

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 Will One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another”

June 2014



Members and guests fall-in to start our Memorial Day Service at The Wall on Memorial Day morning. Photo by Cathy Keister.

Mission Accomplished

The chapter successfully accomplished its multi-operations Memorial Day weekend mission. Max Knouse, event manager, with Jonathan Olson, Len Ignatowski, Joe and Sharon Celesnik, Margaret Stern, Fran Knouse, John Runyon, Charlie Klein, Gus Howard, and Jonathan Olson conducted a highly successful information booth at Viva Vienna! on Sunday, May 25th. Several Vietnam veterans were impressed with the chapter's programs and accepted membership applications. That evening, Diane and Len Ignatowski hosted the family barbecue. Special kudos to Diane as the Master Host, while Bill Bohuslaw pitch hit for Max Knouse as the gourmet barbecue chef of the hot dogs and hamburgers.

The traditional wreath laying at The Wall was done on Memorial Day morning. Hugh Jordan was probably attending his last visit since he and his wife are moving to Australia. He met his wife while on R&R in Sydney and his two daughters are living there. Hugh is one of the chapter's founding members. We wish you the best “down under”. Hugh and Diane Ignatowski carried the wreath to The Wall's apex. Cathy Keister, AVVA National Vice President, who attended our service, explained the In Memory Memorial plaque to us. Bob Dadiomoff traveled from Florida to attend the service. He brought Jim Peacock, a fellow Florida Vietnam veteran. The service included a moment of remembrance, members sharing stories of friends whose names are on The Wall, and Len Funk reciting the epic war poem, “Flanders Field. Len Ignatowski served as the service moderator. Charlie Hobbs, VVA Membership Affairs Committee chairman, met with members before the service. VVA had an information tent near The Wall. The chapter gave its annual \$ 200 grant for the Memorial Day Writers' Project tent rental near The Wall. Several chapter members were instrumental in founding this veteran outreach effort. After the service, members and families met for breakfast at a local restaurant. The day ended with the Town of Vienna's Memorial Day ceremony honoring Len Ignatowski for his Vietnam service. The town is a participant in the 50th Anniversary Commemoration of the Vietnam War program. Many thanks to those who made “Mission Accomplished” a success.

ABC's of Veteran Health Care Benefits Lobbying

Tim Redmon, chapter member, will share his 40 years of political lobbying experience for veteran and civilian health care benefits at the June 19th membership meeting. 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. You never know whom you might meet at the meeting.

Keep The Streak Alive!

The chapter traditional family summer event, Nationals baseball game, is set for Sunday, August 24, 2014 at 1:35 PM against the San Francisco Giants. The ticket price is \$12 per person. The ticket-ordering deadline is June 24, 2014. Mail your check payment to Bill Lynch, ATTN: VVA Baseball Game, 6322 Applegarth Ct., Alexandria, Va. 22312. Questions, call 703-256-4484. Please include your phone and email address. Tickets will be available at the Will Call window. Bring your family and friends.

The chapter attendance record stands at 8 wins and “no” losses for the Nationals. Come to keep the streak alive!

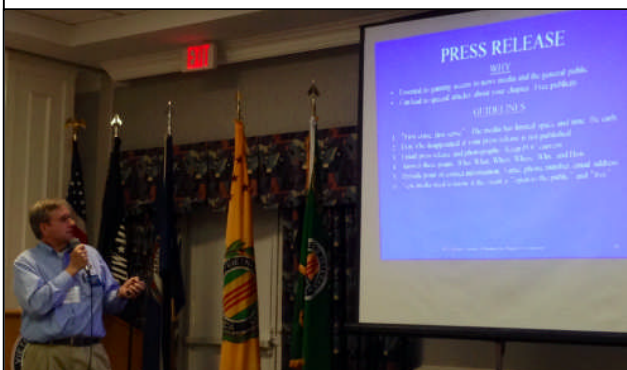
AVVA Launches New Community Outreach

The June 19th membership meeting initiates a new AVVA community outreach by members bringing individual size s snacks packages (candy, health bars, and fruit) to be given to the Lamb Center in Fairfax City. The daytime homeless center provides services from hot showers to refreshments including time for VA staff to assist homeless veterans in applying for their benefits.

Do It Now!

