

THE JOURNEY

Vietnam Veterans of America Inc. Chapter 227
The Dean K. Phillips Memorial Chapter

“Serving Veterans and the Community in Northern Virginia”



In Service to America

“Never Again Shall One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another”

November 2013

THE BIRTH OF GUNSHIPS

The November 21st membership meeting features John Bessette, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel, who will discuss the development of the side-firing gunship concept concentrating on the Vietnam War AC-47, Spooky, that turned the battle tide in favor of American and ARVN units from 1965 through 1971. He served in Vietnam from May 1968 to August 1969.

Come early to enjoy a great meal and meet your fellow members! Spouses and family are always welcome. Better yet, bring fellow veterans with you. Drinking of alcoholic beverages is prohibited during the meeting.

COME TO THE DANCE!

- **AN EVENING OUT:** Members are strongly urged to attend this year's 25th DMZ to Delta[®] dance on November 10th to demonstrate your support and to meet other chapter members and visiting veterans. You never know who you may meet? Ask Joe Celesnik who met a fellow air force buddy that he had not seen since Vietnam. The dance will play the top 25 songs of the Vietnam War in honor of the dance's 25th anniversary. Note new dance location. **Order your tickets now!**
- **SILENT AUCTION:** The DMZ to Delta[®] dance needs items for the silent auction. Donated items range from hotel gift certificates to Vietnam War merchandise and clothing. Baskets such as wine and cheese or similar contents are also acceptable. Call Len Ignatowski at 703-255-0353 to make a donation or ask a question.

YOUR DD-214 IS STILL NEEDED!

Special thanks to the members who have provided a copy of their DD-214 for the IRS audit compliance. However, more members still need to provide a copy to the chapter.

The reason for this request is that recent IRS audits of veteran organizations included verification of member eligibility. Unfortunately, a few years ago, the chapter destroyed all DD-214's (active and inactive) after eligibility was verified and recorded into the membership database in accordance with the national office guidance at the time. The record destruction was done as an anti-identity theft measure.

Each member is being asked to mail a copy of one's DD-214 to the chapter. The social security number can be made illegible. Mail the copy to the chapter post office box address as shown on the newsletter's front page. Let's complete the mission NOW!

HOLIDAY CHEER FOR VASH FAMILIES

The chapter plans to repeat its very successful Holiday Cheer for needy VASH families. Each family provides a holiday gift list. Diane Ignatowski, AVVA Representative, is sponsoring this need as an AVVA project. Everyone including spouses is invited to help buy and wrap the gifts or give a cash donation. The VASH managers are providing the Holiday Cheer Lists. Diane can be contacted at 703-255-0353, while donations can be mailed to VV Chapter 227, Attn: VASH Family Holiday Cheer, 44020 Pandora Ct., Ashburn, Va. 20147, and checks made payable to VVA Chapter 227 with a note, "VASH Family Holiday Cheer".

Make Charlie Ride the Hood!

Bill and Cheryl Dumsick are hosting the Holiday Party on December 14, 2013, at 6:00 pm in their home at 13606 White Stone Court, Clifton, Virginia. Beverages and meat dishes are provided, while members bring a covered dish. Call Cheryl Dumsick (703-968-0686) for a dish selection. **No early arrivals please!**

A party tradition is to bring a wrapped child's gift with the gift's gender and age marked on it, and a child's winter clothing item. The gifts and clothing serve as an emergency supply for the Sullivan House in Arlington County. Jonathan Olson and Charlie Klein deliver the gifts and clothing. Our goal is to completely fill Jonathan's car with our generosity so that Charlie has to ride on the hood. If you can't attend the party, gifts and clothing can be delivered to Len Ignatowski's home at 2408 Oak Vale Court, N.W., Vienna. Call for a delivery time at 703-255-0353.

Let's make this holiday a little more joyful for the less fortunate.



