



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"

April 2023

APRIL MEETING: ARMY'S FUTURE IN SE ASIA

The April 20th membership meeting guest speaker is Col. Trent Mills, who will discuss the Army's future mission in Southeast Asia and the role of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency in the use of new technology there.

The meeting includes an Italian buffet dinner for \$20 each at the American Legion Post 177, 3939 Oak St., Fairfax, Va. The meeting starts with a cash bar from 6:00 PM to 7:15 PM. The buffet dinner is served at 6:45 PM. Mask wearing is optional. AVVA is collecting cash donations for The Lamb Center, our successful community homeless outreach. For questions about The Lamb Center's activities, call Diane Ignatowski at 703-772-5303. **RSVP to Melissa Kalner at mkalner77@gmail.com or call/text her at 703-819-1480 by noon, Tuesday, April 18th.** A meal purchase is not required, but **if you order a meal and don't show, please mail payment since the chapter pays for the set number of meals ordered.** Meet your fellow veterans and maybe a friend from the past. Do It Now!

MY VIEW OF 9/11 FROM THE SEAT OF AN F-16



Jay Kalner presents the 9/11 Pentagon picture to Maj. Heather Penney, USAF Retired. Credit: Len Ignatowski

On September 11, 2001, the then Lt. Heather Penney awoke to serve her day as an F-16 pilot in the DC National Guard at Andrews AFB. As she looked out her house window, the bright blue sky was a clear indication for a great day of flying. The flight line at the D.C. NG was a beehive of activity. Three F-16s armed with practice bombs were dispatched to the bombing range in North Carolina. Heather and another pilot were assigned to Alert Aircraft duty. The two jets were ready to roll, but they were not armed. Budget cuts eliminated arming the jets with missiles and bullets. This task was time consuming.

Without warning, the TV and operational room screens were filled with scenes of the two aircraft crashes into the Towers in NYC. The attack alerted the three interceptor squadrons on the East Coast. The New England squadron dispatched its jets to NYC, while the squadron at Langley AFB jets scrambled to the Atlantic Ocean. The aircraft attack on the Pentagon and a missing passenger aircraft, United Flight 93, gave clear warning that D.C. might still be a target. The Operations Officer issued an order to destroy the civilian aircraft before it reached D.C. She was to crash into the aircraft tail, while the second pilot's target was the cockpit. At the time, Heather's father was a United airlines pilot and

she did not know where he was. Within minutes both jets were flying westward in search of the missing aircraft. When they learned of the United's Flight 93 fate, they returned to Andrews AFB to refuel and be armed. For the remainder of the day, DC and Langley AFB jets flew Combat Air Patrols in the closed D.C. air space. She said that event was so fast paced that she did not think about ejecting from her aircraft since it might have resulted in a missed collision. Later she flew escort to Air Force One returning to Andrews AFB. Her story is a true credit to the dedication of women in military service.

Jay Kalner presented Heather with a chapter challenge coin and a picture of two F-16s flying over a burning Pentagon with the inscription, "Lest we forget." The final act was Heather pulling the winning ticket for the 50/50 raffle and George Jones wood carving bowl. Her presentation truly reflects in fulfilling our founding principle, "Never Again Will One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another." We thank Maj. Penney for her brave actions on 9/11 and all women veterans.

WE REMEMBER!

- \$ 353 Partnered to fill a veteran's heating oil tank for the winter
- \$ 130 Partnered to pay a veteran's car repair
- \$ 100 Partnered to pay a deceased veteran's funeral expenses
- \$ 117 Partnered to pay a veteran's back rent

LAMB CENTER SUPPORT

Recent member donations for The Lamb Center indicate a preference for a cash donation instead of requested items. The new policy is that only cash or check donations is being solicited. Make checks payable to VVA Chapter 227 and not The Lamb Center. Write Lamb Center on the check's memo line. However, the contribution of hotel toiletries are still being collected.

The last two meetings resulted in \$675 in donations to The Lamb Center. The chapter donated some 700 plus eating utensils, paper plates, and paper towels in recent months. The Chapter thanks all who contributed to this successful Chapter community outreach.

DOUBLE DUTIES

Bill Dumsick, Chapter Director, is successfully performing multiple State Council duties. As the State Council Treasurer, he successfully transferred the Council funds from a commercial bank with its fees to the friendlier Navy Federal Credit Union. The latter action resulted in higher account dividends and easier access for Council officers. In addition, he is a member of the Finance Committee and Chairperson of the Agent Orange and Minority Affairs Committees. Bill has brought new life to the latter committee. Thank you, Bill, for assuming these vital Council leadership duties.

CHAPTER SHORTS

- **STATE COUNCIL GRANT:** The State Council approved a \$250 grant for our veteran assistance program.
- **WE ARE:** As of March 2023, the chapter membership stands at 361 members and is the 18th largest chapter.



Chapter's recruitment tools at Mission BBQ with thanks to Stan Derr's effort.



