

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

“Never Again Shall One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another”

April 2012

CHAPTER ELECTIONS

The chapter’s biannual election of new officers and directors shall be at the April 19th membership meeting. As of April 1st, the candidates are the following:

President: Byron Sheldon **Vice President:** Bruce Waxman **Secretary:** Ron Ball **Treasurer:** Chuck Harris
Directors: Bill Dumsick, Len Ignatowski, Charlie Klein, Paul Stancliff, Joe Celesnik, Tom Stryer, Max Knouse, Bill Lynch, and Chris Bevelry.

AVVA Representative: Diane Ignatowski

Member involvement is critical to our successful growth. Max Knouse, Bill Lynch, and Chris Bevelry, have stepped forward to serve. If you want to serve your fellow veterans again, this is the way to go. The minimal time commitment is the monthly board meeting, and most duties can be performed at home. If interested, offer to serve as a director and see how you like it. Floor nominations are allowed. Call Len Funk, Nominating Chairperson, at 703-820-8118 to toss your hat in the ring.

MY FATHER, A WWII FIGHTER PILOT

As part of the chapter’s continuing effort to honor the service of our WWII veterans, Ed LaClare, chapter member, will share his father’s stories about the life of a WW II fighter pilot at the April 19th membership meeting at 7:30 P.M. Come early to enjoy a great meal and to meet your fellow members. Remember family members and friends are always welcome.

“WELCOME HOME” SUCCESS

To celebrate Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day, the chapter sponsored the movie, “21 and a Wakeup” showing. It was a great success with approximately 140 veterans and guests in attendance on March 25th. Besides American War veterans, Korean and Vietnamese military war veterans responded to our invitation. The movie was based on the last days of the 24th Evacuation Hospital near Saigon which showed the daily challenges of treating both military and civilian war casualties while U.S. military forces and resources were being withdrawn from the war.

Byron Sheldon, Chapter President, welcomed the audience, and Bruce Waxman, Chapter Vice-President, gave a brief background on the movie and its producer, Chris McIntyre, a Vietnam veteran. He ended by welcoming the veterans in English, Vietnamese, and Korean. Many thank you’s were expressed after the movie. Bruce managed the event, while the Minuteman Alert was deployed to spread the word to both chapter members and friends. Special thanks to the University Mall Theaters owner, Mark O’Meara, for the use of the theater and to Chris McIntyre for the free use of the movie.



Movie attendees line up to enter the theater. Photo by Len Ignatowski

IT IS A RECORD!

A new Suits for Vets clothing donation record was set when Bill Lynch delivered over 70 men’s and women’s clothing items on March 15th. The large donation was obtained when Bill attended an estate sale where a large number of personal clothing was not sold. Bill talked to the Four Sales agent who agreed to donate the clothing to the Suits for Vets campaign. The following weekend, another large clothing donation was made. Bill is loading the clothing into Chuck Harris’ car in the photograph to the left.

Chuck Harris, Suits for Vets campaign manager, wants to thank Bill for his super effort. To help Chuck, clothing donations should be in excellent condition, cleaned, and wrapped in plastic with the size identified. The used clothing is offered to wounded warrior family members who come in haste to D.C. and are invited to formal events.



50th ANNIVERSARY WAR COMMEMORATION

Richard Williams, Chief, Community Affairs & Outreach, DOD, gave a very informative presentation on the 50th Anniversary Vietnam War Commemoration program at the March 15th membership meeting. With a new director, General Claude Kicklighter, who managed the WWII War Memorial dedication, Memorial Day 2012 will launch the program with an enhance memorial service at The Wall on Memorial Day 2012. In cooperation with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, the Memorial Day program will have speakers that require a full security sweep and personnel checks of the memorial area. The Commission supports federal, state, and local governments and private organizations in honoring our service with its five missions.

1. To thank and honor veterans of the Vietnam War, including personnel who were held as prisoners of war (POW), or listed as missing in action (MIA), for their service and sacrifice on behalf of the United States and to thank and honor the families of these veterans.
2. To highlight the service of the Armed Forces during the Vietnam War and the contributions of Federal agencies and governmental and non-governmental organizations that served with or is in support of, the Armed Forces.
3. To pay tribute to the contributions made on the home front by the people of the United States during the Vietnam War.
4. To highlight the advances in technology, science, and medicine related to military research conducted during the Vietnam War.
5. To recognize the contributions and sacrifices made by the allies of the United States during the Vietnam War.

