



Vietnam Veterans of America

8719 Colesville Road, Suite 100, Silver Spring, MD 20910 • Telephone (301) 585-4000

Main Fax (301) 585-0519 • Advocacy (301) 585-3180 • Communications (301) 585-2691 • Finance (301) 585-5542

www.vva.org

A Not-For-Profit Veterans Service Organization Chartered by the United States Congress

Vietnam Veterans of America National Board of Directors Meeting October 19, 2018 Approved by Board

President John Rowan called to order the meeting of Vietnam Veterans of America National Board of Directors on Friday October 19, 2018, at 9:06 am, at the Double Tree by Hilton in Silver Spring, MD. Director Gumersindo Gomez delivered the opening prayer which was followed by a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

The National Secretary conducted the roll call of the National Board of Directors. Present were:

John Rowan, President	Skip Hochreich	Dave Simmons
Marsha Four, Vice President	Sharon Hobbs *	Dick Southern
Bill Meeks, Secretary	Francisco Ivarra	Dan Stenvold
Dottie Barickman	Allen Manuel	Kerwin Stone
Tom Burke	John Margowski	Ted Wilkinson
Spence Davis	Sara McVicker	Sandie Wilson
Richard DeLong	Charlie Montgomery	
Gumersindo Gomez	Rex Moody	
Bob Grabinski	Felix Peterson	

** AVVA President is a non-voting member of the National Board of Directors*

Present: Joseph A. Sternburg, CFO

Excused: Wayne Reynolds and Father Philip Salois

Secretary Meeks conducted roll call of the State Council Presidents. Present were:

Alabama	Absent	Nebraska	Present
Alaska	Present	Nevada	Present
Arizona	Present	New Hampshire	Absent
Arkansas	Present	New Jersey	Present
California	Present	New Mexico	Present
Colorado	Present	New York	Present
Connecticut	Present	North Carolina	Present
Delaware	Absent	North Dakota	Present

Florida	Present		Ohio	Present
Georgia	Present		Oklahoma	Present
Idaho	Present		Oregon	Present
Illinois	Absent		Pennsylvania	Present
Indiana	Absent		Puerto Rico	Present
Iowa	Present		Rhode Island	Present
Kansas	Present		South Carolina	Present
Kentucky	Present		South Dakota	Present
Louisiana	Present		Tennessee	Present
Maryland	Present		Texas	Present
Massachusetts	Present		Utah	Present
Michigan	Present		Vermont	Present
Minnesota	Present		Virginia	Present
Mississippi	Present		Washington	Present
Missouri	Present		West Virginia	Present
Montana	Present		Wisconsin	Present

Preliminary Business

Secretary Meeks submitted the following motions with a second from Vice President Four:

Motion 1

To accept the 2018 October BOD meeting tentative agenda.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Motion 2

To approve the 2018 July BOD Meeting Minutes 7/24/18.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

National President/J. Rowan

President Rowan gave a brief verbal report with a copy in the packets. He also explained that Treasurer Wayne Reynolds is still recovering from surgery which does not allow him to travel and he is excused from the meeting.

On August 5th Mariann and I traveled to Camp Smith, the home of the NYS National Guard Training Camp to join the Masons in doing a BBQ for returning troops and their families. They served about 300 people.

On August 15th I attended a meeting at St. Albans VA Extended Care Facility with VA Housing officials and various NYC housing agencies and reps from the NYC Dept. of Veterans Services to discuss the development of enhanced use leases to develop housing for veterans on the St. Albans campus.

On August 27-28 I joined VP Four at VVA HQ to deal with several staff issues and to finalize plans for the refurbishment of the office based on the terms of our new lease.

Sunday, September 9th I joined Senator Schumer (D-NY) at a press conference in front of the Manhattan VAMC to raise concerns about the staff shortage at VA medical facilities. Sen. Schumer proposed adding \$46.8 billion to the upcoming spending bill to resolve this problem. I raised concerns about a self-fulfilling prophecy, whereby staff shortages would lead to appointment delays that would justify sending more vets to the private sector, who is ill prepared to deal with us.

September 14th Mariann and I attended a Manhattan Chapter # 126 35th Anniversary cruise around Manhattan.

September 21-22 Mariann and I attended a NYSC meeting in Tioga Downs, NY.

September 25-26th I was at HQ dealing with some personnel issues. On the 25th I attended a "Hanoi Hilton" brick presentation to Adm. Robert H. Shumaker, a former POW, at the Freedom Museum in Fairfax, VA. This event was attended by over 100 persons. Adm. Shumaker was a POW for 8 years and coined the name "Hanoi Hilton" and helped develop the "tap code". His wife was one of the founders of the League of Families. The presentation conducted by "Doggers", Air Force Vietnamese linguists flying in reconnaissance aircraft around North Vietnam. Two of the "Doggers", spoke about their involvement in overseeing the Son Tay raid. Rich Bini, flying out of Thailand monitored the North response to the raid in case we had to defend the rescuers. Bob De Mayo, flying over Laos on an RC-135 along with Army Green Beret advisors were prepared to assume command and control, if necessary. Initially they thought it was a failure only to learn later that it caused North Vietnam to bring all prisoners to Hanoi, which lead to better conditions.

September 26th, I attended a meeting on the NYC Veterans Advisory Board meeting in Bronx, NY.

September 26-28, I attended a meeting of the Masonic War Veterans of NYS.

October 5th, I was on a conference call to discuss the development of an update to the Protestant Chaplains Monument on Chaplains Hill in Arlington Cemetery. They want to add all the Post WWII KIA Chaplains. They also want to swap the concrete base on the monument for granite as the present base is deteriorating.

On October 7th Mariann and I attended the annual retreat by the Masonic War Veterans of NYS at Washington's retreat in Tappan, NY.

October 12-14 I attended and spoke at the 30th Anniversary of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial. This is a beautiful memorial that lists the names by town. I was joined by Mariann's cousin Elise Haugh and her husband Dennis, a Vietnam vet. They were from Crockett, CA and knew both KIAs from this small town. Hospitality was provided by VFW Post 67, the oldest VFW post in CA.

National Vice President/M. Four

Vice President Four gave a brief verbal report with a copy in the packets.

