

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"

February 2017



"KEEP A CANDLE BURNING"

February 1st marks the 10th Anniversary of the chapter's "Keep A Candle Burning" which is to keep a single candle lit in your home window to remind our fellow citizens of the sacrifices of our military personnel and their families who are serving in "harm's way" around the world. Today's war on terror has no front lines, faces, and geographical boundaries.

You are asked to place one electric candle in a window to be lit every night until our troops are safely home. If your neighbors or a guest ask, "What is the significance of the lone candle?", you can explain it. You can invite them to join the campaign. Members should be proud that maybe WalMart "Greenlight A Veteran" campaign is a take off of our program.

Let the "Stars and Stripes" fly boldly during the day, and light a single candle at night to show the world that we stand with our brave warriors and their families to remind everyone that the daily sunset does not mark the end of the work day for our troops in harm's way.

History of American Military Cemeteries

The February 16th membership meeting features Col. Roger Hill, USAF (Ret) and Vietnam War veteran, who will discuss the history of U.S. military cemeteries from the Civil War to the present. This topic represents another chapter effort to offer knowledge about a veteran subject that is taken for granted, but with little understanding on why they appear as they do.

Come early to enjoy a great meal and meet your fellow members. You never know who you might meet. Better yet, bring your spouse, family, or a Vietnam War veteran with you. So "Fall In" for the February 16th membership meeting at 7:30 P.M.



Bruce Waxman and Speaker Paul Ryan exchange challenge coins. Len Ignatowski observes.

Chapter Meets with House Speaker Ryan

Bruce Waxman, Chapter President, and Len Ignatowski, Chapter Vice-President, represented VVA at the CNN Town Hall Meeting for Speaker of the House Paul Ryan on January 12th. The event was at The George Washington University campus. Both members just happened to be sitting behind where the questions were asked. Their VVA baseball caps appeared repeatedly on national TV. Unfortunately, program time expired before veteran benefit questions could be asked. After the meeting, Bruce and Len met with the Speaker. Bruce and Speaker Ryan discussed a mutual friend, and Bruce asked for his support on several proposed veteran benefit bills. The meeting ended with both exchanging challenge coins.

The event resulted in three acquaintances. Bruce connected with an Iraqi War veteran of the Wounded Warriors program, while Len met an eight year Army veteran, who is an Eagle scout. He is integrating the Boy and Girl Scouts programs into the Muslim community and mosque. The BSA is recognizing his effort with the prestigious Silver Beaver Award. A second acquaintance was a Chinese exchange student at GW. At Len's invitation he attended the Lyons PTSD visit to The Wall on January 25th and plans on attending a chapter meeting.

Your Help Is Needed for the State Council Meeting

The chapter is hosting the Virginia VVA State Council meeting on March 10-12, 2017 at the Crowne Plaza Dulles Airport at 2200 Centreville Road, Herndon. Member and AVVA support is needed to provide food and beverages for the Friday night hospitality suite and items for the chapter's Chinese and silent auction fundraisers at the Saturday meeting. Auction items can be a theme basket, like a barbecue kit of fixings, spices, and utensils. If requested, a donation acknowledgement will be provided. Also treats are needed for the Welcome Bags. Don Drunsic is the silent and Chinese auctions POC (703-731-2050), while Bob Tecklenburg is the food POC (703-963-8149). Bill Dumsick is assisting Bob. Diane Ignatowski is the Welcome Bag POC (703-255-0353). Members are invited to the Saturday meeting at 9:00 AM, and Bruce Waxman, Len Ignatowski, and Don Drunsic will be delegates.

Chapter Clothing Availability

Military Best is offering chapter attire with our distinctive patch at a 20% discount. Items can be ordered through this internet link: <http://militarybest.com/vva-chapter-227-dean-phillips-merchandise.html>. If you have no computer, ask a friend or family member to order for you..



Sarah Elpern (L) and Diane Ignatowski greet a movie attendee. Photo by Len Ignatowski



Bruce Waxman and Carrie Alford answer questions on PTSD during the Q&A period. Photo by Bill Shugarts

“THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE”

On January 24, 2017, the Chapter successfully hosted the showing of the documentary film, “Thank You for Your Service” to almost a full house at the Angelika Film Center in Merrifield, Virginia. A total of 137 out of 150 tickets were purchased. The film exposes the military and VA failure to address PTSD and returning veteran suicides.

