Vietnam Veterans of America
2016 National Leadership & Education Conference
Hilton El Conquistador, Tucson, AZ

MONDAY, (July 18, 2016)

8:00am  Situation Room (Set Up)  Joshua Tree 1
8:00am  VVA/Media Office (Set Up)  Joshua Tree 2
8:00am  AVVA Office (Set Up)  Mesquite
8:00am  Registration (Set Up)  Registration Desk
12:00pm  Veterans Mall (Set up)  Turquoise BR 3

TUESDAY, (July 19, 2016)

8:00am – 5:00pm  Situation Room  Joshua Tree 1
8:00am – 5:00pm  VVA/Media Office  Joshua Tree 2
8:00am – 5:00pm  AVVA Office  Mesquite
8:00am – 5:00pm  Pre Registration  Registration Desk
9:00am – 6:00pm  Veterans Mall  Turquoise BR 3
2:00pm  Wreath Laying Ceremony  Flag Poles Front
4:00pm – 6:00pm  BOD Meeting  Presidio BR 1
5:00pm – 8:00pm  On-site registration  Registration Desk
6:00pm – 9:00pm  Welcome Home Party  Hotel Pool area

WEDNESDAY, (July 20, 2016)

8:00am – 5:00pm  Situation Room  Joshua Tree 1
8:00am – 5:00pm  VVA/Media Office  Joshua Tree 2
8:00am – 5:00pm  AVVA Office  Mesquite
8:00am – 6:00pm  Registration (closed during opening ceremony)  Registration Desk
8:45am – 10:30am  Opening Ceremony  Presidio BR 5

Presentation of Flags – TBD
Pledge of Allegiance – TBD
National Anthem – TBD
Remarks – John Rowan, VVA President
Remarks – Sharon Hobbs, AVVA President
Welcome – Gene Crego, AZ State President
Welcome – Tucson Mayor
Keynote Speaker – Lindsey M. Bier
### Announcements – Wes Guidry, Director of Meetings

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<th>Event Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>11:00am – 6:00pm</td>
<td>Veterans Mall</td>
<td>Turquoise BR 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00am – 12:30pm</td>
<td><strong>Chapter and State Council Secretary duties &amp; Responsibilities</strong></td>
<td>Turquoise BR 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00am – 12:30pm</td>
<td>Web Rosters – Coming Soon!</td>
<td>Turquoise BR 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00am – 12:30pm</td>
<td>National Cemetery Administration: Veterans and Survivors Benefits</td>
<td>Coronado 1&amp;2</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30pm – 1:45pm</td>
<td>VVA/AVVA Officers Luncheon</td>
<td>Presidio BR 1&amp;2</td>
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<td>2:00pm – 3:30pm</td>
<td><strong>Chapter and State Council Bylaws Workshop</strong></td>
<td>Turquoise BR 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00pm – 3:30pm</td>
<td><strong>Flag Protocol – Myths and Misconceptions</strong></td>
<td>Turquoise BR 2</td>
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**Announcements**

- After the president the secretary is the most important position at the chapter or state council level. This seminar will give new and current chapter or state council secretaries the information and tools to perform their duties. Topics will include: responsibilities as outlined in the VVA Constitution and Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, record keeping (essential documents and how to organize them), the fundamentals of writing meeting minutes, forms and when to file them (state, federal and VVA), and much more.

**Presenter:** Leslie DeLong – Chair of the Constitution Committee, Louisiana State Council Secretary, Member of the National Association of Parliamentarians.

- In this session attendees will learn how to access web rosters. A step-by-step guide will be used to demonstrate how to run and save State Council and chapter rosters. Strongly suggested for State Council Officers, Chapter Officers, & Membership Chairs.

**Presenters:** Charlie Hobbs – Chair, Membership Affairs Committee  
Tracie Houston – Director, Information Management Systems  
Frankie Pressley – VVA Database Manager

- What is NCA? How to prepare – What to do now; Burial benefits, allowances & can Veterans have benefits for private cemeteries: Survivors benefits; headstones, markers, medallions; military honors & flags; benefits for women & minority veterans; Presidential memorial certificate; burial at sea program.