Activities for this period included the following:

- National Office (8/27-30): President Rowan and I met with individual staff and held a Department Directors' meeting.
- Met with members of the office rehabilitation team on the upcoming projects of the physical plan to include the new conference room space.
- Met with the Executive Director, Lydia Watts, of Service Women's Action Network (SWAN) to discuss its upcoming conference in Atlanta, Georgia. VVA was given to understand that the Atlanta conference was the first of many meetings organized in an effort to create a new women veterans coalition and this group would be limited to representatives of *women veteran only organizations*. I put forward that this limitation would be denying the knowledgeable input of women veterans who were members of the Veteran Service Organizations. Lydia wasn't aware that this perception existed and assured us that would not be the case, as SWAN recognized our experience and expertise on the issues at hand. We have continued conversations with SWAN since that time.
- Met with Ellen Harring of SWAN on October 15, 2018, at VVA National Office to review the outcome of the Atlanta Coalition meeting. Ellen was interested in discussing ideas related to the coalition plans for leadership, fundraising, budgeting, group involvement, membership coordination etc. Dr. Schwartz also attended the meeting.
- President Rowan and I met with Dr. Jeff Lang regarding contacts he has that might be of value to VVA in advancing our projects and issues. The discussion this day was that of creating an information initiative that veterans could utilize in meeting with their individual community doctors.
- Samala Parker and I had a conversation with President Moody regarding an orientation for the State Council Presidents. That orientation will take place at the time of the October board meeting.
- Working with Dr. Schwartz on the design of a pocket card for veterans allowing them to control the health information they provide to their community care provider.

National Secretary/B. Meeks

Secretary Meeks gave a brief verbal reminder to the state councils and chapters about submitting VVA election and financial reports. He provided a notice that he would not attend the 2019 January BOD meeting due to a family commitment and that the meeting would be recorded by Samala Parker so he could produce the meeting minutes.

Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America/ S. Hobbs

The AVVA Board continues to conduct business and communicate through our online conferencing platform. Officer, Regional, and Committee reports can be read on the AVVA website. (www.avva.org).

LEADERSHIP & EDUCATION CONFERENCE: I must say that in spite of the weather, the 2018 Conference was a success. AVVA manned the office every day of the Conference. Visitors dropped by to discuss issues, pick up brochures and Paper Safes, introduce themselves, and/or just to visit. AVVA held one seminar (Recognizing and Living with Secondary PTSD) and our very own national Parliamentarian, Barbara Miller, held a seminar (Basic Parliamentary Procedure); both were well attended. We manned our vendor booth everyday which resulted in another record sales for the week. A comprehensive report of the Conference can be found on our website.

PROJECT FRIENDSHIP Thanks to our generous VVA & AVVA members, we exceeded our donation goal to Project Friendship: ***Lighthouse Social Services Centers (LSSC)***. LSSC is a non-profit organization (501c3) located in Colton, CA. On Saturday morning during the Closing Ceremonies we presented them with a check for \$13,000 which was \$1,000 above our goal. Since returning home, another \$150 was received at the National Office and forwarded on to our recipient.

CONDOLENCE PROGRAM: AVVA continues to work with Father Phil in sending sympathy cards to the families of all reported deceased members of VVA and AVVA. We average 80/month. An enclosure provided by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) with information about the *In Memory* registry is included with each sympathy card.

WEBSITE FACELIFT & POSTINGS: In September, AVVA launched the latest upgrade to our website. Webmaster, Joanna Henshaw, has done an excellent job of keeping our website up-to-date. The latest edition of our online newsletter, ***UPDATES***, is posted on the AVVA website along with our governing documents, events, Toxic Exposure updates, and the latest legislative information. Our continuing goal is to make our website a source of up-to-date information for our membership. To date we have had approximately 168,000 hits.

IRS Status: In September, AVVA was granted 501(c)(3) by the IRS. A special “thanks” to Jake Barsottini (AVVA dual member) for his hard work and dedication to AVVA. His perseverance made this happen.

20th ANNIVERSARY: 2019 is AVVA’s 20th anniversary. We will officially begin in October making the convention a special event for AVVA.

AVVA Board meets on Thursday, October 18th. Any updates or additions will be given during my report during the VVA Board meeting on Friday.

Sharon Hobbs, AVVA President

Conference of State Council Presidents/R. Moody

CSCP President Moody noted that they were forty-four (44) presidents in attendance. He introduced Dr. Tom Hall who discussed the Vet Center Questionnaire and Jacob Barsottini gave a fundraising presentation. The CSCP conducted their elections and the results are as follows: Chair: Rex Moody, First Vice Chair: Richard Lindbeck, Second Vice Chair: Charles Stapelton; and Secretary: Steve Mackey.

Veterans Benefits Program Director's Report/Felicia Mullaney, Esq.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

October 2018

Felicia Mullaney, Esq.
Deputy Director, Veterans Benefits Program

CONTENT

1. Deputy Director's Note
 - a. Appeals Modernization Act Update
 - b. VA Office of General Counsel Audit
2. VBP Activities
3. Notable Achievements
4. People & Staff Changes

APPENDIX

1. VVA's Comments on the Appeals Modernization Act
2. VBP Reponse to VA Office of General Counsel Audit

1. Deputy Director's Note

Appeals Modernization Act Update

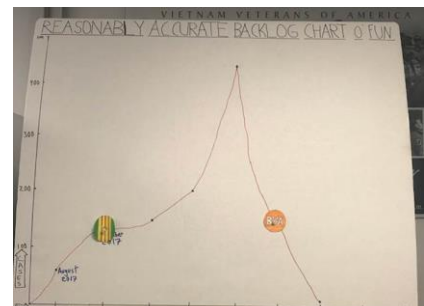
The VBP has been working hard staying up to date on changes coming with the Appeals Modernization Act (AMA). We have been advocating for veterans and collaborating with VA ensuring that veterans are not disadvantaged, as much as possible, in the transition. The VBP recently submitted comments to the proposed regulations, which are attached in the appendix. During the upcoming months, as changes are being implemented, we plan on continuing to advocate for veterans by pointing out AMA inadequacies and areas for improvement in the transition.

The VBP is grateful to the Board and Finance Committee for approving and funding VSO Appeals Modernization Act training. To save cost, this training is going to take place January 13th- January 15th, immediately following the January Board Meeting.

AMA training is critical to making sure our VSOs are prepared for the changes, and are able to provide quality representation for veterans under the new system. The VBP has begun notifying SCPs and VSOs, and organizing the training. We have had a great response from VSOs who are excited to attend.

The VBP has also been preparing its offices here at National for the upcoming changes. Our entire program has been working hard to create efficiencies and structure to handle the increased workloads. Under the AMA, veterans who appeal to the Board of Veteran Appeals (BVA) will only have 90 days from the day they file their Notice of Disagreement (NOD) to submit additional evidence. This also means that our attorneys at the BVA will have range of **deadlines from 30-45 days** from the day the NOD is filed to submit a written argument. The BVA office is going to have to prioritize appeals under the AMA, while still working on our backlog of cases under the legacy system.

Our BVA office has been working very hard to clear its backlog so that we can be in the best position possible when the AMA starts and forces us to priorities AMA appeals. Alec has been working to create efficiencies in new attorney training and motivational techniques to increase production and morale. For example, Alec has created a chart in his office to track how far VVA is behind the BVA and has small celebrations when we make progress towards catching up.



