

THE JOURNEY

Vietnam Veterans of America Inc. Chapter 227
The Dean K. Phillips Memorial Chapter
“Serving Veterans and the Community in Northern Virginia”
“Never Again Will One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another!”



In Service to America

November 2009

COME TO THE DANCE!

You should attend the 21st DMZ to Delta® Dance on November 10th. The dance provides a very enjoyable evening with our brothers and sisters from across the country. See the dance announcement in the newsletter.

If you decide to attend the dance, volunteer some time by contacting Len Ignatowski at 703-255-0353. See you at the dance!

WHAT YOU WERE AFRAID TO ASK ABOUT PTSD

Dr. Tom Berger, a Vietnam veteran as a navy corpsman with the Marines in Vietnam during 1966 to 1968, will discuss the basic causes and symptoms of PTSD and treatment at the November 19th membership meeting. He is a Life VVA member and currently the Executive Director of VVA's Veteran Health Council and chairman of VVA's PTSD and Substance Abuse Committee. Tom is a recognized PTSD expert, and he serves on several national and DVA health and mental commissions.

All members and spouses are encouraged to learn about this debilitating mental illness on military veterans. If you know of a current family whose loved one has recently experienced combat, “do” invite them to the meeting. It may be a life saving act of kindness.

Come early and enjoy a great meal and meet your fellow members and family to renew our very own Vietnam veteran camaraderie. DMZ to Delta® Dance tickets will be for sale, too.

GEORGE MASON B-BALL TICKETS

Two certificates for a George Mason University men or women's basketball game are being auctioned to anyone who wants to bid on one or both certificates. Each certificate is for four tickets. The bidding will end at the dance's silent auction. This unique auction opportunity is being offered since the university is a local attraction and many of our members already support the university. So if you want to see a first class college basketball game, start your bidding by emailing Len Ignatowski at grunt69@gmail.com or calling 703-255-0353. The starting bid for each certificate is \$60 with \$5 bid increments. Thanks to Douthard Butler, a new chapter member, for the donation.

FALL FESTIVAL

An outreach program was successfully conducted at the Fairfax City Fall Festival on Saturday, October 10, 2009. Max and Fran Knouse, Paul and Cyndy Stancliff, Margaret Stern, and Len Ignatowski assisted Joe and Sharon Celesnik, who were the program directors, in distributing membership and veteran benefit information. A Vietnam navy pilot agreed to be a speaker who will show slides and movie clips of his Tour of Duty as a carrier pilot. Len Ignatowski met with Josh Lawton, who is the president of the Student Veterans Association at George Mason University. A partnership meeting with this veteran group is being planned to determine how the chapter can assist these new veterans. Stay tuned for more information. The “Living Wall” three panel display and the Southeast Asia topo map provided an opportunity for veterans to share their Tour of Duty with family members for the first time. Also, household goods collection bags were distributed to fairgoers who visited the Living Wall display or asked questions. Overall, the day was a success. A special thanks to Pat Robertson, AVVA member and DVA employee, who provided copies of a current veteran benefit book. The book with a VVA membership application attached was given to each veteran visitor. Thanks to all who made the Fall Festival such a great success.

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

Announce the *Vince Kaspar Prizes* *for Excellence in the Arts*

The 2009-2010 academic year will be the 14th year of the Vince Kaspar Awards.

Two first prizes of \$200 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 \$100 and \$50.

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, 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. Art entries may also be submitted via electronic medium, such as a CD or a DVD. Entries submitted electronically should have the identifier on the jewel case or a separate piece of paper, **not** on the electronic medium. ***Failure to follow identifier instructions may disqualify your entry.***

Deadline: Postmarked no later than February 27, 2010. Prizes will be awarded at the VVA Chapter 227 meeting on Thursday, May 21, 2010. Poetry winners (including Honorable Mentions) will be asked to read their poetry at the ceremony. Winning artists will discuss their work and their entries will be displayed at the ceremony (and returned at that time.)