The film follows the road of three combat veterans in their struggle to overcome their PTSD condition. One attends and completes an outdoor challenge program with the second one participating in a wild horse round-up. The third completes a traditional native Indian warrior return ceremony. The unifying element is that “only veterans can help another veteran in dealing with combat service”. This is a good reason for you to attend the Lyons Combat PTSD visits to The Wall. The story ends with two soldiers visiting an Iraqi family whose father and two brothers were killed in a hostile engagement. The daughter survived with multiple bullet wounds. The surviving family members came to the U.S. and as fate had it, they lived only a few hours from both veterans. One had completed an emotional reunion with the daughter while the veteran got the second veteran to agree to a reunion.

The story’s emphasis is that a Mental Health Care Corps needs to be established in every service, just like Medical Corps for physical combat injuries and to recognize that PTSD is not a military career ending condition. Also, the military needs to resurrect an effective WW II transition program where soldiers returning from combat participated in an adjustment program of sports and other activities. VVA, Virginia Dept. of Veterans Services (DVS), and VA PTSD re-



An Army veterans comments on his combat PTSD. Photo by Len Ignatowski

source materials and chapter newsletters were distributed at the ticket table.

The Q&A Session featured Carrie Ann Alford, Policy Director, Virginia Department of Veterans Services, and Dr. Joseph Tarantolo, a psychiatrist in Washington, DC (who appears in the film). The questions and comments revealed a wide range of movie attendees from professional health providers to combat veterans. Two Loudoun County police officers were in attendance too. One encouraged when making a 911 call to ask for a responding officer with Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) The program ended with the exchange of business cards and phone numbers between the attendees.

Overall, the chapter should stand proud for conducting this veteran outreach. Len Ignatowski, George Jones, and Bill Shugarts assisted in the program, while Diane Ignatowski and Sarah Elpern, AVVA Members, handled the ticket station. Local staff of the Virginia DVS were available for immediate assistance. Special thanks to Bruce Waxman for initiating the program and contacting every public and private veteran service program that he knew and a few that he didn’t know in the Northern Virginia area.

Veteran Outreach

- **Couch Removal:** A chapter grant of \$ 150 paid for the removal of a bedbug infested couch of a veteran. The commercial cleaning of her apartment failed to eradicate the infestation of her couch. The only solution was to remove the couch from the apartment. It was removed on January 31st to the delight of the veteran. Our grant provided immediate relief to a problem that most social programs don’t support. This appeal exposes the trials and trepidations that may be an inconvenience for you and me, but a monumental challenge for a veteran struggling to regain his or her dignity and economic freedom. Just like the cavalry came to the rescue in many John Wayne movies, the chapter “Just in Time” program scored another victory in helping the new generation of veterans.
- **Emergency Fare:** A \$ 47 chapter grant purchased a bus ticket for a needy veteran to attend his brother’s funeral.
- **Winterhaven Standdown:** On January 28th, Len Ignatowski and Bill and Leslie Lynch served as volunteers at the annual standdown at the D.C. VA hospital. Len and Bill worked at the Men’s Clothing Station, while Leslie worked at the Woman’s Clothing Station. Sarah Hoffman, USAF nurse and new chapter patron, worked at the Men’s Clothing Station too. VVA National sponsored the Men’s Clothing Station. Sharon Hodge, VVA staff, did a spectacular job in managing the successful men’s clothing station from the acquiring of warm and stylish winter jackets to the hangers. Some of the winter jackets attracted the interest of women veterans to ask for one. From the full duffel bags and the happy faces of the departing veterans, the Standdown was another success. Many thanks are due to the VA employees who came to work on their day off and to the government and public agencies with an army of volunteers who worked in the standdown.

“YOU” ARE NEEDED FOR RESEARCH STUDY

Social Support Networks of Vietnam Veterans: A Typology of Social Relations

Eligibility: Membership in either VVA Chapter 227 or VVA Chapter 1061. Both Veterans who served in-country proper of the Republic of Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia or Laos, and veterans who served in other locations outside of Vietnam from 1965 to 1975 are eligible for participation in this study. **Members are strongly encouraged to participate since the study is limited to two VVA Chapters.**

Time Commitment: Participants will be asked to complete four (4) self report questionnaires. This is a one-time event and will take on longer than 30 total minutes for completion.

Potential Benefits: This study does not offer direct benefits

Locations: Uniformed Services University, Bethesda, MD; VVA Chapter 227, Vienna, VA, and VVA Chapter 1061, Harrisonburg, VA.

