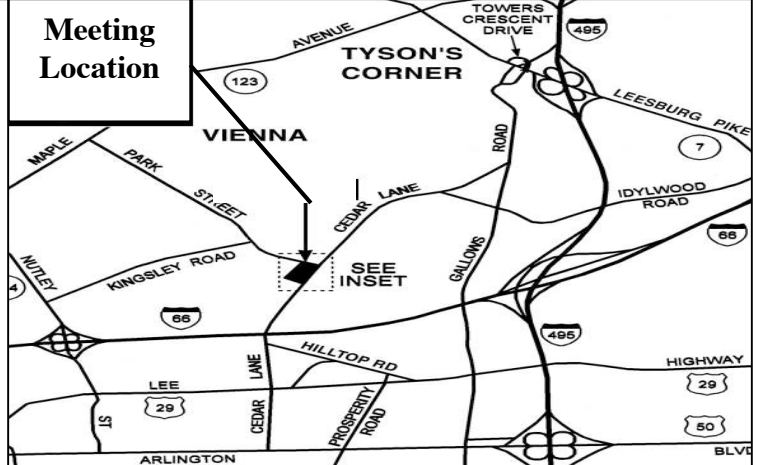
CHAPTER 227 DOG TAGS

November 2011



OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF CHAPTER 227

- President:** Byron Sheldon – 703-850-3498
- Vice President:** Bruce Waxman – 703-323-0269
- Secretary:** Ron Ball
- Treasurer:** Chuck Harris
- Sergeant at Arms:** Jonathan Olson
- Board of Directors:** Paul Stancliff, Len Funk, Len Ignatowski, Bill Dumsick, Charlie Klein, Joe Celesnik, and Tom Stryer.
- AVVA Representative:** Diane Ignatowski 703-255-0353
- Newsletter Editor:** Len Ignatowski 703-255-0353
- School Speaker's Panel:** Tom Stryer 703-323-9032
- Meeting Guest Speaker:** Len Funk 703-820-8118
- DMZ To Delta@Dance:** Len Ignatowski
- Suits for Veterans:** Chuck Harris 703-729-5665



CHAPTER INFORMATION: 703-968-0686

CHAPTER WEB SITE: www.vva227.org

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS
 Neighbor's Restaurant, 262D Cedar Lane
 Vienna, Virginia (Park St. & Cedar Lane)
 Pre-Meeting Dinner (Optional): 6:45 PM
 Meeting Time: 7:30 PM Phone: 703-698-8010

CHAPTER OPERATIONS PLAN

November:

- 03: Board Meeting: American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street, North, Vienna, Va, 7:30 PM
- 06: Elks Lodge 2188 Annual Veterans Dinner. See newsletter article.
- 10: DMZ to Delta@ Dance: **BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!**
- 11: Veterans Day
- 11: Memorial Day Writers Project 11:30 AM to 5:30 PM: Tent at on the mall @ Constitution & 21st St NW All welcome
- 17: Membership Meeting: Rear Admiral Thomas A. Morrison, USN Retired, "Do You Need A Lawyer?"
- 23: Lyons PTSD Class Visit to The Wall: Meet at the flag pole @ 11:00 AM. POC: Ben Buckley 703-978-9179

December:

- 01: Board Meeting: American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street, North, Vienna, Va., 7:30 PM
- 03: Virginia State Council Meeting, Virginia Beach, Va.
- 10: **Holiday Party: Host needed. Details to follow. Call Byron Sheldon at 703-850-3498.**
- 15: No membership meeting
- 25: Merry Christmas

January 2012

- 01: Happy New Year

VETERAN'S HOTLINE 1-800-273-8255

**24 HOURS/ 7 DAYS A WEEK
DON'T HESITATE! CALL NOW**

VVA CAR DONATION PROGRAM

1-800-Help Vets

WHY ARE YOU NOT IN ONE OF OUR PHOTOGRAPHS?



DMZ To Delta ® DANCE

November 10, 2011

BE THERE!

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

November 17, 2011

“Do You Need A Lawyer?”

Bring cans of soups for the Lamb Center Winter Pantry

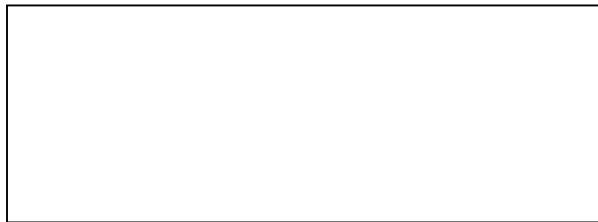
HOLIDAY PARTY

December 10, 2011

HOST NEEDED

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA ® INC.
CHAPTER 227
DEAN K. PHILLIPS MEMORIAL CHAPTER
P.O. Box 5653
Arlington, Virginia 22205-0653

Address Service Requested



OUR MISSION

**To “Serve Veterans, Their Families,
Our Community and Our Country”**