Backlog Chart o Fun

At our Appeals Management Office (AMO), Homer and his team have been working hard to help train new staff members and create efficiencies in their work as well. Our AMO office is critical in helping to stop appeals, and prevent unnecessary remands back to BVA. Additionally, the AMO's workload continues to increase as state VVA VSO programs are closing. Our AMO office ensures that veterans in states where our programs have shut down maintain quality VVA representation. Our AMO office also provides our VSOs in the field with support by answering legal questions, help collaborate with VA, and provide support in their day to day representation of veterans.

This upcoming quarter VBP's goals are to ensure that our department is fully staffed, efficient, and working collaboratively together as well as with our VSOs in the field. These goals are in place to help us through these changes and to be prepared for any challenges that come with adjusting to change. We look forward to reporting back in January and giving you additional updates on our progress and adjustments.

VA Office of General Counsel Audit

In September, VVA was notified that its VSO accreditation program is being audited by VA's Office of General Counsel (OGC). Every year OGC selects 9 Veteran Service Organizations for an audit. The purpose of the audit is to ensure that VVA continues to train our VSOs, monitor their work, and ensure our VSOs are properly handling VA benefit claims. *See* 38 C.F.R. § 14.628(d)(v) and (f). The audit also ensures

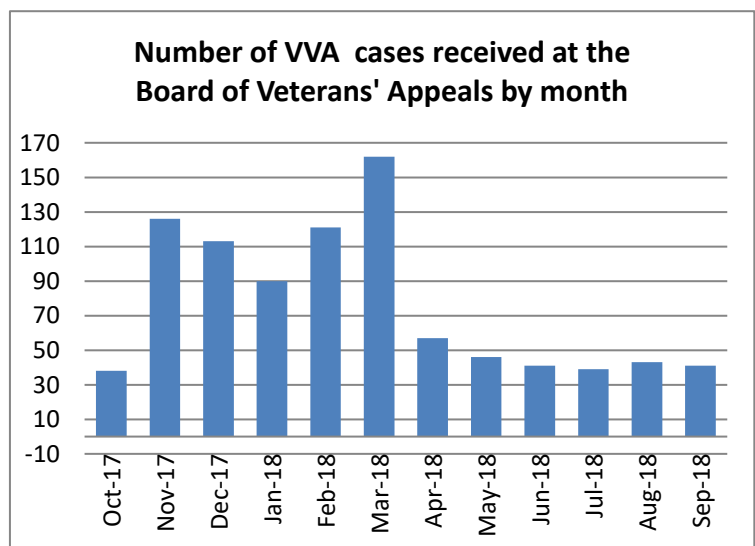
that VVA is appropriately certifying VSO accreditations and certifying that its VSOs have demonstrated an ability to represent claimants before the VA. *See* 38 C.F.R. §§ 14.628(f) and 14.629(a)(1).

The VBP submitted a timely response to the audit on October 3rd. At this time, we are waiting for OGC to review our response and training materials. The VBP will keep the Board informed of any updates we receive from OGC and of any potential changes we are required to make in response to the audit.

It is critical for our programs success, that we have regular training for our VSOs and funding to support these trainings. Our entire Benefits Program relies on maintaining our ability to accredit VSOs and continue our relationship with VA. Fortunately, we have had trainings like, the Advanced Service Officer training held at the Leadership Conference, and the Appeals Modernization Act training coming up in January. The VBP plans to continue trainings like these so that we remain in compliance with our requirements as a VA OGC recognized Veteran Service Organization.

2. VBP Activities

The VBP continues to achieve a “win rate” at the Board of Veterans’ Appeals (BVA) above 80%. From January 2018 until October 2018, 37.5% of VVA cases were granted and 43.1% of its cases remanded.¹ Since the last report in April 2018, and not including hearing request cases, we have received 388 additional new cases. Due to the large influx of cases, unfortunately, VVA cases are still being held up by our office, not VA. As of October 2018, we have managed to get our backlog under 2,000, with VVA getting its backlog down to 1,903 cases.



TOTAL APPEALS BACKLOG AT BOARD OF VETERANS APPEALS

LOCATION	Number of Cases (July '17)	Number of Cases (Oct '17)	Number of Cases (Jan '18)	Number of Cases (Apr '18)	Number of Cases (July '18)	Number of Cases (Oct '18)
Pending Attorney Review	895	886	1014	1273	1048	1044
Pending Travel Board Hearing	211	196	205	207	203	185
Pending Videoconference Hearing	654	659	687	725	715	662
Pending Central Office Hearings	18	16	19	12	15	12
TOTAL VVA BACKLOG AT BOARD	1,778	1,757	1,925	2,217	1,981	1,903

Source: VACOLS; Board of Veterans' Appeals

¹ VVA recorded a denial rate of 11.5% and 7.5% of the cases recorded a disposition of “other”.

As shown in the table below, VVA continues to file over 100 NODs and over 100 Form 9s each month. Most of these claims will eventually make their way up to the BVA. The below data indicates that VVA's benefits program continues to remain highly active at all levels.

VVA Appeals Filed Nationwide (August 2017-August 2018)		
	NODs Filed	Form 9s Filed
Aug	141	131
Sep	127	95
Oct	118	91
Nov	114	119
Dec	Data Unavailable	Data Unavailable
Jan	120	137
Feb	123	105
Mar	143	95
Apr	130	109
May	136	94
Jun	108	96
Jul	116	104
Aug	111	95

Source: Veterans Benefits Administration (9/2018)

The VBP Office at the AMO and BVA continues to be a high-volume office as we continue to experience an increased workload on almost all aspects.

Correspondence & Visitors Report (2017-2018)												
	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Phone Calls	233	271	289	205	218	177	227	264	284	232	208	263
Voice Messages	53	74	58	55	49	65	91	75	61	130	86	122
Emails	330	379	253	263	291	327	308	262	231	308	240	262
Appointment/Walk-In	8	4	11	11	3	4	8	5	4	0	5	3
Mail/Faxes	62	74	90	87	139	113	92	86	131	106	122	134

Source: VetPro (10/1/2018)

Number of Tracked Appealed Claims by E-VSO													
Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
132	147	127	157	158	134	111	93	147	110	132	116	73	72

We continue to methodically track substantive appeals nation-wide. From August 2017-September 2018 our AMO office tracked, on average, over 122 appeals each month. We had a drop in August 2018 and September 2018 due to an update in our Chief Veteran Service Officer Notification process, which helped our state programs better manage appeals for their own veterans.

Rating Decisions Reviewed (VSO Queue)													
Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
138	110	15	51	30	29	16	28	39	46	54	41	50	37

Fortunately, the number of rating decision reviews our office conducted this year continue to stay low due to the VBMS update of the “Station of Origin” search feature. Now, our service officers in the field can track, monitor, and check *their* claims, regardless of where they are adjudicated.

3. Notable Achievements

The VBP Team is busy zealously advocating for the veterans we serve. Some notable accomplishments for this quarter of the VBP Team are highlighted below:

Senior Managing Attorney Alec Ghezzi Alec submitted an IHP arguing for an *increased rating and earlier effective date for PTSD*, BVA granted resulting in a retroactive award of **\$178,352.00**.