Program information and the quarterly newsletter are available at <http://www.vietnamwar50th.com/>.

WREATH LAYING MAY BE CHANGED

Public access to The Wall will be restricted after 4:00 AM on Memorial Day due to security measures for the 50th Anniversary Commemoration of the Vietnam War speakers. For this reason, the chapter is considering canceling the wreath laying or delaying it until 4:00 or 5:00 PM with dinner afterwards. If you have not received a Minuteman Alert regarding this issue, call Len Ignatowski at 703-255-0353 if you have a preference for one of the stated options. The chapter will host its Viva Vienna Fair booth and Family Barbecue on May 27th. The wreath laying decision will be printed in the May 2012 newsletter.

VETERAN OUTREACH

- **STATE COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP:** The Virginia VVA State Council will award two \$500 scholarships at the June convention. Details and application are on the council's website at <http://www.vva-vasc.org/scholarship.pdf>. Deadline is May 31, 2012. A scholarship recipient is determined by a name drawing.
- **VASH SUPPORT SUCCESS CONTINUES:** The increasing number of Veteran Administration Support Housing (VASH) recipients resulted in a second case worker, April Ballard, being assigned to help Martha Valdez. April did not wait long to ask for chapter assistance. The chapter provided \$50 Unique Thrift Store (VVA's Household Goods Store) gift cards to two new VASH families with children. Two cards to each family were provided to help furnish their new home.
- **ANOTHER MINUTEMAN ALERT SUCCESS!** A VASH Vietnam veteran is now the owner of a new microwave oven "thanks" to a Minuteman Alert that was instigated by an appeal from April Ballard. The elderly veteran could not afford to buy a new oven to replace his broken one. Within a few minutes of the Minuteman Alert, several members offered a used microwave, but Lee Carrick, a non-chapter Minuteman, immediately offered to buy a new microwave oven, which was delivered within days of the appeal. Thanks Lee for your generosity and veteran support. If you want to be a Minuteman (it is open to non-members and service organizations too), send your email address to Len Ignatowski at grunt69@gmail.com.
- **LYONS VAMC COMBAT PTSD CLASS VISIT:** The chapter hosted another successful visit for the Lyons VAMC Combat PTSD classes on April 4th. Ben Buckley gave his inspiring welcome to the veteran family, and Len Ignatowski presented our America/Veteran flags lapel pin to each veteran. The welcome concluded with Bill Shugarts taking group photographs with their class plaque at The Wall. Many of the new veterans went to Section 60 at Arlington National Cemetery to visit the graves of their comrades. Dee Rushforth and Larry Young were in attendance. Dee was on his second visit, while Larry, who is a public school teacher, gave up a day of his spring vacation to support this chapter outreach. Thanks. Defense Information School students unexpectedly interviewed chapter members about their war experience and the meaning of The Wall for a class assignment.

More member participation is encouraged. Call Ben Buckley at 703-978-9179 to offer your service. The next visit is May 16th. You won't regret it.

- **SUITS FOR VETS CAMPAIGN:** The Northern Virginia Senior Softball League made a second \$500 donation to the Suits for Vets campaign. The donation brings their total to over \$1000 for the last year. Team members donated six business suits too. Special thanks to League players and to LTC. Ray Steiger, League Director, for their continual support.