The Region 3 Conference covered a wide range of topics, but the bereavement presentation identified a need that we all must do now. It is your obituary. Dee Branch Oliver was married to a funeral director who died a few years ago. Since he was the only child, she did not know much about his younger days. She overcame this feeling of inadequacy by writing "Going Out In Style, which documents her husband's funeral challenges and how to prepare for a loved one's funeral. Beverly Pounds, VVA Region 3 Director, discussed the AVVA folder, "The Paper Safe" which is a checklist of personal and financial information that one would need for a family death. Your DD-214 is essential for receiving veteran funeral benefits.

The obituary is the most important document that the undertaker immediately needs, and which families are not prepared to write. She recommended that you write it now since spouses don't have a good understanding on your military career and awards. Your local newspaper and the internet are good sources. This point was unfortunately made more emphatic when Bootie Ellis of Virginia Chapter 752 collapsed just minutes before the state council. He died in the hospital.



Len Ignatowski discusses how to communicate with members and the general public at the Region 3 Conference. Photo by Gary Witt.

Region 3

Len Ignatowski attended the Region 3 Conference as a seminar presenter. His presentation was chapter communications which centered on a newsletter, email network, "Minuteman Alert", and press releases. The editor of another chapter decided to switch from a color to a B/W photograph format after reviewing a copy of the chapter newsletter that was distributed to the attendees.

The chapter newsletter is distributed to over 400 chapter members, VVA chapters, VVA staff and officers, other veteran and social organizations, and local county, state, and national legislators. These recipients frequently compliment the chapter's programs from newsletter articles. The newsletter distribution has resulted in several feature articles about the chapter in the community newspapers.

2014 VINCE KASPAR AWARDS

At the chapter meeting on Thursday, May 12, 2014, the winners of the 2013-14 Vince Kaspar Prizes for Excellence in the Arts were announced. As in past years, the poets read their poetry and the artists displayed their art.

First prize for poetry went to Elizabeth McCune, a senior at McLean HS for *An Exchange*. Ms. McCune also received third prize for *Whitewashed Cinderblocks Stacked* and an Honorable Mention for *We Thought ourselves gods....* The Second prize was awarded to Shalini Rana, senior, George C. Marshall HS, for *Rubber and Socks*. She also had Honorable Mentions for *Birds, Honey Bear, and Longing for My Honey Pie*. Other Honorable Mentions were *A Hazardous Forecast* by Patrick Garcia-Reyes, senior Robert E. Lee HS, *Circus Mirrors* by Margaret McCabe, senior, Bishop Ireton HS; *I ask you, has life ever...*, by Georgianna Reid, senior, West Springfield HS, *Lonely Chimes* by Jei-Si Ang, senior, West Springfield HS, and *Ode to Math* by Allison Miller, junior, Washington-Lee HS. Ms Ang won first prize in 2013.

On the art side, First Prize went to *Love and Death*, a Mixed Media Cameo by Megan Ganley, senior, Thomas Jefferson HS for Science and Technology, who also won the 2013 second and third prize. This year Second Prize for art went to *Seeing the Lights*, a Pencil Drawing by Jillian Gross, junior, West Springfield HS., Third place was a tie between *Duck, Duck, Duck, Duck, Duck, Duck, Goose*, Mixed Media by Ms. Ganley, and *Pulsing Through My Veins*, Photograph by Sivia Campos, senior, Wakefield HS. Honorable Mentions were *Rumor*, Sculpture by Liza Freed, senior St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School, *Beauty by the Sea*, Photograph by Mobin Fateh, senior Wakefield HS, *King George*, Photograph by Mckaylee Reavis, junior, Wakefield HS, *Early Morning Fog*, Photograph by Amelia Semprebon, junior, Wakefield HS and *Balloons for Sale*, by Raquel Marriott, senior, Wakefield HS. Jina Davidson, Art Department Chair, Photography/AP Art History/AP Studio Art Teacher, Wakefield High School, who sent in over 30 photography entries by her students, also attended!

The poetry judges were Cathie Solomonson, Mike McDonnell (both 227 members), Dick Epstein, who read a poem by Vince Kaspar, as did Coordinator Bruce Waxman, and Clyde Wray. Art judges were Nichola Hays, Gallery Manager and Membership Coordinator of the Arts Club of Washington, and Kristin Bolster, art teacher at St. Leo the Great. Dennis Stephens, who will be a co-coordinator, next year, assisted Bruce with the presentations.

VETERAN'S HOTLINE 1-800-273-8255

24 HOURS/ 7 DAYS A WEEK

DD-214: Provide a copy of your DD-214 to the chapter to comply with an IRS audit standard. Mail your copy to the chapter's post office box address. The social security number can be made illegible.