Senior Managing Attorney Homer Richards During an office training on *rating decision reviews*, Homer noticed that the VA erroneously denied a veteran’s claim to increase his rating after a right knee surgery. Despite the medical evidence clearly showing the veteran’s condition worsened post-operation, the VA ignored this evidence to maintain a 10% post-op rating. Homer challenged the VA with the medical records showing his worsened condition, which led to the VA conceding its error and increasing the veteran’s rating to 30%. This increase resulted in a **retro payment of over \$1,100.00** and increased his combined rating evaluation by 20%.

National Appeals Attorney Mylee Sabarre Mylee, who joined us in August 2018, recently submitted her **first** IHP requesting *service-connection for hearing loss*, which was *granted* by BVA.

Contract Attorney Joshua Leach, After Josh submitted an IHP in support of an earlier effective date and increased compensation for *Aid and Attendance*, the BVA granted an earlier effective date of April 2010, the date of claim, which resulted in an award of **\$32,594.07**.

National Appellate Attorney Alexandra Rigby After Alex submitted an IHP in support of an *earlier effective date for individual unemployability*, the BVA granted an earlier effective date and the VA assigned an effective date of 4 years prior to the date previously assigned and awarded a retroactive payment of **\$104,414.00**.

VSO Counsel Joe Scott Joe helped a veteran expedite his claim so that the veteran could financially support himself. The veteran also had severe dental health conditions that he needed addressed, and could not receive VA care until he was granted service-connection. After submitting a Motion to Expedite along with new lay evidence collected from the veteran, the VA deemed that the veteran suffered a financial hardship and agreed to expedite his claim.

National Senior Service Officer Dee Wallace One of Dee's veterans had his claim granted by BVA, but his retroactive award did not reflect the payment he was owed. Dee discovered that the VA did not recognize the veteran's wife as a dependent, despite the wife being on VA files since 2006. Dee filed a Motion for Reconsideration that resulted in retro payments of over **\$8,000.00** to make up for the payments that were missed due VA overlooking the veteran's marital status.

4. People & Staff Changes

Over the last 6 months, National Appellate Attorneys: Amy Borgersen, Whitney Wells, Carlie Steiner, and Katherine Ebbesson, left VVA to pursue other career opportunities. We wish them well with their future career endeavors.

We welcomed the following new members to the Benefits team:



Ryan Yoon (left) Ryan joined the VVA VBP team on June 28th weighing in at 6 lbs 8 oz. Ryan is the youngest new member of our team and is by far the cutest. We look forward to Ryan's mommy, Kelsey, coming back in November and seeing Ryan for visits at the office.

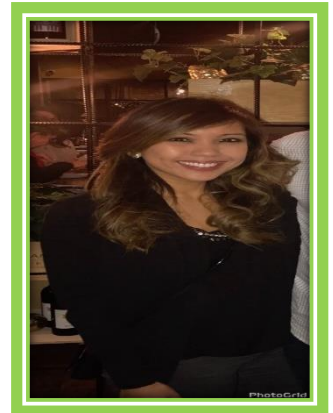
VSO Counsel Joseph "Joe" Scott (right) Joe enjoyed two years of veterans' advocacy in law school before joining VVA and wanted to continue in this field after graduation. He is very excited about having the chance to practice law on behalf of veterans as a career. He moved to Washington, DC last June and has enjoyed it ever since.





E-VSO Kenneth “Kenny” Bouy (left) Kenny is a native Philadelphian who joined the Navy at a young age. During his naval career, Kenny worked as paralegal completing naval investigations, courts-martial, and administrative discharge hearings. After Kenny’s naval career, he worked at National Geographic for 17 years as a paralegal and contracts manager. Kenny and his wife Anetha have two sons, Kenny Jr. and Michael.

National Appellate Attorney Mylee Sabarre (right) Mylee is a May 2017 graduate from the University of Maryland School of Law. She comes to us after completing a distinguished clerkship for the Honorable Robert A. Greenberg, who sits on the Circuit Court for Montgomery County. While in law school, Mylee became a member of the Maryland Public Interest Law Project and pursued several internship opportunities in a variety of public interest areas.



National Appellate Attorney Aviana Cooper (left) Aviana is a May 2017 graduate from the University of Baltimore School of law, where she served in the school’s Journal of International Law’s Executive Board as Submissions Editor. She most recently completed a litigation fellowship with AARP Foundation Litigation. Aviana has six years of public interest experience, including serving as chief of staff for a Maryland State Senator and clerking for the University of Maryland Medical System.

National Appellate Attorney Heather Olson (right) Heather earned her JD at the Michigan State University College of Law in May 2018, graduating in the top ten percent of her class. During law school, Heather completed internships with disability rights organizations, including Michigan Disability Rights Coalition and Michigan Protection and Advocacy Services. Heather also worked for three years as a program assistant for Hero Dogs, where she



coordinated with the VA, veterans, and doctors to determine eligibility for partnership with service dogs.



National Appellate Attorney Fatmata Conteh (left) Fatmata is a June 2016 alumnus from New York Law School and quarter-finalist in one of the school's moot court competitions. Since 2013, Fatmata has held several public-interest positions, including a one year position at the New York City Administration for Children's Services. Fatmata was also an intern at the New York City Housing Authority, Employee Disciplinary Division.

All of our new team members will be at the 40th Anniversary party. Please take the time to introduce yourself and learn more about our new team members.

Veterans Health Council/Cathleen Wiblemo

President Rowan introduced Cathleen Wiblemo as the new Director of the Veterans Health Council.

HGDP Report/Q. Butcher

Quentin Butcher noted that revenues were the same, Savers going away and that there was no home pick-up in Chicago.

National Meetings and Special Events/W. Guidry

Wes Guidry gave an update on several items. The following motion was submitted by the VVA National Leadership Committee:

Motion 3

To authorize Wes Guidry, Director of Meetings, to negotiate the 2022 Leadership Conference proposals with Greensboro, NC, Knoxville, TN, Orlando, FL and Albuquerque, NM and enter into contract with the city offering the best proposal.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Consent Calendar

Secretary Meeks presented the following motion:

Motion 4

To approve the 2018 October BOD Meeting Consent Calendar.

- 1. Move to amend the VVA BOD Motions Reference Guide – Finance Committee Section by retiring all of the motions indicated.**

October 29-30, 1999

Motion # 7 - To authorize Vietnam Veterans of America to accept funds to be accounted for separately and to authorize VVA to make expenditures charged against said account for operational purpose for all ordinary business transition for the Veterans and Disabled Veterans' Entrepreneurship Task Force.

April 2004

Motion #3 – To present future budgets in a “cash format” and further to convert the periodic VVA Unaudited Financial Statements from accrual to cash basis.

Motion #6 – Move the VVA budget process permanently from the former October/January time frame to the new January/April time frame and further; to authorize spending in the first two months of each fiscal year based upon the prior year's budget subject to change if necessary.

