

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

March 2008

ELECTIONS 2008 – “A few good veterans are needed!”

A few good veterans are needed to serve again. If you are interested, contact Len Funk at 703-820-8118 or Byron Sheldon at 703-471-5018. New ideas and people are a way to maintain our vitality. The election will be held at the April 17th membership meeting. The personal satisfaction far outweighs the effort expended.

Candidates for Chapter 227 as of March 2, 2008

President: Bill Dumsick

Vice President: Open

Treasurer: Open

Secretary: Open

Directors: Len Ignatowski, Len Funk

MARCH MEETING: VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL

The March 20th membership meeting features Jon Hatfield, Executive Director, of the Virginia War Memorial, which is in Richmond, Virginia? He will discuss the Memorial mission to preserve Virginian military service heritage through artifacts and video interviews. The Memorial has an active outreach program to state schools.

Come early and enjoy a great dinner with your fellow chapter members. Also, spouses, children, and the general public are always welcome!

JAPANESE-AMERICAN WWII MILITARY SERVICE



Grant Ichikawa (l) proudly holds his VVA baseball cap, which was presented to him by Bill Dumsick (r) and Len Funk, Speaker Chairman (c). Photo by Len Ignatowski

Grant Ichikawa shared his WWII Tour of Duty as a Japanese-American at the February 21st membership meeting.

After the Pearl Harbor attack, Japanese-Americans were classified as 4C, enemy combatants, even the ones that were U.S. citizens. Those living on the West Coast had to move elsewhere in the U.S. at their own expense or be relocated to an internment camp, which basically was a prison. The living conditions were primitive and impersonal.

The Ichikawa family and other California families were moved to internment camps in the most desolated areas. Grant had an accounting degree, so he worked as an accountant for the camp's vegetable garden.

Grant joined the army after a college friend came to the camp to recruit Japanese-Americans to serve as translators or to fight against the Germans. They did not experience any hostility while wearing their uniforms in the states, except in southern segregated camps where the Negro soldiers

considered them to be white soldiers, and they were often chased from their areas. Grant served as a translator in the Pacific Theater. Captured Japanese officers refused to talk since Grant was considered a traitor, but the enlisted men talked after they received fair POW treatment. A friend, who was assigned to an Australian unit, was asked to wear their uniform so that he would not be mistaken for a Japanese soldier. His friend replied that if he was to die in combat, he wanted to be wearing an American uniform. (continued Page 2)

JAPANESE-AMERICAN SOLDIERS (Continued from P. 1)

The 442nd Regimental Combat Team was an all Japanese-American unit that distinguished itself in the Italian campaign by breaking the highly fortified German Gothic Line with heavy losses after other unit attacks failed. The unit is the most highly decorated unit in our country's history with 21 Medals of Honor and 9,500 Purple Hearts.

Grant decided to remain in the army after his Korean War recall. Later, as a CIA employee, he experienced the saddest day of his life when he was one of the last Americans to leave the U.S. Embassy in Saigon on April 29, 1975. He almost missed his flight when he had trouble getting into the embassy due to his Vietnamese appearance.

The unjust treatment along with their exemplary military service and loyalty was finally recognized after the war. In 1952, the Japanese were allowed to become naturalized citizens, and in 1988, President Reagan signed an official apology to the interned Japanese-Americans on behalf of the United States. In 1990, each surviving interned citizen received \$20,000 for their treatment. President Clinton awarded twenty Medals of Honor to Japanese-American WWII veterans for their gallantry in 2000. Their military service tradition continued with two Japanese-Americans were awarded the Medal of Honor in the Vietnam War.

He expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to speak to us. He plans to attend future meetings since he lives near the restaurant. Grant said that he will wear his VVA baseball cap with honor.

A special note to Leslie Lynch, who attended her first meeting with her husband, Bill Lynch. Hope to see you again. Dennis Stephens won the 50/50 raffle after he in jest asked Grant to pull his ticket. Some people have the luck.



Bill Dumsick (R) presents the Special President's Award to Ed LaClare for his eight years as Treasurer. Photo by Len Ignatowski

SERVICE RECOGNIZED

At the February membership meeting, Bill Dumsick, President, presented a Special President's Award to Ed LaClare for these eight years of service as the chapter's exceptional treasurer.

Ed accepted Len Ignatowski's offer to serve as treasurer to only write checks and balance the check book. His dedication resulted in financial records that passed each inspection with high marks. He implemented a cash receipt ledger and repositioned our reserve funds to earn a higher return. The chapter annual financial report was generally the first one submitted to the national office. He became known on a first name basis with the bank staff too.

Many thanks to Ed for his eight years of service and continued good health with his growing responsibility as a granddad.

WAR MUSEUM NEEDS "YOU"

The Virginia War Memorial will be interviewing military veterans for the living history library. The interviews take an hour and are professionally recorded and edited. The Memorial staff is particularly interested in interviewing WW II veterans. Grant Ichikawa has agreed to be interviewed. Call Len Funk at 703-820-8118 if you wish to participate or can recommend a WW II veteran.