If Interested Please Contact: Sarah Huffman @ (304) 520-9239 or slh2fw@virginia.edu

JANUARY MEETING WRAP-UP

Dr. J. Robert DiFulgo, a Navy Vietnam veteran and chapter member, discussed his quest to write a post-Titanic story about an individual's identity that was forfeited because of the theft of an extremely valuable object, which he had in his possession when his body was recovered from the cold Atlantic waters. The quest started with his visit to an unmarked Titanic grave in Halifax cemetery and a series of personal events that revolved around the grave number 223. The discussion revealed some interesting facts about the controversial sinking ranging from inadequate passenger life boats to the extreme rivalry between the two British ship lines, Cunard and White Star Line, the Titanic owner, that contributed to the tragedy. The Q&A session broadened the discussion on the ship sinking.

The chapter welcomed Stan Derr as the newest LIFE member and his wife, Merrie Rose. Bruce presented a chapter challenge coin as a new LIFE member. Stan approached Len and Diane Ignatowski at a local restaurant after he saw Len's VVA baseball cap. A brief discussion resulted in an invitation to the meeting and the email delivery of the chapter newsletter. Stan is a two Tour Army veteran and retiree. See how easy it is to recruit a new member; wear your VVA attire. Hope to see Stan and Merrie Rose at future events.



Bruce Waxman welcomes Stan Derr with a challenge coin as the newest LIFE member. Photo by Len Ignatowski

LYONS COMBAT PTSD VISIT

The chapter welcomed another combat PTSD class from the Lyons VAMC, N.J. on January 25th. Ben Buckley gave his inspiring welcome to the veterans. The welcome included the pinning of the Vietnam War Veteran pin on the seven Vietnam War veterans in the class, and a Veteran/American flag lapel pin was given to each veteran to identify each as a veteran. The group then marched to The Wall apex to present their class plaque to The Wall and to say a prayer for all who did not come home. Some veterans visit Section 60 in Arlington National Cemetery, while others visit the WW II and Korean War Memorial.

The visit clearly illustrated the emotional pain of PTSD when one of the veterans remained outside the formation for the welcome and The Wall visit. Len Ignatowski did extend a welcome by giving a flag pin to this veteran. As the movie, Thank You for Your Service, definitely revealed only veterans can help other veterans with battling PTSD since “We Understand”. This incident demonstrates the value of our hosting and the need for more member participation.

Special thanks to Ben Buckley, host, and Bill Shugarts (official photographer) for their years of support for the visits in freezing rain and summer heat. Bruce Waxman, Len Ignatowski, and Dick Weaver, Members, and Maura Levesque, Guest, are regular attendees. Sarah Huffman, an Air Force nurse, attended too. The next visit is **March 8th**. Mark your

calendar now and Fall In for this veteran outreach. **They need YOU!**



Len Ignatowski (R) pins a Vietnam War Veteran pin on a fellow Vietnam veteran. Photo by Bill Shugarts

**Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 227
and The Memorial Day Writers' Project**

21st Annual (2016 – 2017 Academic Year)

Vince Kaspar Prizes

For Excellence in the Arts

Two first prizes of \$250 will be awarded.

One First Prize will be awarded for a Poem of any length, style, or subject. Judges include professional writers from the sponsoring organizations.

One First Prize will be awarded for a work of Visual Art of any size or medium. Judges include professional artists from the local art community.

Second and third prizes in each category are \$150 and \$100

Eligibility: 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.

Submission of Entries: Mail entries to the Vince Kaspar Prizes for Excellence in the Arts, c/o VVA Chapter 227, P.O. Box 5653, Arlington, Va., 22205. **For poetry**, please provide two copies of your work. To facilitate a "blind judging" put your *identifiers* of: Name, Home Address, Telephone Number, E-mail Address, School Attended, and whether a Junior or Senior, **on one copy only**. **For art**, you can submit one or two copies, but put your *identifiers* on a separate sheet of paper for each entry, not on the art work. Please specify the medium used for producing each art work. Art entries may be submitted electronically via a CD or a DVD or thumb drive. An electronic entry should have the identifier on the jewel case or a separate piece of paper, **not** on or in the electronic medium. *Failure to follow identifier instructions may disqualify your entry.* Each contestant may submit a **reasonable** number of entries.

Deadline: Postmarked no later than Saturday, February 28, 2017. Prizes will be awarded at the VVA Chapter 227 meeting on the evening of Thursday, May 18, 2017. Poetry winners (including Honorable Mentions) are expected to read their poetry at the ceremony. Winning artists are expected to discuss their work and their entries will be displayed at the ceremony.