**Presenters:** Kate O’hare-Palmer, Chair of Women Veterans Committee  
Anita Hanson – Deputy Under Secretary for Management for the VA  
Jerry Rainey – Director, Prescott National Cemetery, National Cemetery Administration  
Fr. Phil Salois, M.S. – VVA National Chaplain

- The workshop will discuss chapter and state council bylaws: how to write, amend or revise them; they integrate with the VVA Constitution and other governing documents; what should be in the bylaws and what should not; how to present bylaw amendments or revisions to the chapter or state council. Emphasis will be placed on making sure chapter or state council bylaws do not conflict with the VVA Constitution. While examples of bylaws will be provided for discussion, attendees may bring their chapter or state council bylaws to review during the seminar.

**Presenter:** Leslie DeLong – Chair of the Constitution Committee, member of National Association of Parliamentarians

- Flag Protocol – Myths and Misconceptions
An in-depth look at the U.S. Flag Code that will provide answers to questions about the correct use and display of the Stars and Stripes. Learn how to display the flag correctly indoors and out; correct color guard procedures; use on wearing apparel and in advertising; to salute, or not salute, during the pledge of allegiance; Correct order of flags on display; where does the POW flag go in the formation; and a lot more.

Presenters: Marc Leepson, Arts Editor – The Veteran; Author of “Flag: an American Biography”
Wes Guidry, CMP – Director of Meetings, VVA

My HealtheVet, VA’s Online Personal Health Record - Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow
2:00pm – 3:30pm
Coronado 1&2

My HealtheVet, VA’s online personal health record, has been available nationwide since 2003. My HealtheVet provides Premium account users with VA Rx refills, Secure Messaging, access to VA appointments and key portions of their health record (such as lab tests and progress notes). My HealtheVet is being redesigned to improve the online experience for Veterans and all My HealtheVet users. The redesigned site will feature simple menus, clear labels and fewer clicks to complete popular tasks on desktops, tablets and smartphones. Additional virtual resources like Telehealth, VA Mobile Apps and new innovations will increase access to VA health care services; enhance the reach and efficiency of VA staff; and support Veterans’ participation in their health care. Veterans will begin to see changes to the My HealtheVet website home and login pages in the next few months with updates launched in phases.

Presenter: Theresa Hancock, Director, Veterans/Consumers Health Informatics Office in VA’s Office of Connected Care

What does it take to be a President?
3:45pm – 5:15pm
Turquoise BR 1

Provide overview of the position of President of State Council or Chapter. Give some examples of what to expect, i.e., reports, deadlines, etc. Will provide a copy of the following Handbooks: Pres/VP, Secretary, Treasurer, Constitution

Presenters – Tom Burke, Former State President – Ohio; Chair of Veterans Benefits
Ned Foote, Finance Committee Chairman, State President – New York

The Nuts and Bolts of Organizing a Successful Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting
3:45pm – 5:15pm
Turquoise BR 2

From choosing your team, planning your timeline, and assembling your panelists, to advertising and promoting your event and engaging your legislators and the media, the panelists will guide you through the lessons learned for hosting a successful event.

Presenters: Maynard Kaderlik, Chair VVA Agent Orange Committee
Pete Petersno, Chair VVA Government Affairs Committee
Nancy Switzer, AVVA Agent Orange Committee Chair
Mokie Porter, VVA Director of Communications
Amber Chaney, VVA Communications Specialist

Overview of VA Benefits with an In-depth View of eBenefits
3:45pm – 5:15pm
Coronado 1&2

VA will provide an in-depth benefits briefing during the Vietnam Veterans of America
(VVA) – 2016 Leadership Conference. This briefing will inform, educate, and empower members of VVA on all VA resources and benefits available to them. Additionally, VA will provide training on registering for a Premium eBenefits account and its relationship to the Stakeholder Enterprise Portal. VA will also staff a benefits resource table to assist attendees with registering for an eBenefits account, as well as, provide pamphlets and literature on all available benefits.

