

THE JOURNEY

Vietnam Veterans of America Inc. Chapter 227

The Dean K. Phillips Memorial Chapter

"Just In Time"



"Never Again Shall One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another"

December 2018



Let's fill up Jonathan's gift mobile with holiday children gifts and winter clothing by attending the Holiday Party.

Holiday Party

Bill, Cheryl, and son, Joey, Dumsick are hosting the Holiday Party on December 15th at 6:00 pm in their home at 13606 White Stone Court, Clifton, Virginia. Call Cheryl at 703-968-0686 for a dish selection (salad, vegetable, or dessert) and head count. The Dumsicks' holiday decorations and hospitality are a proven winner for an enjoyable evening.

A party tradition is to bring wrapped children's gifts with the gender and age marked on the gift and children's winter clothing. The gifts and clothing serve as an emergency supply for the Bridges of Independence in Arlington County. The agency assists homeless families.

The party is a great way to meet fellow members and for spouses to get acquainted with members in a warm and festival holiday spirit.



Len Funk (L) displays his chapter challenge coin that Jay Kalner presented to him. Photo by Len Ignatowski

AN LOC, ***"The Forgotten Victory!"***

Len Funk provided a very informative discussion on the battle of An Loc at the November 15th membership meeting. It was part of the 1972 NVA Easter Offensive with the objective of destroying the ARVN army and the collapse of the South Vietnamese government. The battle plan utilized conventional Russian combined arms tactics of artillery, infantry, anti-aircraft guns, and armor from bases in Cambodia. The critical element was the use of large numbers of heavy Russian tanks. Most American ground combat units had been withdrawn from South Vietnam. Chuck Harris provided first hand comments on the battle, since his helicopter platoon participated in the relief effort. John Willut, new chapter member, served as an advisor in An Loc and provided ground level observations during the latter days of the siege.

The NVA assault utilized the QL-13 road as the axis of attack to Saigon from Cambodia starting on April 4, 1972. Loc Ninh, the first town on QL-13,

quickly fell. An Loc was the next objective with a expected capture date of April 20, 1972. Things did not go according to plan. A 15 hour artillery barrage initiated the first tank assault. The courageous act of the Regional National Police Chief inspired the stunned defenders. He destroyed a Russian tank with an American light anti-tank weapon. The ARVN and their American advisors successfully withstood the deadly 66 day siege from April 13 to July 20, 1972 with exceptional courage. The defense was enhanced with tactically placed tank traps and B-52 bombings. The concentration of forces made ideal targets for the precision B-52 bombings. Each B-52 carried 108 five hundred lb. bombs.

The attack slowly developed into a stalemate after the NVA made some critical mistakes. The invasion used the QL-13 road, as its attack avenue which was lined with dense vegetation on both sides. This condition severely restricted two armor advantages— fire and maneuver and shock and awe. Helicopter gunships disabled the lead and tail tanks, which made the remaining armor vehicles sitting ducks. An unnoticed event was that the captured ARVN soldiers who were forced to aim their 105 mm howitzers at the defenders conveniently forgot to fuse the shells. The shells did not explode. After NVA effective anti-aircraft fire halted C-130 supply missions, heroic American helicopter pilots delivered supplies and reinforcements and evacuated wounded from the village into the only secured clearing, a soccer field. The NVA gunners concentrated their fire on the Cobra gunships allowing the Hueys to complete their mission.

The siege continued until the attackers supplies were exhausted and ARVN counteroffensive operations throughout the country were pushing the NVA back into Cambodia. The defenders' courage with air support foiled the massive NVA Easter Offensive. Vietnamization appeared to have worked to a certain degree. Gen. Giap of the NVA lost his military command. Unfortunately, this same degree of courage failed to materialize in the 1975 NVA invasion. The siege of An Loc was truly an historical victory for the ARVNs.

Many thanks to Len Funk, a three Tour MACV advisor, for sharing his research on the battle of An Loc. Members and friends are encouraged to share their Tour of Duty or related knowledge by contacting Jay Kalner at 703-346-2013.

VETERAN OUTREACH!