January 2006

To accept the rewritten VVA Travel Policy (Oct 2013 - # 38).

April 2011

Motion #8 (Consent Calendar) – To increase the per diem for Board of Directors, Committee/Taskforce Chairs to forty-five (\$45) effective April 13, 2011 (Oct 2016 - # 7).

October 2011

(Consent Calendar # 8) – Move to approve the VVA Credit Card Policy (Jan 2017 - # 15 – Items # 2 & # 3).

Motion 32 - Move that all VVA State Councils and Chapters currently on the IRS Revocation List (noncompliance with 990-N filing requirements) or on future IRS Revocation List, other than those already revoked through the VVA process, be automatically placed in a Suspended status as being in noncompliance of the VVA Constitution dated August 18, 2011, Article IV, General Provisions, Section 1 – Finance to wit: “Each Chapter and State Council shall conform to all applicable Federal, state, and local laws...”

That all State Councils and Chapters placed in a Suspended status as per the above, will immediately receive a “certified receipt requested” letter signed by the VVA Treasurer or VVA Chief Financial Officer and sent to the State Council/Chapter address as carried in the VVA database (uncertified copy sent to State Council President and Regional Director – e-mail copy acceptable),

explaining the reason for this status, and options for resolution of this revocation per IRS guidelines, (either State Council or Chapter VVA revocation or submission of an IRS 1024 requesting IRS exemption).

That all State Councils and Chapters placed in a Suspended status as per the above will have one hundred and twenty days (120) from the date of the above certified receipt date to submit a letter to VVA National requesting revocation of the respective State Council or Chapter or a copy of the IRS 1024 and certification that the IRS 1024 has been submitted to the IRS. Letters returned as “undeliverable” or absence of either of the aforementioned documents will mean instant VVA revocation with no appeal for the respective State Council/Chapter.

April 2012

Motion # 23 To allow Chapters that are suspended due to IRS revocation of tax-exempt status, but that have filed a Form 1024 requesting reinstatement and are otherwise in good standing with VVA (i.e., election and financial reports submitted for 2010 and subsequent years) to continue to hold meetings, conduct elections and otherwise engage in Chapter activities pending decision by the IRS regarding reinstatement of tax-exempt status. The prohibitions enumerated in paragraph A.2 of the Chapter Charter Revocation Policy as amended April 21, 2011 will remain in effect.

January 2013

Motion #13 – To approve the revised “VVA Corporate Printing Policy – January 2013” as presented (Jan 2016 - # 6).

October 2013

Motion #38 - Move to approve the VVA Travel Policy as presented (Jan 2017 - # 13).

April 2015

Motion # 7 To enter into a contract with the Double Tree, Silver Spring for sleeping rooms and meeting space for our BOD meetings in 2016, 2017 & 2018.

Motion #8 - Move to approve the 2016 National Education & Leadership Conference proposed budget as presented.

Motion #9- Move to approve the FYE 2-29-16 VHC proposed budget as presented.

Motion #10 - Move to approve the VVA FYE 2-29-16 proposed budget as presented.

October 2015

Motion # 26 – To accept the Consent Calendar Motions:

Motion # 4 – Move to accept Mullins PC as the VVA auditors for FYE 2-28-16.

Motion # 5 – Move to approve the updated VVA Annual Financial Report Form (Jan 2018 - # 5).

December 2015

Motion # 1 To approve Next Generation (NextGen) Fundraising to replace Mansfield Assoc. as our Direct Mail vendor effective 3-1-16.

April 2016

Motion # 3 - Move to approve the FYE 2-28-17 Veterans Health Council Budget as presented.

Motion # 4 - Move to approve the 2017 National Convention Budget as presented.

Motion # 5 - Move to approve the FYE 2-28-17 VVA Budget as presented.

October 2016

Motion # 3 - To authorize Wes Guidry to do final negotiations for the 2020 Leadership Conference with the Hyatt Regency Albuquerque, NM and the Crowne-Plaza Dayton, Ohio. Also to have contract signed with the property that offers the best proposal.

Motion # 4 - Move to amend the President's approved budget by adding \$10,000 to the Travel & Expense line to fund necessary travel for the remainder of the VVA fiscal year.

Motion # 5 - Move to amend the Region 9 Director's approved budget by adding \$2,500 to the Travel & Expense line to fund necessary travel for the remainder of the VVA fiscal year.

Motion # 6 - Move to amend the POW/MIA approved budget by adding \$55,000 to the Travel & Expense line to fund a proposed trip for four to Vietnam in February 2017.

April 2017

Motion 5 - Move to approve the National Leadership & Education Conference proposed FYE 2-28-18 budget as presented.

Motion 6 - Move to approve the Veterans Health Council proposed FYE 2-28-18 budget as presented.

Motion 7 - Move to approve the VVA proposed FYE 2-28-18 budget as presented.

October 2017

Motion 15 - Move to amend the POW/MIA budget by adding \$35,000 to the Travel and Related expense line, funds to be taken from current year Bequests.

2. **Move to amend Motion 1 of October 2017 by deleting Deborah Williams and inserting Joy Diggs. See below**

Motion 1 - To approve the Finance Committee Members:

Sara McVicker Vice Chair, Chair of Budget Oversight sub-committee, Tom Burke, Chair of investment subcommittee, Jake Barsottini, Barry Rice, Dottie Barickman, Allen Manuel, Dan Stenvold and Jacob Barsottini; Wayne Reynolds as special advisor, and Joe Sternburg and ~~Deborah Williams~~ Joy Diggs as staff liaisons.

3. **Move to revoke the charter of VVA Chapter 151 (NJ) and this is a decision made by the Chapter 151 (NJ) Board Directors.**
4. **Move to revoke the charter of VVA Chapter 706 (FL) on the recommendation of the VVA Florida State Council.**

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Finance Committee Report

Chair Ned Foote made the following motion out of committee.

Motion 5

To accept the unaudited Finance Report as presented.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Honorary Life Memberships

Secretary Meeks presented the following motion with a second from Vice President Four.

Motion 6

To approve the Honorary Life Membership requests.

Name	Requested By
Barbara Hatch	AZ State Council
Wanda Wright	AZ State Council
Richard C. Andrade	AZ State Council
Kyrsten Sinema	AZ State Council
Jonathan Rothschild	AZ State Council

Lee Huff	AZ State Council
Nancy Caracciolo Warne	Chapter 908 (MA)
Bill Grady	Chapter 317 (MO)
Kimberly M. Lauderdale	Chapter 317 (MO)
Jeffrey B. Berry	Chapter 1078 (TN)
James E. McGin	GA State Council

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Government Affairs, Executive Director's Report/R. Weidman

Rick Weidman spoke about where VVA was on our legislative efforts with Congress on the Blue Water Navy Bill.