Presenter: E. Maquel Marshall

**THURSDAY, (July 21, 2016)**

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<th>Presenter/Topic</th>
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<td>Joshua Tree 1</td>
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<td>9:00am – 12n</td>
<td>VVA/Media Office</td>
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<td>8:00am – 12n</td>
<td>AVVA Office</td>
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<td>8:00am – 12n</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>Registration Desk</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30am – 12n</td>
<td>Veterans Mall</td>
<td>Turquoise BR 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00am – 10:30am</td>
<td><strong>Veteran Consumer Financial Protection</strong></td>
<td>Turquoise BR 1</td>
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This seminar discusses the various laws and regulations that exist to protect veterans from fraud and predatory businesses of financial products or services. The seminar will include a summary of the key legal authorities and a demonstration on how to submit complaints to the federal government on various financial products and services like mortgage loans, credit cards, auto loans, bank accounts, credit reports and debt collectors. The seminar will also introduce new consumer tools developed by the federal government to simplify complicated decisions like buying a house, buying a car and choosing when to claim Social Security.

Presenter: Tony Camilli, Lt Col, USAFR, Office of Servicemember Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

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<td>9:00am – 10:30am</td>
<td><strong>Federal Laws Covering Children with Disabilities</strong></td>
<td>Turquoise BR 2</td>
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The seminar discusses the current federal laws that cover children with disabilities. The key parts of each law are covered as well as the pitfalls that you may encounter when attempting to access the services that the law mandates. You will learn the basic procedures of working with your local officials including the do’s and don'ts. Individual Education Plans (IEP) will be discussed and you will learn what constitutes a valid IEP and how best to use the IEP to get the supportive services that the child needs. If the child is able to become a working adult the Americans with Disabilities Act will provide protection and stability.

Presenter: Pete Peterson - Chair, Government Affairs Committee
Also Assisted by Government Affairs Committee Staff

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<td>9:00am – 10:30am</td>
<td><strong>The Silent Epidemic Affecting an Estimated 10% of Vietnam Vets</strong></td>
<td>Coronado 1&amp;2</td>
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This important program features a fellow Vietnam vet sharing his story living with, battling, and overcoming a serious liver disease affecting many of our members: hepatitis C. Because of wartime conditions and the blood supply not being screened, Vietnam veterans were at high risk for being exposed to the blood-borne virus. And about half of those with hepatitis C don’t even know they have it. Come learn the facts about hepatitis C from a professional educator and about scientific advances that may help our VVA members living with the disease.

Presenters: Dr. Tom Berger - Director VVA Veterans Health Council
Dick Southern - VVA Team Leader
Marc Cohen - Community Specialist
10:45am – 12:15pm  **Annual Financial Report & other related items**  Turquoise BR 1


Presenters: D. Wayne Reynolds – VVA Treasurer  
J. A. Sternburg – VVA Chief Financial Officer

10:45am – 12:15pm  **Legislative Advocacy 101**  Turquoise BR 2

Attendees will learn the legislative process from an idea to how the idea becomes a bill and finally how the bill becomes a law. The seminar will walk the attendees through the steps that are necessary to become a knowledgeable and effective advocate from background research to what actions are taken after your office visit. They will learn how to use the various automated tools that are available to assist them in tracking legislation and staying up to date on the process.

Presenters: Pete Peterson – Chairman & Legislative Coordinator for Oklahoma Veterans Council.  
Sharon Hodge – Staff member Government Affairs Committee

10:45am – 12:15pm  **The U.S.A. Vietnam War 50th Anniversary Commemoration**  Coronado 1&2

A presentation and discussion of the Nation's efforts to remember, thank and honor its Vietnam veterans and family members for their service, valor and sacrifice in recognition of the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War. Presentation topics will include the Commemoration's background, mission, Congressional objectives, execution plan, President of the United States Memorial Day kickoff, Commemorative Partner Program, and the Vietnam Lapel Pin program requirements.

Presenters: Joe Ramos – Consultant, Events Team, Vietnam War 50th Commemoration

12:15pm – 2:00pm  **AVVA Luncheon**  Presidio BR 1&2

12:15pm until 2:00pm  **Free Afternoon**  Coronado 1&2

2:00pm  **AVVA Annual Meeting**  Coronado 1&2

2:00pm  **Agent Orange Town Hall meeting**  Turquoise BR2

6:30pm – 9:00pm  **Chuck Wagon Dinner and Show**  Presidio BR

**FRIDAY, (July 22, 2016)**

8:00am – 8:30am  **POW/MIA Ceremony**  Outside (TBD)