FAQ are available at www.vva227.org

Contact: Dennis Stephens at (703) 328-0707, or Email: dmsstep@cox.net

Please distribute this announcement

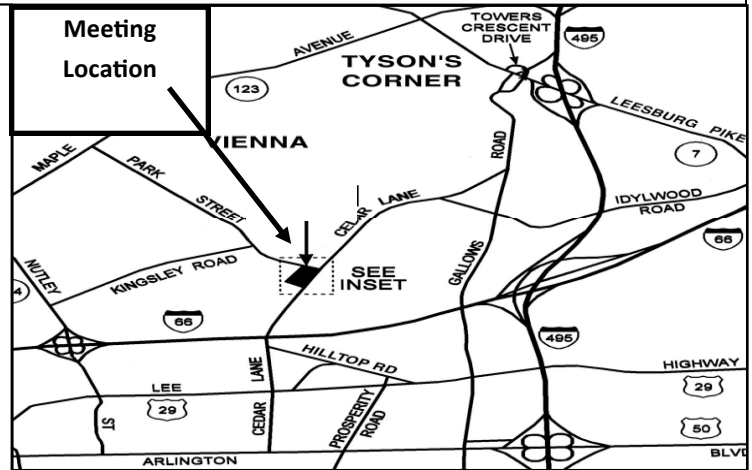
CHAPTER 227 DOG TAGS

February 2017



OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF CHAPTER 227

President: Bruce Waxman – 703-323-0269
Vice President: Len Ignatowski, 703-255-0353
Secretary: Scott Hurley
Treasurer: Chuck Harris
Sergeant at Arms: Jonathan Olson
Board of Directors: Bill Dumsick, Charlie Klein, Bill Lynch, Tom Stryer, Bob Tecklenburg, Dennis Stephens, George Jones, Don Drunsic and Jay Kalner.
AVVA Representative: Margaret Stern
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 Program: Charlie Klein 703-509-9469



MEETINGS

3rd Thursday of the Month except July, August, and December
 Neighbor's Restaurant, 262D Cedar Lane
 Vienna, Virginia (Park St. & Cedar Lane)
 Pre-Meeting Dinner (Optional) 6:30 PM Meeting: 7:30 PM
CHAPTER WEBSITE: www.vva227.org
FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/VVA227>

CHAPTER OPERATIONS PLAN

February 2017:

16: Membership Meeting 7:30 PM: Col. Roger Hill, USAF (Ret), "Memorializing American's War Dead"
 28: Vince Kaspar Prizes for Excellence in the Arts submission deadline

March 2017:

02: Board Meeting 7:30 PM: American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street, North, Vienna, Va.
 08: Lyons Combat PTSD Visit to The Wall 11:00 AM: Rendezvous Point at the flagpole by The Wall
 10-12: Chapter hosting the Virginia State Council Meeting: Help needed, see newsletter article.
 16: Membership Meeting 7:30 PM: Volko Ruhnke, "Nuts and Bolts of a Producing a Board Game: Fire in the Lake, Insurgency in Vietnam"

April 2017:

6: Board Meeting 7:30 PM: American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street, North, Vienna, Va.
 19: Lyons Combat PTSD Visit to The Wall 11:00 AM: Rendezvous Point at the flagpole by The Wall
 20: Membership Meeting 7:30 PM: Speaker to be announced

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP TO VVA

Return to: VVA Chapter 227, P.O. Box 5653, Arlington, Virginia 22205

You must submit a copy of your DD-214 with this application.

Name: _____
☐ Male ☐ Female DOB: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Telephone: _____
 E-Mail: _____
 Chapter # **227**
 Sponsor: (optional) _____

Type of membership:

☐ \$20 (1 Year) ☐ \$50 (3 Years)
☐ Life Member:

\$ 100 for all ages

Payment Method:

☐ Check ☐ Money Order
☐ Credit Card:
☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard
☐ AMEX ☐ Discover

Credit Card Number: _____
 Signature: _____ Exp. Date: _____

ELIGIBILITY: Membership is open to U.S. armed forces veterans who served on active duty (for other than training purposes) in the Republic of Vietnam between February 28, 1961, and May 7, 1975, or in any duty location between August 5, 1964, and May 7, 1975.

QUESTIONS

CONTACT BILL LYCNCH AT 703-474-4891

Membership Meeting—February 16, 2017
“Memorializing American's War Dead”

Combat PTSD Class Visit—March 8, 2017

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

Chapter Clothing Availability
See Page 1 for Details

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.



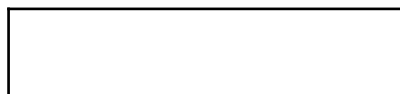
VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA ® INC.
CHAPTER 227

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