BOD Meeting recesses until Saturday morning: 8:00 am

President Rowan reconvened the meeting on Saturday October 20, 2018, at 8:04 am. Roll Call by National Secretary Meeks of the National Board of Directors & State Council Presidents and other preliminary business.

The National Secretary conducted the roll call of the National Board of Directors. Present were:

John Rowan, President	Skip Hochreich	Dave Simmons
Marsha Four, Vice President	Sharon Hobbs *	Dick Southern
Bill Meeks, Secretary	Francisco Ivarra	Dan Stenvold
Dottie Barickman	Allen Manuel	Kerwin Stone
Tom Burke	John Margowski	Ted Wilkinson
Spence Davis	Sara McVicker	Sandie Wilson
Richard DeLong	Charlie Montgomery	
Gumersindo Gomez	Rex Moody	
Bob Grabinski	Felix Peterson	

** AVVA President is a non-voting member of the National Board of Directors*

Present: Joseph A. Sternburg, CFO

Excused: Wayne Reynolds and Father Philip Salois

Secretary Meeks conducted roll call of the State Council Presidents. Present were:

Alabama	Absent	Nebraska	Present
Alaska	Present	Nevada	Present
Arizona	Present	New Hampshire	Absent
Arkansas	Present	New Jersey	Present
California	Present	New Mexico	Present
Colorado	Present	New York	Present

Connecticut	Present	North Carolina	Present
Delaware	Absent	North Dakota	Present
Florida	Present	Ohio	Present
Georgia	Present	Oklahoma	Present
Idaho	Present	Oregon	Present
Illinois	Absent	Pennsylvania	Present
Indiana	Absent	Puerto Rico	Present
Iowa	Present	Rhode Island	Present
Kansas	Present	South Carolina	Present
Kentucky	Present	South Dakota	Present
Louisiana	Present	Tennessee	Present
Maryland	Present	Texas	Present
Massachusetts	Present	Utah	Present
Michigan	Present	Vermont	Present
Minnesota	Present	Virginia	Present
Mississippi	Present	Washington	Present
Missouri	Present	West Virginia	Present
Montana	Present	Wisconsin	Present

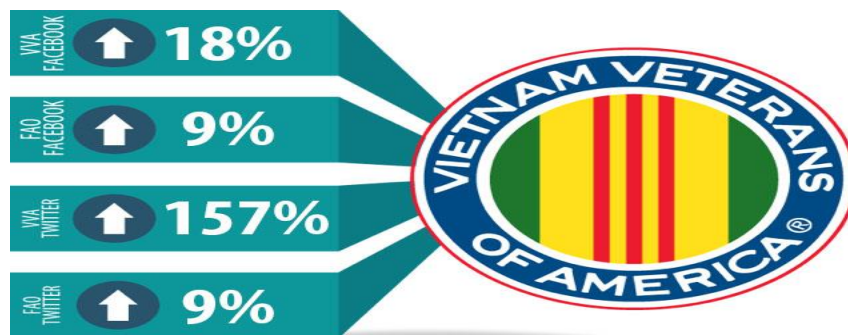
Communication Department/M. Porter

Mokie Porter spoke about the web, social media, news and publications.

COMMUNICATIONS STATISTICS SOCIAL MEDIA, NEWS, PUBLICATIONS

October 19, 2018

SOCAL MEDIA



VVA Facebook 2017-2018

The VVA Facebook page continues to gain followers, as measured by “Likes.”

The VVA Facebook has had a **18%** increase in followers in a 12-month period (October 1, 2017- October 1, 2018);

As of October 1, 2018, VVA Facebook had **133,234** likes, an increase from **112,387** likes recorded on October 1, 2017

We have gained nearly **12,000** additional followers since April 1, 2017.

Faces of Agent Orange Facebook 2017-2018

The Faces of Agent Orange Facebook page had a **9%** increase in followers for the same 12-month period (October 1, 2017- October 1, 2018);

As of October 1, 2018, FAO Facebook has **18, 638** likes, an increase from **17,002** on October 1, 2017.

VVA Twitter

VVA's twitter account as of October 1, 2018, has **10,600** followers, up **157%** from October 1, 2017 (**4,114 Followers**). VVA has issued **over 8,000 tweets**.

Followers often "retweet" our messages to their followers, some of whom have thousands of followers. This expands VVA's visibility exponentially, which has reached over 138,000 viewers (impressions).

Faces of Agent Orange Twitter

VVA's FAO twitter account, as of October 1, 2018, had **1,205** followers, up **9%** from October 1, 2017 (**1,100 Followers**).

Followers often "retweet" our messages to their followers, some of whom have thousands of followers. This expands VVA's visibility exponentially, which has reached heights of over 10,000 impressions.