FAQ is available at www.vva227.org

Contact: **Bruce Waxman** at (703) 323-0269 or E-mail to bruce_waxman@vva227.org

Please post this announcement

“ON HOLD”: OPERATION SUGARPLUM

Due to a Ft. Belvoir program policy change that replaced the family adoption gift giving to a grocery gift certificate, the chapter's participation has been suspended. A search for a military family gift giving program is underway. If you know of such a program, call Max or Fran Knouse at 703-242-2308. Even with the program suspension, call Fran to give your name in case a program or need is found at the last minute.

VETERAN OUTREACH CONTINUES

- **WHEELCHAIR REPAIR:** The chapter's #1 commitment to assist military veterans has resulted in another successful mission. A \$250 grant to the AMEN social service organization in Arlington County resulted in repairing the damaged wheelchair of an Iraq war veteran. Privacy requirements prevent the release of additional information.
- **VETERAN HOTLINE:** If you are a veteran in emotional crisis and need help RIGHT NOW, call this toll-free number **1-800-273-8255**, available 24/7, and tell them you are a veteran. All calls are confidential. USE IT!

DANCE NEEDS:

- **DANCE SILENT AUCTION:** The dance's silent auction is in need of items to generate extra revenue. Past donations included a Disneyland vacation as well as electronic devices. If you can help, call Bill Dumsick at 703-968-0686.
- **DANCE SPONSORS:** To provide an additional dance revenue source, business brochures will be distributed at the dance. The donation is \$50. The material will be placed on each table and at the ticket sales. If you are interested, contact Len Ignatowski at 703-255-0353.

WHY VIETNAM MATTERS

As a young army 2nd Lt. and trained CIA operative, Rufus Phillips did not comprehend how his initial duty assignment to the Saigon Military Mission in 1954 would make him one of the early experts on understanding this conflict. He arrived just as the cease fire was taking effect that would divide Vietnam into two countries. He worked with Edward G. Lansdale to help the South Vietnamese government develop its political and military structure to defeat the Communists. After his military Tour of Duty, he worked as a civilian in several capacities that broadened his understanding of the conflict. His expertise was so well respected that he briefed President Kennedy on the war. He believed that the president realized that only the South Vietnamese could win the war.

The initial U.S. failure was to develop a political cause to compete with Communist nationalism, which led to the eventual decision to bring in U.S. troops to win the war for the Vietnamese with a WW II big battle strategy. The WWII strategy neglected the rural villagers and farmers, which is the heart of a successful insurgency. He claimed that General Abrams strategy to protect the rural villages was successful in winning the hearts and minds of these people in 1969 and 1970. The Vietnamization was doomed to fail since the Vietnamese military lacked an air force and logistics to support the program and its accelerated pace. Despite its many handicaps, battle tested ARVN commanders were able to defeat the communist 1972 Easter Offensive. The 1975 North Vietnam invasion was successful due to the drastic cut in U.S. military aid and our refusal to fulfill our pledge to respond to Communist aggression. His complete analysis is in his book, "Why Vietnam Matters".

Some of the negative lessons learned from the Vietnam War were:

1. An attitude of Western culture superiority
2. Use of WWII military tactics in a civil war
3. Failure to view the conflict through the eyes of the adversary
4. Ignoring our host country's culture and social history in order to build a relationship.
5. Failure to appreciate the impact of nationalism in a civil war
6. Working in a political environment in which the U.S. had never lost a war.
7. Ignoring the input from the troops and civilians in the field as to what was really happening
8. Telling the boss what he wanted to hear instead of the truth.

Based on a recent month long visit to Afghanistan, he believes little or no progress has been accomplished in the last seven years due to inadequate resources. He is optimistic that the conflict can be won if the mistakes of Vietnam are not repeated. He strongly recommends avoiding air strikes since they usually alienate the general population and innocent victims. Pakistan is a key player not to be ignored. The correct effort may take 3 to 5 years. His recent discussions with the troops and civilians in the field revealed that they have an understanding and knowledge to make the right decisions to win the hearts and minds of the people. It is going to take the political will of our leaders to make the right decision, and our support to win this war.