CHAPTER 227 DOG TAGS

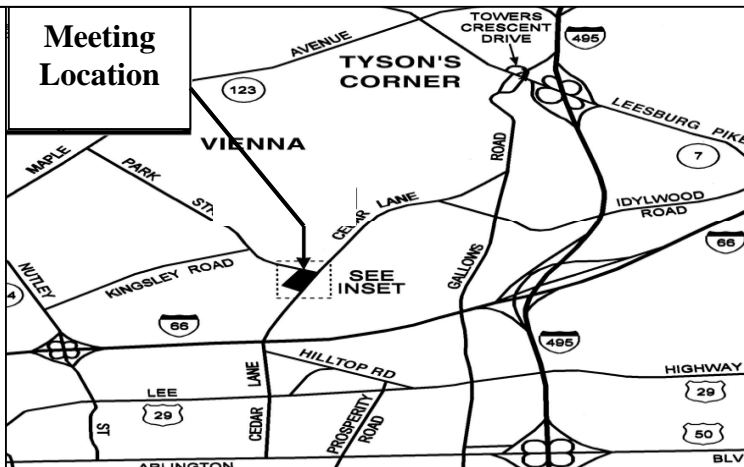
June 2014



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: Bill Dumsick, Charlie Klein, Max Knouse, Bill Lynch, Tom Stryer, Bob Tecklenburg, Scott Hurley, Dennis Stephens, and Jay Kalner.
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
Suits for Veterans: Chuck Harris 703-729-5665
Lyons PTSD Visit: Ben Buckley 703-978-9179
Used Books: Charlie Klein 703-509-9468.

Meeting Location



CHAPTER INFORMATION: 703-323-0269

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

June

05: Board Meeting 7:30 PM: American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street, North, Vienna, Va.
19: Membership Meeting: Guest Speaker: Tim Redmon, "The ABC's of Veteran Health Care Benefits Lobbying". Bring individual size snack packages for the AVVA Community Outreach to the Lamb Center, which provides space for VA staff to service homeless veterans.
25: Lyons VAMC Combat PTSD Visit: Meet 11:00 AM at the flagpole by The Wall
24: Deadline for ordering Nationals baseball tickets for August 24th game

July

03: Board Meeting 7:30 PM: American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street, North, Vienna, Va.
17: No Membership Meeting

August

07: Board Meeting 7:30 PM: American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street, North, Vienna, Va.
17: No Membership Meeting
24: Annual Nationals baseball game. Make it 9 in a row!

CHAPTER BRIEFS:

- **Homeless Vet Gets Car:** A chapter grant of \$ 128 enabled a homeless veteran to receive a car from Catholic Charities. The grant paid for the car registration and related costs. The car enables the veteran to be employed.
- **America's Adopt A Soldier:** A \$2,000 grant was given to the America's Adopt A Soldier for its support of the chapter's homeless veteran outreach. Bruce Waxman, chapter president, and other volunteers recently completed the move to the new warehouse that stores donated household goods and other items for needy veterans and military personnel.
- **Used Books:** Charlie Klein's successful used book collection resulted in a \$ 20 donation from the Hole In The Wall Books store in Falls Church. The proceeds fund the Vince Kaspar awards program. Call Charlie at 703-509-9496 to donate your used books. Charlie asks that members not deliver books to the store.
- **Teacher of the Year!** Dennis Stephens, chapter director, received the Virginia VFW 2013-14 National Citizenship Education Teacher of the Year. The award recognizes educators that promote citizenship, civic responsibility, and patriotism in the classroom. He is an elementary school teacher in the Fairfax County Public Schools. Dennis' exceptional teaching skill was demonstrated when he shared his Tour of Duty as a C-130 pilot at a membership meeting. VFW Post 8241 McLean nominated him. Congratulations, Dennis.
- **Keep Those Household Goods Coming:** The chapter received a quarterly check for \$ 971 from the VVA Household Goods' program. Make a donation (888-518-VETS) or shop/drop-off at the Unique Store at 2956 Gallows Road, Merrifield, Va.

**AVVA COMMUNITY OUTREACH
June 19th Membership Meeting
Lamb Center
Bring Individual Size Snack Packages
(Candy, Fruit, & Health Bars)**

**BASEBALL GAME TICKET DEADLINE
June 24, 2014**

**ABC's OF LOBBYING FOR VETERAN HEALTH BENEFITS
June 19th Membership Meeting**

**LYONS COMBAT PTSD CLASS VISIT
June 25, 2014**

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**