BYLAWS BEING UPDATED

The chapter's bylaws are currently being updated. The major revisions are the return to the single vice president office, formalizing the past president office, and making the term of office for two years to be in line with the state council and national terms. If you have any questions, call Charlie Klein at 703-527-4699.

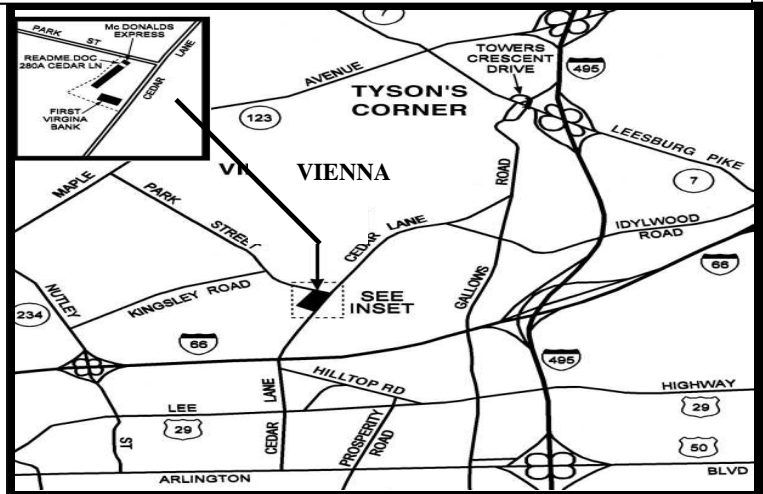
ADDRESS OR EMAIL ADDRESS CHANGES:

Members are encouraged to notify the chapter when you move to insure continual delivery of the newsletter via mail or email. Call Bill Bohuslaw at 703-503-9420 or email Len Ignatowski at grunt69@gmail.com.



**OFFICERS
AND
BOARD OF
DIRECTORS
OF
CHAPTER 227**

- President:** Bill Dumsick – 703-968-0686
- Vice President:** Joe Celesnik – 703-938-7669
- Secretary:** Bruce Waxman
- Treasurer:** Ed LaClare
- Master of Arms:** Jonathan Olson
- Board of Directors:** Paul Stancliff, Len Funk, Charlie Klein, Byron Sheldon, Bill Bohuslaw, Jim Hewitt, Phil Saulnier, and Charles Harris.
- Past President:** Len Ignatowski
- Veterans Assistance:** Byron Sheldon 703-471-5018
- AVVA Representative:** Margaret Stern
- Newsletter Editor:** Len Ignatowski
- Speaker's Panel:** Len Ignatowski
- DMZ To Delta@Dance:** Len Ignatowski
- State Council POC:** Paul Stancliff
- State Council Delegate:** Len Ignatowski, Paul Stancliff



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 INFORMATION: 703-968-0686

CHAPTER WEB SITE: www.vva227.org

**VVA Inc. THRIFT STORE (HOUSEHOLD GOODS
COLLECTION): 1-800-459-8387**

CHAPTER OPERATIONS PLAN

Mar.

- 07-08: Virginia State Council Meeting, South Boston, Va.
- 20: Membership Meeting 7:30 pm: Jon Hatfield, Executive Director, Virginia War Memorial

Apr.

- 03: Board Meeting 7:30 pm: American Legion Post 270, 1355 Balls Hill Rd., McLean, Va.
- 15: Federal Income Taxes due. Come to the membership meeting to recuperate
- 17: Membership Meeting 7:30 pm: Elections and Guest Speaker: Admiral Bob Shumaker, USN (Ret.), who was a Vietnam War POW for eight years.

May:

- 01: Virginia Income Taxes due
- 01: Board Meeting 7:30 pm: American Legion Post 270, 1355 Balls Hill Rd., McLean, Va.
- 15: Membership Meeting 7:30 pm: Vince Kaspar Awards for the Arts
- 25: Viva Vienna! Information Booth. Staff needed from 1100 to 1600 hours
- 25: Family Barbecue: Host to be announced
- 26: Wreath Laying and Service at The Wall. Mark you calendar now!

2008 Chapter Elections

**Your services and experience are needed to fulfill the chapter's mission.
Call Bill Dumsick to volunteer to be on the 2008 Election Nominating Committee and to serve in a very rewarding chapter leadership position.**

Treasurer Needed. Ed LaClare is stepping down after eight years of exceptional service. Ed will assist you in the transition to his easy and well-documented financial system.

- ***MARCH MEMBERSHIP MEETING***
Virginia War Memorial
- ***ELECTIONS 2008***
YOUR SERVICES ARE NEEDED AGAIN
- ***DON'T FORGET TO LEAVE***
A CANDLE BURNING IN YOUR WINDOW

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA ® INC.
CHAPTER 227
DEAN K. PHILLIPS MEMORIAL CHAPTER
P.O. Box 5653
Arlington, Virginia 22205-0653



OUR MISSION

To “Serve Vietnam Veterans, Their Families,
Our Community, and Our Country”.