YouTube

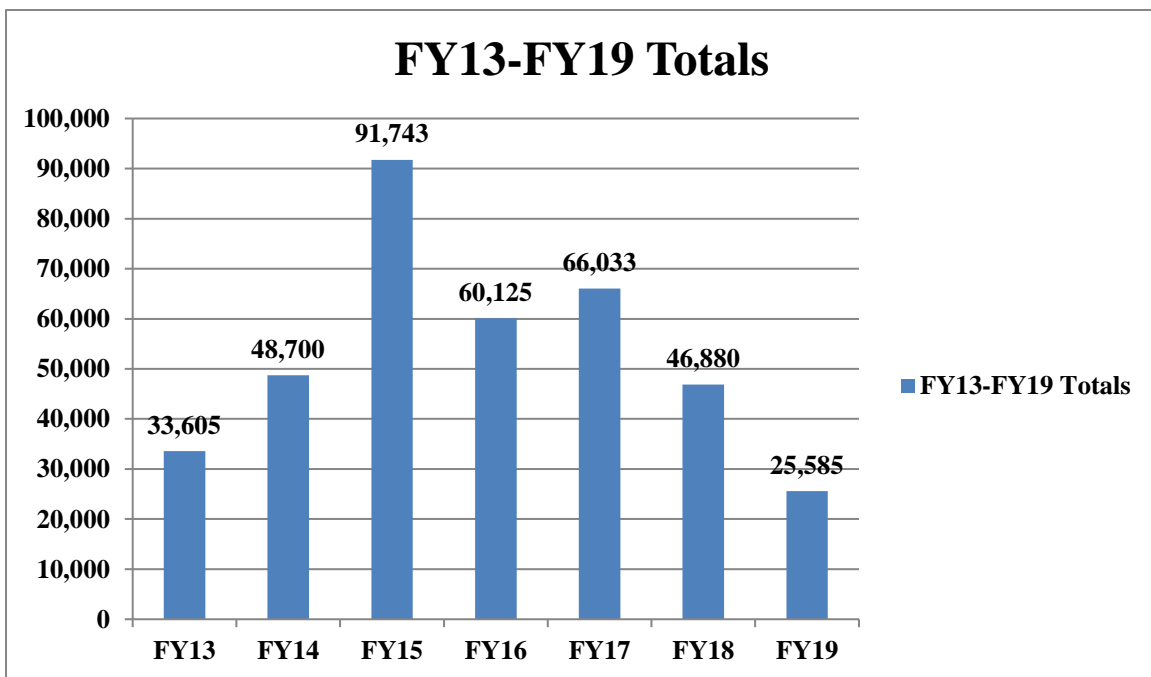
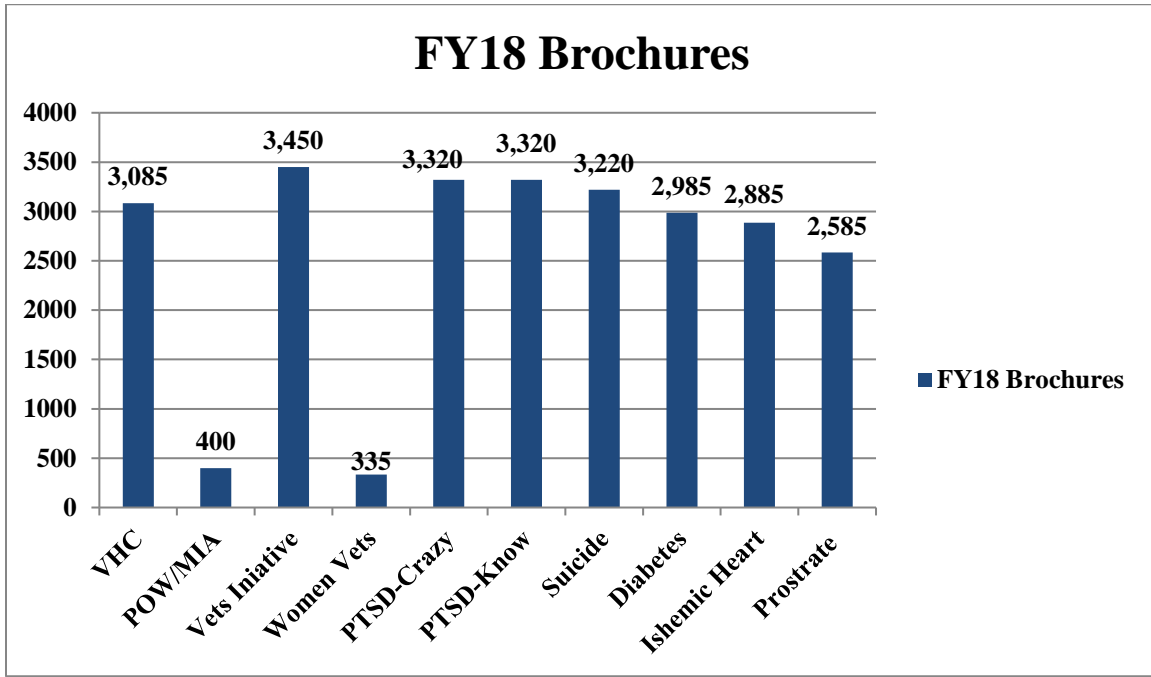
Our Vietnam Veterans of America YouTube channel has **97,770** views and **512** subscribers as of October 19, 2018.

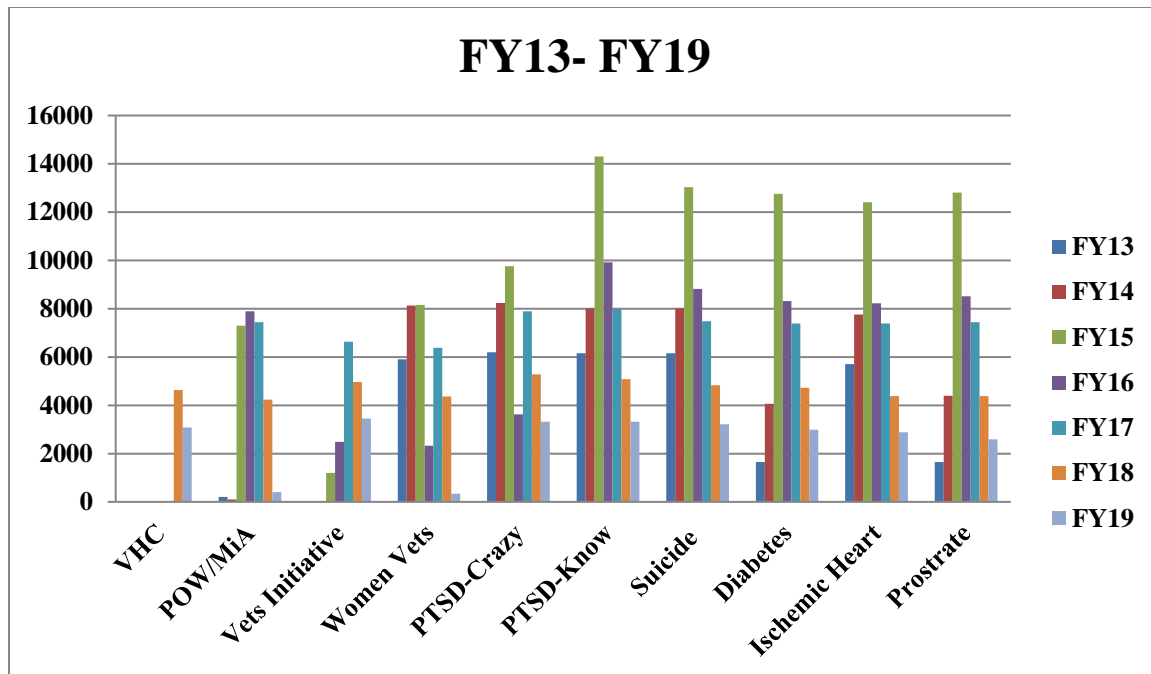
Our Faces of Agent Orange YouTube has **97,181** views and **493** subscribers as of October 19, 2018.



Brochure Totals Fiscal Year 2013-2019

FY19- 25,585
October 2018





372,671 Brochures

NEWS

VVA's Web Weekly is distributed to our **30,000 +** VVA members, supporters, and members of the media.

Web Weekly is **15.63 % OVER** non-profit industry average for percentage opened.

Agent Orange Town Hall Meetings

317 faces of Agent Orange Town Hall Meetings have been convened since the first of August 1, 2009; In **FY 2019, 21 town hall meetings have been held to date, with 3** town hall meetings currently scheduled for the remaining FY19.