Bruce Waxman, center, talks to the American Indian woman veteran Honor Guard

MS. VETERAN AMERICA 2013

On October 13th, Chapter President Bruce Waxman, his wife, Sarah Elpern and chapter member, Lois Beck, were the guests of Final Salute for the 2013 Ms. Veteran America pageant at the National Conference Center in Leesburg, Va. VVA 227 has been a staunch financial supporter of Final Salute, an organization that provides housing and aid to homeless female veterans and their children.

The winner, out of twenty finalists, was 31 year old Staff Sgt. Allaina Guitron, a 13 year Army veteran. When Sgt Guitron, who is stationed at Fort Meade, Maryland, was young, her mother was homeless, and Guitron lived in several foster care homes.

The dinner raised over \$90,000 for Final Salute, and a corporate donor has promised to build 90 homes for homeless female veterans and their families nationwide. Final Salute currently has two homes in the Washington D.C. area of which both are in Northern Virginia.

VETERAN OUTREACH: “Just In Time!”

- **VVA National recognizes chapter VASH outreach:** The chapter’s VASH back-to-school gift card program is featured on its website: VVADonations.org, posting the story on Facebook and Tweeting. Its December newsletter, *Report to Action*, will, also have the story.
- **“Care Package for Troops” Mitre Corp Partnership:** The 2013 Veterans Day campaign resulted in a record setting collection of \$ 4113.26 and the mailing of 290 care packages to deployed overseas troops. The program has provided 1,075 packages since 2009. Thanks to the Mitre Corp employees and Chuck Harris as the chapter program liaison.
- **AVVA Lamb Center Outreach:** Another large hotel toiletries delivery was made to the Lamb Center, which provides hot showers for homeless people. The Center provides time and space for VA staff to assist homeless veterans in obtaining their benefits. Thanks to Fran Knouse, Sharon Celesnik, and Diane Ignatowski for their toiletery contribution.
- **LYONS PTSD VISIT:** Another successful visit by the Lyons Combat PTSD class to The Wall was conducted on October 9th. The mission was accomplished using new stealth movement due to the government shut-down. Special thanks to Ben Buckley and Bill Shugarts for deploying their new stealth technology for this important visit.
- **FAIRFAX CITY FALL FESTIVAL:** Joe and Sharon Celesnik successfully managed our annual information booth at the Fair. Max and Fran Knouse and Bill and Natalie Bohuslaw helped staff the booth. The group answered many inquiries about the war and the chapter and membership applications were distributed to Vietnam veterans. Thanks Joe and Sharon.

“25th Annual DMZ TO Delta”[®] DANCE

“Featuring the Top 25 Songs of the Vietnam War Era”

DATE: NOVEMBER 10, 2013

TIME: 8:00 PM TO MIDNIGHT

HOLIDAY INN ALEXANDRIA SOUTHWEST

2460 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, Va. 22314

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: \$ _____

NAME: _____ Email for future mailings: _____

ADDRESS: _____ Phone Number: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE: _____

Ticket orders will be held at the Will Call Desk, which opens at 7:00 pm. Questions, call 703-255-0353.

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, 2408 Oak Vale Court NW, Vienna, VA. 22181