Chuck Harris delivers his perspective on the true cost of war and how many of our citizens do not comprehend its true costs at the VVMF's National Vietnam Veterans Day program on the Mall. Chuck's Tours of Duty included as a helicopter gunship pilot and troop squadron commander. Credit: Joe Gromelski/VVA



Arlington County Board salutes Vietnam War veterans with a Welcome Home Proclamation. Jay Kalner, Chapter President, received the proclamation at the ceremony. Jay is to the left in the front row. Credit: Arlington County PIO.



Diane Ignatowski delivers the Chapter's check and a bagful of hotel toiletries to Mark Glenn, Volunteer Manager of The Lamb Center. Credit: Len Ignatowski

VVA's and CHAPTER'S DISSOLUTION?

Tom Burke, VVA Vice President, spoke about the future of VVA at the State Council meeting on March 25, 2023. His points include:

- The convention delegates voted not to open our ranks to the newer veterans. We are Vietnam veterans and want to remain so.
- Difficulty in finding members to serve at the National offices, state councils, and chapters for health and age reasons, and burn-out.
- The National office is planning to hold only three more national conventions before dissolving.
- A special National board meeting is planned to address the issue of how the lights are turned out. The aim is to establish a Legacy for Life in a dignified and enduring manner.
- A major close-out issue is how to hand-off the current VVA veteran benefit cases.
- VVA National may close its doors, but state councils and chapters may continue since they are separate incorporated entities. However, the state councils and chapters would assume certain legal responsibilities that the National office does now.
- Despite our aging membership, recruitment of new members is thriving. Veterans want to join.
- The initial shutdown plan ignored the office staff and the Household Goods program. A new effort will incorporate these two issues into the plan.

The issues will be addressed at the August 2023 National Convention. The State Council current plan is to dissolve and distribute its funds to the chapters. The Chapter's September 2023 membership meeting will discuss the Convention outcomes and the chapter's future. So mark September 21st on your calendar to attend this critical meeting.

NATIONAL VIETNAM WAR VETERANS DAY SUMMARY

The Chapter conducted two successful events on National Vietnam War Veterans Day. Jay Kalner managed our participation in the VVMF program on the mall, while Stan Derr directed the multi-store Mission BBQ recruitment.

Five members shared their Vietnam War experience on the mall as part of the VVMF program. Chuck Harris, the first speaker, discussed a very thought provoking meaning of what the war meant to him and the current understanding of war and military service. Jay Kalner served as an MP in Saigon and as an English teacher to Vietnamese police, while Brad Bradshaw told several stories about being a C-130 gunship pilot. Len Ignatowski discussed his pre-welcome home experiences. John Gill recounted his experiences in an artillery unit and subsequent Army career. The event can be seen on www.vvmf.org/live by clicking on VVMF Live Events.

Recruiting events were successfully conducted at four Mission BBQ restaurants. George Jones and Bruce Waxman at Chantilly; Don Sutherland and Len Funk were in Alexandria; Andy Bender and James Elliott staffed the Herndon restaurant, and Stan and Merrie Rose Derr were at the Sterling restaurant. The recruitment campaign resulted in the signing of seventeen veterans who expressed an interest in joining the Chapter.

Many thanks to those members who participated in these two successful programs.



George Jones (L), Maddy Farmer, Mission BBQ Community Ambassador, and Bruce Waxman, staffed the recruitment effort at the Chantilly restaurant. Credit: Bruce Waxman



Jay Kalner, Brad Bradshaw, Len Ignatowski, John Gill and Chuck Harris (L to R) spoke about their Tour of Duty and their Stateside return at the VVMF program on the mall near The Wall.

Vietnam Veterans of America

Send to: Bill Lynch, Attn: VVA Chapter 227, 5328 Taney Ave., Alexandria, Va. 22304-2039

Name _____ ☐ Male ☐ Female

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

H () _____ C () _____ Email _____

Chapter No. **227**

• Eligibility: Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. military (for other than training purposes) between November 1, 1955 - 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.

Special Life Membership: \$50

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

Credit Card # _____ Exp. 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).

Signature: _____ Date: _____



WE WANT YOU

QUESTIONS

CONTACT

BILL LYNCH

703-474-4891

CALENDAR

APRIL

20: Membership Meeting 7:30 PM: Col. Trent Mills, USA, "Army's future mission in Southeast Asia and the role of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency in the use of new technology there"

MAY

04: Board Meeting 7:30 PM: Zoom format

11-13: Welcome Home! The Nation Mall, Washington, D.C.

18: Membership Meeting 7:30: Spkr: Jim Schier, NASA Chief Architect, "Project Artemis, A Return to the Moon".

28: Memorial Day Barbecue: Rescheduled for June 11th as Stan and Merrie Rose Derr will host.

29: Memorial Day Wreath Laying and Breakfast: Meet by the flagpole at 8:00 AM and breakfast at the Metro 29 Diner

JUNE

01: Board Meeting 7:30 PM: Zoom format

11: Chapter BBQ: Stan and Merrie Rose Derr to host. Details coming

15: Membership Meeting 7:30: Last meeting before summer break. Speaker: To be announced

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*