CHAPTER 227 DOG TAGS

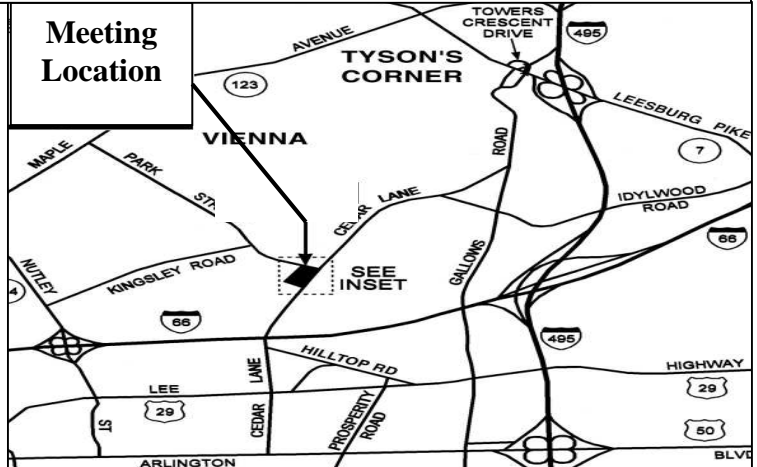
April 2012



OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF CHAPTER 227

- President:** Byron Sheldon – 703-850-3498
- Vice President:** Bruce Waxman – 703-323-0269
- Secretary:** Ron Ball
- Treasurer:** Chuck Harris
- Sergeant at Arms:** Jonathan Olson
- Board of Directors:** Paul Stancliff, Len Funk, Len Ignatowski, Bill Dumsick, Charlie Klein, Joe Celesnik, and Tom Stryer.
- AVVA Representative:** Diane Ignatowski 703-255-0353
- Newsletter Editor:** Len Ignatowski 703-255-0353
- School Speaker's Panel:** Tom Stryer 703-323-9032
- Meeting Guest Speaker:** Len Funk 703-820-8118
- DMZ To Delta@Dance:** Len Ignatowski
- Suits for Veterans:** Chuck Harris 703-729-5665
- Lyons PTSD Visit:** Ben Buckley 703-978-9179

Meeting Location



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

April 2012:

19: Membership Meeting 7:30 PM: Speaker: Ed LaClare, "Memories of a WW II Pilot, My Dad" & Chapter Biannual Elections

May 2012:

- 03: Board Meeting 7:30 PM: American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street, North, Vienna, Va.
- 16: Lyons PTSD Class Visit: Meet at the flag pole @ 11:00 AM. POC: Ben Buckley 703-978-9179
- 17: Membership Meeting 7:30 PM: "Vince Kaspar Awards for Excellence" in the Arts presentation
- 27: Viva Vienna information booth: Joe and Sharon Celesnik are the program managers.
- 27: Family Barbecue: Host: Diane Ignatowski, RSVP for head count and dish selection 703-255-0353.
- 28: Memorial Day Wreath Laying at The Wall and Family Breakfast: Details to be announced.

June 2012

- 07: Board Meeting 7:30 PM: American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street, North, Vienna, Va.
- 21: Membership Meeting 7:30 PM: Dr. Hugo A. Keesing, "Next Stop is Vietnam" The history of music in the Vietnam War.
- 23: Virginia VVA State Council Convention and Meeting: Richmond, Va.
- 27: Lyons PTSD Class Visit: Meet at the flag pole @ 11:00 AM. POC: Ben Buckley 703-978-9179

July & August: No membership meeting.

VETERAN'S HOTLINE 1-800-273-8255

**24 HOURS/ 7 DAYS A WEEK
DON'T HESITATE! CALL NOW**

VVA CAR DONATION PROGRAM

1-800-Help Vets

HOUSEHOLD GOODS DONATION – "It Works for Us!"

The VVA Household Goods program provided over \$4100 of income in 2010. You can help in three ways.

- Donate household goods and clothing by calling 1-800-459-8387 to schedule a pick-up, or drop off the items at the Unique Thrift Store on 2956 Gallows Road (the old Levitz Store) and buy something.
- Shop at the store which offers an excellent source for home furniture and decorations for children's new apartments or your second home. Clothing and other items are like new. One member's teenage son enjoys shopping for clothes and bedroom decorations at the store which has great prices. The store hours are Mon. – Sat.: 10 AM to 8 PM, and Sun.: 11 AM to 6 PM.
- Drop-off sheds, similar to the ones that are at shopping centers, are available. If you can provide a location, call Len Ignatowski at 703-255-0353. Every donation helps!

**“My Memories of My Father’s WWII Tour of Duty
as a Fighter Pilot”**

(The Chapter’s Ongoing WW II Veteran Tribute)

Membership Meeting: April 19th

MEMORIAL DAY REMEMBRANCE

- Viva Vienna Outreach: May 27th
 - Family Barbecue: May 27th
- Wreath Laying at The Wall: May 28th (Pending)
- Post-Wreath Laying Breakfast: May 28th (Pending)

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”**