8:00am – 5:00pm  **Situation Room**  Joshua Tree 1

8:00am – 5:00pm  **VVA/Media Office**  Joshua Tree 2

8:00am – 5:00pm  **AVVA Office**  Mesquite

7:00am – 2:00pm  **Registration**  Registration Desk

9:00am – 5:00pm  **Veterans Mall**  Turquoise BR 3

9:00am – 10:30am  **The new VVA.org: Harnessing the capabilities of the internet to promote the works of VVA and its membership**  Turquoise BR 1

Presentation, Q&A and interactive discussion on how the new website communicates your chapters’ activities through stories and images
Presenters: Quentin Butcher, VVA
   Jeff Greulich, Webmaster

9:00am – 10:30am  **Recognizing and living with Secondary PTSD**  Turquoise BR 2

This seminar is designed to bring awareness to the existence of secondary PTSD and to recognize the symptoms associated with it. It is by no means an avenue of counseling or treatment, solely, intended to bring cognizance of the illness to the attendees

Presenters: Nina Schloffe – Program Co-Chair & Facilitator
   Elayne Mackey – Program Co-Chair & Facilitator
   Dr. Tom Berger – Advisor & Mentor
   Dr. Tom Hall – Advisor & Mentor

9:00am – 10:30am  **Advanced Service Officer training (1 of 4)**  Coronado 1&2

Presenters: Kelsey Yoon - Acting Director, Veterans Benefits Program, VVA
   Stephanie Vang - Senior Appellate Attorney, Veterans Benefits Program, VVA
   Michael Garza - Contract Attorney, Veterans Benefits Program, VVA
   Jesus Rodriguez - Change Management Agent/Training Manger, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

10:45am – 12:15pm  **Planning a meeting or Convention? – What you need to know!**  Turquoise BR 1

Are you planning a meeting? How do you find a hotel, what do you need to know before signing a contract. Not knowing could end up costing, you, and your chapter a lot of money. Using a little known resource – The CVB in your area. Learn about negotiating for lower room rates, and concessions.

Presenter: Wes Guidry – Certified Meeting Professional (CMP), and VVA’s Director of Meetings for the last 20 years

10:45am – 12:15pm  **Homeless Seminar**  Turquoise BR 2

This seminar will discuss the inter-workings of stand downs, how they are organized, how to find the resources and volunteers necessary to meet the needs of homeless veterans by way of putting on a stand down. We will discuss how chapters and state councils can help their communities work with the homeless veterans and homeless veteran service providers in their areas in gathering the resources needed to end veteran homelessness. Methods of seeking out those non-profit agencies providing homeless services in the communities, chapters and state councils will be explored. By reaching out to these agencies members, chapters and state councils would be able to assist with serving meals, providing clothing drives, etc, which directly impacts the lives of homeless veterans.

Presenter: Sandy Miller, Chair VVA Homeless Veterans Committee

10:45am – 12:15pm  **Advanced Service Officer training (2 of 4)**  Coronado 1&2

Presenters: Kelsey Yoon - Acting Director, Veterans Benefits Program, VVA
   Stephanie Vang - Senior Appellate Attorney, Veterans Benefits Program, VVA
   Michael Garza - Contract Attorney, Veterans Benefits Program, VVA
   Jesus Rodriguez - Change Management Agent/Training Manger, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

12:15pm – 2:00pm  Lunch (on your own)

2:00pm – 3:30pm  **Veteran Suicide Risk & Prevention** Turquoise BR 1
Suicide prevention requires a combination of universal, selective, and indicated strategies. **Universal** strategies target the entire population. **Selective** strategies are appropriate for subgroups such as veterans that may be at increased risk for suicidal behaviors. **Indicated** strategies are designed for individuals identified as having a high risk for suicidal behaviors, including someone who has made a suicide attempt. Just as suicide has no one single cause, there is no single prevention activity that will prevent suicide. To be successful, prevention efforts must be comprehensive and coordinated across organizations and systems at the national, state/territorial, tribal, and local levels. As with other health promotion efforts, suicide prevention programs should be culturally attuned and locally relevant. Attendees will learn about veteran suicide risks as well as **Selected** and **Indicated** prevention strategies that can be used at the local level.

Presenters: Dr. Tom Hall - Chairman VVA PTSD & Substance Abuse Committee
Dr. Tom Berger – Director VVA Veterans Health Council

**2:00pm – 3:30pm**

**Proud of or Past – Poised for our Future (AVVA)**
Turquoise BR2

The attendee will gain refreshed awareness of the existence and purpose of AVVA’s ongoing endeavors; all will get a glimpse into AVVA’s future planning and implementing of new programs and projects.