CHAPTER 227 DOG TAGS

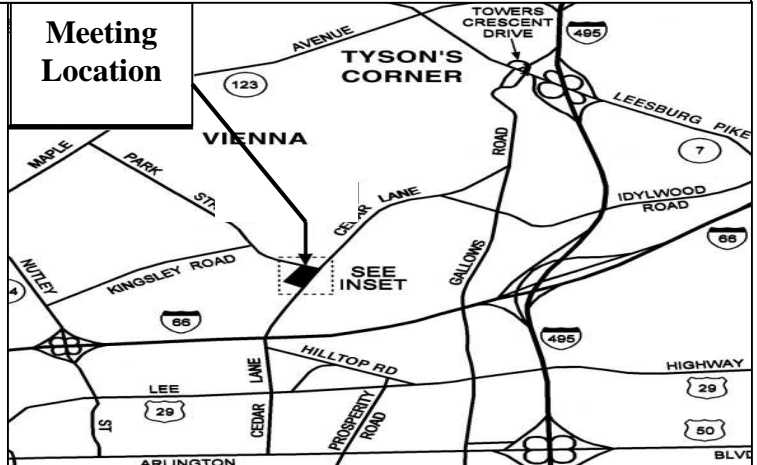
November 2013



OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF CHAPTER 227

President: Bruce Waxman – 703-323-0269
Vice President: Len Ignatowski, 703-255-0353
Secretary: Ron Ball
Treasurer: Chuck Harris
Sergeant at Arms: Jonathan Olson
Board of Directors: Paul Stancliff, Bill Dumsick, Charlie Klein, Joe Celesnik, Max Knouse, Bill Lynch, Chris Beverly, Bob Tecklenburg, 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
Lyons PTSD Visit: Ben Buckley 703-978-9179

Meeting Location



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

Nov. 2013:

- 07: Board Meeting 7:30 PM: American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street, North, Vienna, Va.
- 10: DMZ to Delta® Dance: Come on to the dance and meet your fellow members. Bring a fellow veteran and your spouse too.
- 11: Veterans Day
- 11: Memorial Day Writer's Project near The Wall at 20th St. and Constitution Ave. Open Mike 11:30 am to 5:30 pm
- 20: Lyons PTSD Class Visit to the Wall: Meet at the flagpole at 11:00 AM
- 21: Membership Meeting: Speaker: John Bessette, "Gun Ships (AC-47 Spooky) Development for Close Air Support in the Vietnam War

Dec. 2013:

- 05: Board Meeting 7:30 PM: American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street, North, Vienna, Va.
- 07: Virginia State Council Meeting: Virginia Beach
- 14: Holiday Party 6:00 PM "Make Charlie Ride the Hood!": Host: Bill and Cheryl Dumsick, 13606 Whitestone Court, Clifton, Va. Remember to bring a child's gift and winter clothing.
- 25: Happy Holiday

VETERAN'S HOTLINE 1-800-273-8255

24 HOURS/ 7 DAYS A WEEK

VVA CAR DONATION PROGRAM

1-800-Help Vets

28th CHAPTER ANNIVERSARY

The chapter celebrated its 28th anniversary at the October 17th membership meeting with a special cake and ice cream with a great speaker, Jack Connolly, who described humorous events as a State Department Foreign Service officer in Laos during the 1960's civil war. Our government was encouraging the Laotian army to stop the flow of supplies along the Ho Chin Minh trail in their country. Unfortunately, the Buddhists Laotians were not inclined to fight due to their religious belief.

When he got orders to leave Bangkok to staff the Vientiane embassy, Jack and his family traveled by train to the border, where his wife and three children had to climb down a river bank, cross the Mekong River in a canoe, then climb up a steep bank to enter Laos. Their initial lodging was in a hotel that rented the rooms by the hour. The embassy had primitive conditions for staff and family with the embassy had about 90% of the country's telephones. One of the most humorous stories was when an embassy staff, Pete, received a shrapnel wound, but Jack and others were not trained to place a bandage on this part of the male anatomy. While driving in the midst of street fighting, Jack found a Canadian doctor who treated the wound, and Pete was later flown out of the country. When Pete returned, a gala party was held in his honor with a wide range of attendees from foreign country diplomats to local ladies, who provided most of the native food. After a few rounds of drinks and dancing on a table, Pete displayed his combat wound to show that it was completely recovered. The meeting ended with Chuck Harris donating his raffle winnings to the Vince Kaspar arts award program, which marked the beginning of another Tour of Duty.

25th DMZ to Delta® Dance

COME TO THE DANCE!

November 10, 2013

(Top 25 Songs of Our Tour of Duty)

Lyons VAMC Combat PTSD Class Visit

November 20th

Meet at the flagpole by The Wall at 11:00 AM

The Birth of Air Force Gunships

November 21st Membership Meeting

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”
Since October 11, 1985