- **WINTERHAVEN HOMELESS STAND DOWN:** Members can participate in the 2019 Winterhaven Stand down at the D.C. VAMC on January 26, 2019 FROM 7:00 AM TO 4:00 PM. Volunteer forms must be submitted by Dec. 14th. If you don't have email, call Len Ignatowski for a form to be mailed. If you volunteer, notify Len.
- **CAR FOR VETERAN:** John Bessette and Jay Kalner partnered to fulfill the last wish of Carol Bessette, an Air Force officer and Vietnam veteran, by donating her 2003 Prius to a needy veteran. Carol survived many rocket attacks at Tan Son Nhut air base and was a successful Washington D.C. museum and tour guide. She wanted her beloved car to be given to a needy veteran. The car was given to a veteran who Jay mentored in the Fairfax veteran's court to solve his transportation issue from Germantown, Md. to the Fairfax Court House. The car enhanced the veteran's employment prospects too. The veteran successfully graduated from the program on November 29. A special salute to John and Jay in overcoming the many legal issues with the car registration transfer between two states.
- **VVA CAR DONATION OPTION:** The VVA car donation program is one way to gain a tax deduction while helping fellow veterans via the VVA National office. I donated a mini-van which sold for \$1,800 while the dealer trade-in offer was only \$400. My effort avoided the hassle of selling the car myself or receiving only pennies from the dealer. The VVA Car Donation phone number is 1-800-435-7838 or complete the online form at vva.org.
- **VETERANS' COURT MENTORS NEEDED:** The highly successful Fairfax Veteran's Court Docket is in desperate need for mentors to maintain the one-on-one ratio for each case. One does not have to be a resident of Fairfax County to serve. For questions or to volunteer, contact Tom Davis at 703-629-0111 or tom.davis@fairfaxcounty.gov. The recent program graduation of several veterans demonstrate its growing success.
- **LYONS VA HOSPITAL VISIT:** Ben Buckley and his wife visited the PTSD unit at the Lyons VA Hospital in N.J. in late August. They were welcomed and toured the unit's lodging quarters, classrooms, and other facilities. Everyone was very hospitable and collegial. The tour had the flavor of a grand homecoming because many of the patients had attended our welcome at The Wall. Many thanks to Ben and Bill Shugarts for their leadership and support for this successful chapter program.
- **COMING PTSD CLASS VISIT TO THE WALL:** The combat PTSD class from the Lyons VAMC will visit The Wall on December 12th. Ben Buckley welcomes the veterans from the Vietnam War to today's conflicts. We interface with any veteran who wants to talk and we serve as escorts at Arlington National Cemetery when the class visits fallen friends in Section 60. As a long time veteran of these visits, I have seen how our presence has a positive impact on our fellow comrades. The conversation on the bus ride home is filled with comments about our participation and help. So FALL IN by being at the Snack Bar by The Wall at 1100 hours on Wednesday, December 12th.
- **MDWP TENT:** A \$200 grant was given for the Memorial Day Writers' Project tent rental for their Veterans Day program near The Wall. Chapter members helped form this group which uses poetry, songs, and writings to heal their physical and mental war wounds.
- **DONATIONS:** The chapter accepts tax deductible donations. An acknowledgment letter will be provided. Make the check payable to VVA Chapter 227, and mail it to VVA Chapter 227, PO Box 5653, Arlington, Va. 22205-0653. Your donation will help our fellow veterans in need.



George Jones (R) presents a custom wood carving bowl to Andy Bender as the winner of the 50/50 raffle at the November meeting. He donates a bowl to the raffle for each meeting. Photo by Len Ignatowski



The chapter welcomed the Lyons VAMC Combat PTSD Class to The Wall on July 18, 2018. Ben Buckley's welcome of "What it means to be a military veteran and our veteran family" truly is an inspiration to all. Bill Shugarts again served as the official photographer. Thanks Ben and Bill. Photo by Bill Shugarts.

