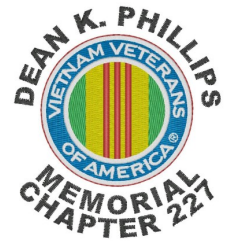


THE JOURNEY

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”

January 2024

CHAPTER ACHIEVES RECORD GROWTH IN VETERAN AID AND MEMBERSHIP IN 2023!

By Jay Kalner, President, VVA Chapter 227

VVA Chapter 227 carried on its central mission of meeting the growing needs of veterans and their families, leading to a record expenditure of over \$33,000 in direct support, compared to \$31,000 in 2022. Our membership numbers drastically increased, from 359 to 401 by yearend—a growth rate of 11.7%—exceeding the 3% rate in 2022. We remain the largest chapter in Virginia, and are 18th in size nationally, but closing in on the three chapters in front of us. Special recognition goes to two board members—Stan Derr and membership chairman Bill Lynch, who have made herculean efforts to increase our numbers. Six members attended the National Convention for the election of officers and directors and to chart our future. Finally, as you will see below, we continue to line up fabulous speakers for our meetings.

Thanks to some amazing benefactors and generous yearend donations, the chapter was able to support some 34 veterans and their families (over \$13,100) for rent assistance, car repairs, utility bills, etc. In addition, we allocated just under \$15,000 for 97 veterans and their families in the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program (VASH) for back to school expenses and the holiday gift program. We gave \$1,000 grants to fulfill the Santa Lists of 3 needy Wounded Warrior families. We also donated a \$250 grant to the Adopt a Soldier program for a charity golf hole sponsorship, and partnered with MITRE Corporation's Care Package programs for troops and veterans. For the latter, the chapter helped pay shipping costs, disburse funds collected, and send out acknowledgment letters. Kudos to Chuck Harris, our chapter treasurer and former MITRE employee, who serves as the program treasurer. Our AVVA gave a \$500 grant to the National AVVA's Project Friendship, the AVVA convention community outreach effort. It also collected cash (totaling almost \$800) and assorted household goods at monthly meetings for the Lamb Center homeless shelter, which helps veterans.

An important tool we used to grow our membership was to bring in prominent speakers for our monthly meetings and make them lively events that attract new and current members. In February, Commander Kirk Lippold, USN (ret.), provided a very revealing and informative presentation on the al-Qaeda attack on his ship, the USS Cole, in October 2000, in Aden, Yemen. The following month, Major Heather Penney, USAF (ret.), gave an absolutely riveting account of her mission on 9/11 to potentially ram United Airlines Flight 93 with her unarmed F-16 fighter. In April, our speaker Colonel Trent Mills, USA, gave an eye-opening view of the role the Defense Advanced Research Project Agency (DARPA) will play in current and future conflicts. A month later, James Schier, the Chief Architect for NASA's Space Communications and Navigation Program, discussed Project Artemis, our current effort to return to the moon and develop the skills and systems for eventual manned flights to Mars. Our October Anniversary Dinner featured VVA's Mokie Porter and Grant Coates discussing the Veterans Initiative Program that attempts to heal the war wounds with Vietnam through bilateral effort to recover the remains of the fallen. Finally, in November, Master Sergeant Forrest Lingenfelter, USA (ret.), the Virginia State Coordinator for the Missing in America Project, provided an inspiring presentation about the search for the unclaimed cremains of military veterans and their dependents in order to inter them in military cemeteries. The year ended with our traditional Holiday Party where both new and senior members and spouses enjoyed the gala event.

At a town hall meeting in September, members reaffirmed their hopes to continue the chapter's mission of helping veterans and their families even after the eventual dissolution of VVA National later in the decade. In 2023, the membership even backed up this verbal support by donating some \$37,500 to the chapter! So for 2024, we look forward to even greater membership growth and member participation, but most importantly, we will never forget our founding principle, *“Never Again Will One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another!”*

JANUARY 18th MEETING: NEW STARTING TIME: 7:00 PM

The January 18th meeting speaker is David Welker, who is a CIA historian. He will discuss the CIA's role in the Vietnam War, 1950s to 1975. The new meeting time is 7:00 PM with a cash bar starting from 5:30 PM to 6:45 PM. The buffet dinner starts at 6:15 PM. The dinner cost of \$25/person includes a full meal and beverage. Cash payment only. The meal purchase is not necessary to attend the meeting. If you order a meal and do not attend, please mail payment to the chapter. The meeting is at the American Legion Post 177, 3939 Oak St., Fairfax, Va.

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, January 16th. Do It Now!**

07:

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

USE THIS NEWSLETTER TO RECRUIT A NEW MEMBER

NEW MEETING TIME JANUARY 18, 2024, 7:00 PM

CALENDAR

JAN 2024:

18: Membership Meeting **7:00 PM**: Speaker: David Welker, CIA Historian, "The CIA's Role in the Vietnam War, 1950s—1975.

21: Congress grants VVA its charter in 1986.

FEB.

01: Board Meeting 7:30 PM: Zoom format

15: VVA founded as "Vietnam Veterans Coalition" in 1978.

15: Membership Meeting **7:00 PM**: Speaker: CPT Cole Johnson, USA Recruiting Command, "Recruiting Challenges for an All Volunteer Army."

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA ® INC.

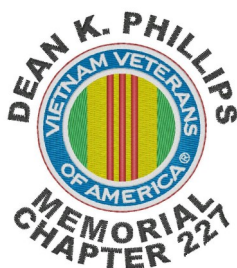
CHAPTER 227

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*