Presenter: Sharon Hobbs, AVVA President

**2:00pm – 3:30pm**

**Advanced Service Officer training (3 of 4)**
Coronado 1&2

Presenters: Kelsey Yoon - Acting Director, Veterans Benefits Program, VVA
Stephanie Vang - Senior Appellate Attorney, Veterans Benefits Program, VVA
Michael Garza - Contract Attorney, Veterans Benefits Program, VV
Jesus Rodriguez - Change Management Agent/Training Manger, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

**3:45pm – 5:15pm**

**VA Suicide prevention**
Turquoise BR1

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has built the Nation’s largest, most comprehensive mental health care and suicide prevention program to combat Veteran suicide. During this seminar, a VA Suicide Prevention Coordinator will provide an overview of VA’s integrated approach to suicide prevention. This will include a review of the various resources that are available to Veterans and their loved ones, a discussion about common warning signs of crisis or suicide, and guidelines for seeking support.

**3:45pm – 5:15pm**

**Prayers, Rites, and Rituals to Celebrate Life**
Turquoise BR 2

This workshop will serve as an introduction on how to utilize the "**VVA Ritual Book**" - for Chapter Chaplain and State Chaplains. We will demonstrate how to be religiously sensitive to Chapter members who have different belief systems. What to do at the wake of a deceased VVA or AVVA Chapter member? Flag etiquette explained. Ceremonies for major Veteran holidays. And so much more.

Presenter: Rev. Phil Salois, M.S. – VVA National Chaplain

**3:45pm – 5:15pm**

**Advanced Service Officer training (4 of 4)**
Coronado 1&2

Presenters: Kelsey Yoon - Acting Director, Veterans Benefits Program, VVA
SATURDAY, (July 23, 2016)

8:00am – 12:00pm       Situation Room       Joshua Tree 1
8:00am – 12:00pm       VVA/Media Office              Joshua Tree 2
8:00am – 12:00pm       AVVA Office                      Mesquite

8:30am – 10:00am       Keeping Veterans out of prison and treating them like soldiers in prison       Turquoise BR 1

A presentation on the virtues of Veterans Treatment Court. A Warden will deliver a presentation on the virtues of housing Veterans, in a Veteran dormitory, while incarcerated.

Presenters:  Dominick Yezzo – Administrative Law Judge, Veterans Treatment Courts NYC
            Diane Andrews - Warden

8:30am – 10:00am       Ask a “Top Gun” Service Officer       Turquoise BR 2

Veterans and their families will be able to ask VVA Accredited Service Officers general questions about the VA Claims Process. Answers will help explain the process, documentation, appeals and other issues. Please, no personal cases

Presenters:  Richard Carman – Chief Service Officer, Louisiana State Council
            Felix ‘Pete’ Peterson – Chief Service Officer, Oklahoma State Council
            Kelsey Yoon – Acting Director, Veterans Benefits Program, VVA
            Michael Garza – Contract Attorney, Veterans Benefits Program, VVA

8:30am – 10:00am       So You Want to Write a Book - A Conversation with John McDonald, Ken Williamson and Marc Leepson       Coronado 1&2

Explanation of what is proposed, to be presented: _VVA Member John E. McDonald, the author of nine novels in his Sgt. Major Brand Series, and _VVA Veteran senior writer and arts editor Marc Leepson—the author of eight nonfiction books—will offer their insights on how to go about getting a book published. McDonald will cover fiction and self-publishing, Leepson will discuss nonfiction, including memoirs, and how to work with a literary agent. This will be a lively, informal session with lots of audience participation.

Presenters: Marc Leepson, John McDonald and Ken Williamson —all are published authors and VVA members

9:00am – 12:00pm       Veterans Mall (Vendors out before 2pm)       Turquoise BR 3
10:30am – 12:00pm       Closing Ceremony                      Presidio BR 5
12:00pm – 2:00pm       Author book signing & Celebrity meet and greet   Foyer
12:00pm                  Lunch (on your own)                          TBD
4:00pm – 5:00pm         Catholic Mass                                TBD
6:00pm – 7:00pm         Reception                                    TBD
7:00pm – 10:00pm        VVA Awards Banquet                         Turquoise Ballroom