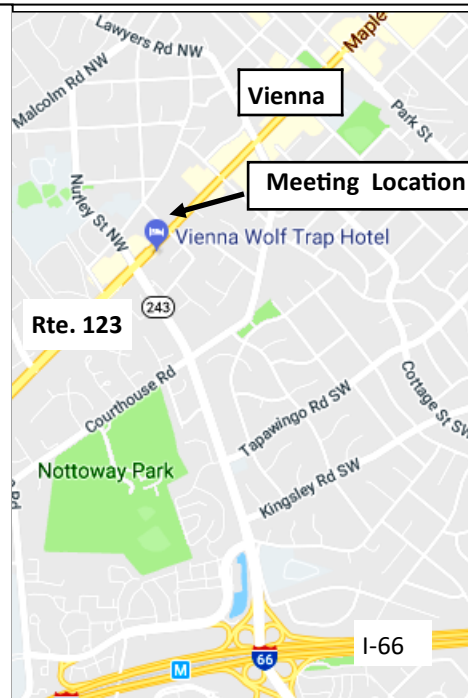
CHAPTER 227 DOG TAGS

December 2018



OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF CHAPTER 227

President: Jay Kalner, 703-346-2013
Vice President: Len Ignatowski, 703-255-0353
Secretary: Bob Tecklenburg
Treasurer: Chuck Harris
Immediate Past President: Bruce Waxman
Sergeant at Arms: George Jones
Board of Directors: Bill Dumsick, Bill Lynch, Tom Stryer, Jonathan Olson, Gus Howard, Dennis Stephens, Stan Derr, George Jones, Scott Hurley, and Bob Pezold.
AVVA Representative: Diane Ignatowski
Newsletter Editor: Len Ignatowski 703-255-0353
School Speaker's Panel: Tom Stryer 703-323-9032
Guest Speaker Program: Jay Kalner 703-346-2013
Membership: Bill Lynch 703-474-4891
Used Books: Andy Bender 559-575-2748



MEETINGS

3rd Thursday of the Month except July, August, and December

Amphora Restaurant,
377 Maple Ave. West
(Rte. 123),
Vienna, Virginia
22180

Ph.: 703-938-7877

- 6:30 PM Dinner (Optional)
- 7:30 PM Meeting

WEBSITE:

www.vva227.org

FACEBOOK:

<https://www.facebook.com/VVA227>

HAVE A HAPPY AND SAFE HOLIDAYS!

December 2018 — No membership meeting

06: Board Meeting 7:30 PM: American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street, North, Vienna, Va.
12: Lyons PTSD Class Visit to The Wall: Meet at flagpole at 11:00 AM
14: Winterhaven Stand Down volunteer form submission deadline. Contact Len Ignatowski for the form.
15: Holiday Party 6:00 PM: Host: The Dumsick Family—mark your calendar NOW!

January 2019:

01: Happy New Year
03: Board Meeting 7:30 PM: American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street, North, Vienna, Va.
17: Membership Meeting 7:30 PM: Dave Bushy, author of "The World Looked Away, Vietnam After the War".
26: Winterhaven Homeless Stand Down at the DC VAMC

SHOW YOUR VETERAN PRIDE

Purchase custom chapter attire at

<https://militarybest.com/vva-chapter-227-dean-phillips-merchandise.html>

Vietnam Veterans of America

Send to: VVA Chapter 227, P.O. Box 5653, Arlington, Va. 22205-0653

Name _____ ☐ Male ☐ Female Date of Birth _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

H () _____ C () _____ Email _____

Chapter No. **227** Sponsor _____ Sponsor's ID No. _____

- Eligibility: Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. military (for other than training purposes) between February 28, 1961 - May 7, 1975 (in-country Vietnam), or between August 5, 1964, and May 7, 1975, for Vietnam-era veterans. Return this application along with a copy of your DD Form-214.

Life Membership: \$50

- Payment Option: ☐ Check ☐ Money Order ☐ Credit Card (Amex, Discover, MasterCard, Visa)

Credit Card # _____ Exp. Date ____/____/____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

- ☐ I am a spouse/family member or friend of a Vietnam Vet and would like to join Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America (AVVA).



WE WANT YOU

QUESTIONS

CONTACT

BILL LYNCH

AT 703-474-4891

LYONS VAMC PTSD Class Visit to The Wall

December 12th at 1100 Hrs by the Snack Bar near The Wall

Holiday Party—December 15th

Mentors Needed for the Successful Veterans Court

Contact Tom Davis at Tom.Davis@FairfaxCounty.gov

VASH Family Holiday Gift Cards

Donations are being accepted to fund this special holiday program

VVA Chapter 227 Facebook!!! <https://www.facebook.com/VVA227>



CHAPTER CHALLENGE COIN

The chapter's challenge coin is on sale at \$10 each for chapter and AVVA members and \$15 each for non-members. The attractive coin is made of metal with detailed engraving and bold colors from the lettering to the images. The coins will be sold only at the monthly chapter membership meetings. Make checks payable to VVA Chapter 227. The coins will be given to the monthly guest speaker and for other special occasions. The coin is a great birthday gift and also an addition to a challenge coin collector.

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA ® INC.

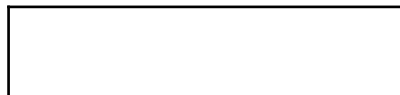
CHAPTER 227

DEAN K. PHILLIPS MEMORIAL CHAPTER

P.O. Box 5653

Arlington, Virginia 22205-0653

Address Service Requested



OUR MISSION

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

Since October 11, 1985