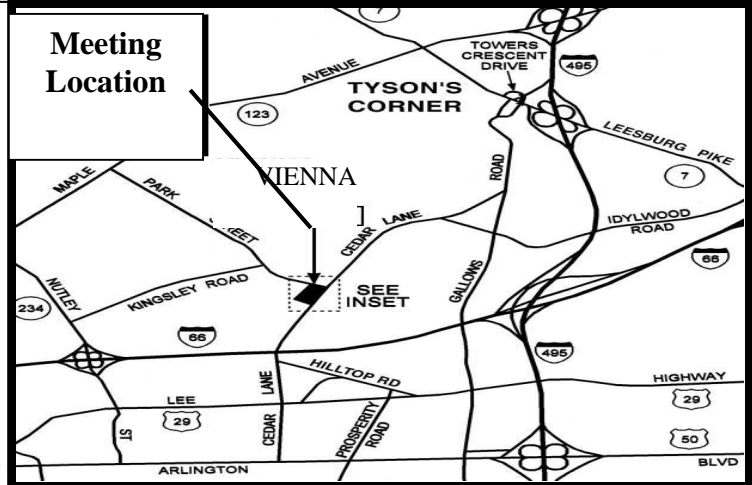
CHAPTER 227 DOG TAGS

November 2009



OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF CHAPTER 227

- President:** Byron Sheldon – 703-850-3498
- Vice President:** Bruce Waxman – 703-323-0269
- Secretary:** Vacant
- Treasurer:** Chuck Harris
- Sergeant at Arms:** Jonathan Olson
- Board of Directors:** Paul Stancliff, Len Funk, Len Ignatowski, Charlie Klein, Joe Celesnik, and Bill Bohuslaw.
- Past President:** Bill Dumsick
- AVVA Representative:** Margaret Stern
- Newsletter Editor:** Len Ignatowski 703-255-0353
- School Speaker's Panel:** Len Ignatowski
- Meeting Guest Speaker:** Len Funk 703-820-8118
- DMZ To Delta@Dance:** Len Ignatowski
- Suits for Veterans:** Chuck Harris 703-729-5665
- Military Family Holiday Sharing:** Fran Knouse 703-242-2308



CHAPTER INFORMATION: 703-968-0686

CHAPTER WEB SITE: www.vva227.org

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 OPERATIONS PLAN

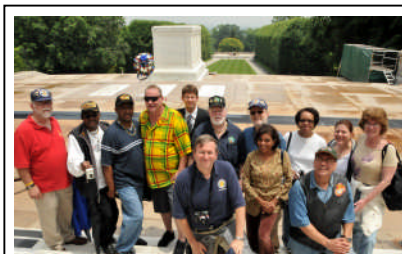
Nov. 09:

- 05: Board Meeting 7:30 pm: American Legion Post 270, 1355 Balls Hill Rd., McLean, Va.
- 07: VVA & Redskins "Timeout for Veterans Health" 10 am to 3 pm: Volunteers are needed.
- 08: McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurant: Veterans Appreciation dinner. Bring proof of military service.
- 10: DMZ to Delta Dance: Buy your ticket now!**
- 11: Veterans Day
- 11: Applebees Restaurant: Veteran appreciation lunch. Bring proof of military service
- 16: Golden Corral: Veterans Appreciation dinner @ 5 pm to 9 pm. Bring proof of military service.
- 19: Membership Meeting: Speaker: Dr. Tom Berger, "PTSD Basics". A must meeting for members and family
- 26: Happy Thanksgiving

Dec. 09

- 03: Board Meeting 7:30 pm: American Legion Post 270, 1355 Balls Hill Rd., McLean, Va.
- 05: Virginia State Council Meeting @ Virginia Beach: Len Ignatowski and Paul Stancliff are the delegates.
- 09: Lyons VAMC PTSD Unit Visit to The Wall and Arlington National Cemetery: Hosts needed. Call Bruce Waxman at 703-323-0269.
- 12: **Holiday Party** at 6:00 pm: Bill and Cheryl Dumsick to host. Call for dish selection at 703-968-0686.
 A great opportunity to meet your fellow members and to share the holiday spirit by our toy and child clothing collection program

WHY ARE YOU NOT IN ONE OF OUR PHOTOGRAPHS?



November 10th
DMZ To Delta® DANCE
“Come One, Call All”

November 11th
VETERANS DAY
“Let Us Remember”

November 19th
“PTSD BASIC 101”
Membership Meeting & Bring a Guest

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 Veterans, Their Families,
Our Community, and Our Country”**