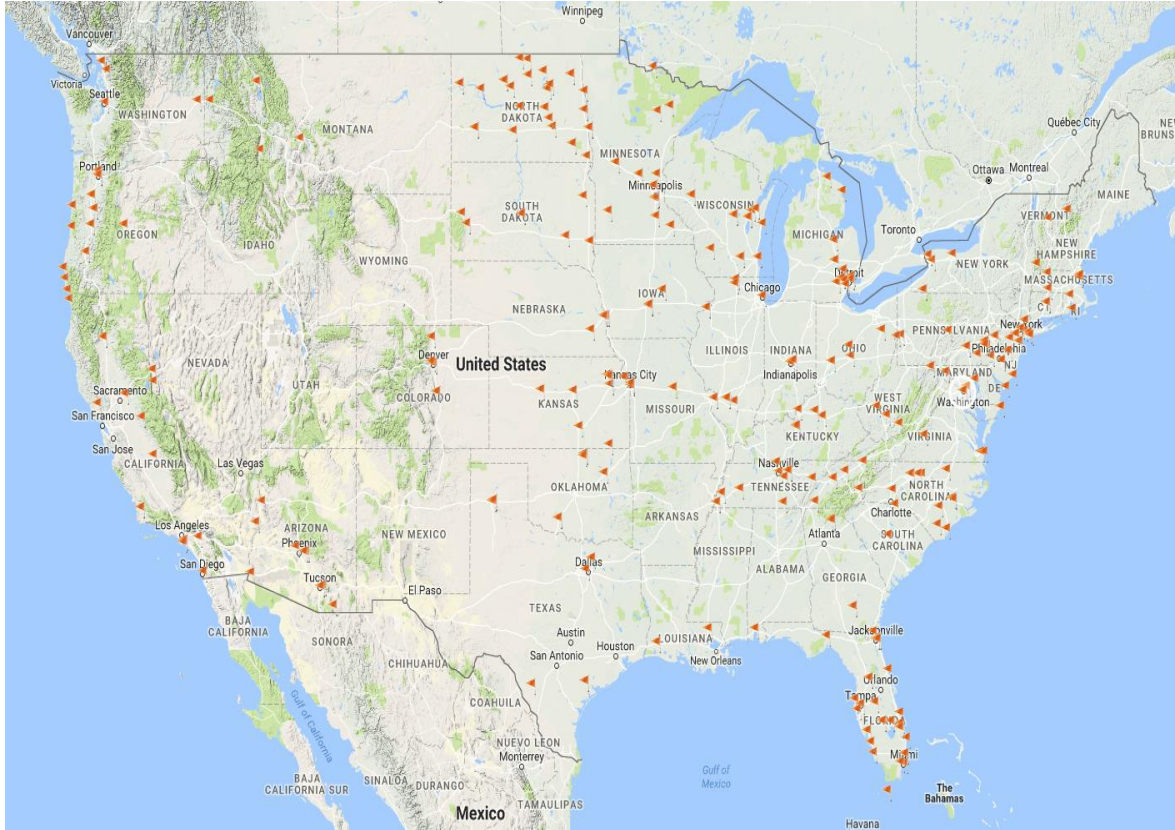
Agent Orange Folders Sent

29,367 Agent Orange folders have been sent in past 6 years—began tracking in 2012
FY19-1,516 | FY18-3,240 | FY17-5,283 | FY16-6,762 | FY15-7,310 | FY14-3,206 | FY13-2,050.

Cases of Agent Orange Booklets Sent

106,420 Agent Orange Self-help Guides sent over past 4 years—began tracking in 2014
FY19-3,500 | FY18-17,640 | FY17-18,583 | FY16-29,887 | FY15-36,810

Google Map of Agent Orange Town Hall Meetings to date



Committee – MOTIONS & REPORTS

Constitution – L. DeLong – Verbal & written reports with the following motions.

Motion 7

To remove Tom George and Nate Washington as members to the Constitution Committee.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Motion 8

To add Shelby Pinkerton as a member to the Constitution Committee at no cost to National.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Economic Opportunities – F. Barry – Verbal report and the following motion.

Motion 9

To add Dave Smith as a member of the Economic Opportunities Committee at no cost to National.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Veterans Incarcerated and In The Justice System – D. Yezzo – Verbal report and no motions.

Minority Affairs – G. Gomez – Verbal and written reports with no motions.

Veterans Against Drugs – D. Simmons – Verbal report and the following motion.

Motion 10

To add Lew Broughton as a member of the Veterans Against Drugs Committee at no cost to National.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

POW/MIA – G. Coates – Verbal and written reports with no motions.

Membership Affairs – C. Hobbs made a verbal and written reports with the following motion.

Motion 11

As of Oct. 20, 2018, there will be one paid class of membership: Life. Life membership will be \$50. All 3 year members who paid \$50 will automatically become life members.

All 1 year members will continue as individual 1 year members until their membership expires and will then have to pay \$50 and become life members.

Due to objection President Rowan called for roll call vote by Secretary Meeks.

Board Members	Vote
John Rowan	Non-vote
Marsha Four	Yes
Bill Meeks, Jr.	Yes
Wayne Reynolds	Not present
Dottie Barickman	Yes
Tom Burke	Yes
Spence Davis	Yes
Richard DeLong	Yes

Gumersindo Gomez	Yes
Robert Grabinski	Yes
Herman Hochreich	No
Francisco Ivarra	Yes
Allen Manuel	Yes
John Margowski	Yes
Sara McVicker	No
Charles Montgomery, Jr.	Yes
Rex Moody	Yes
Felix Peterson, Jr.	Yes
Dave Simmons	No
Richard Southern	Yes
Dan Stenvold	Yes
Kerwin Stone	Yes
Ted Wilkinson	Yes
Sandie Wilson	Yes

Motion passed.

Yes: 19

No: 3

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Homeless Veterans - S. Miller – Verbal report.

Public Affairs – D. Howland made a verbal report and the following motion.

Motion 12

The National Level JROTC Award be established for 3 Top Cadets @ 1st Place \$2,500.00; 2nd Place \$1,500.00; and 3rd Place \$1,000.00 in scholarships.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

National Convention Planning Committee – D. Stenvold made a verbal report and the following motion.

Motion 13

To add Francisco Ivarra as a member to National Convention Planning Committee.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

PTSD and Substance Abuse – Dr. T. Hall made verbal report and the following motion.

Motion 14

To add Craig Wade of Alaska as a member to PTSD and Substance Abuse Committee at no cost to National.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Veterans Benefits – T. Burke made a verbal report and the following motion.

Motion 15

Move that we add Greg Paulline and Gumersindo Gomez as members to Veterans Benefits Committee at no cost to National.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Women Veterans – P. Dumin – Verbal report and the following motion.

Motion 16

Add John McGinty as a member to Women Veterans Committee at no cost to National.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Veterans' Health Care – C. Baker – made verbal report and the following motions.

Motion 17

Add William Garcia and Greg Paulline as members to Health Care Committee at no cost to National.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Motion 18

Board of Directors support the concept and development of a program designed to educate veterans and their families about the need and process of educating Health Care Providers about the Stressors, exposes and hazards encountered during their military service and the increased health risks and health conditions that can result from these conditions. To include the creation of an Educational Publication designed to inform Health Care Providers.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Government Affairs – P. Peterson – Verbal report and made the following motion.

Motion 19

Submit FOIA for law firms or schools at no cost to National regarding pollution on military bases and toxins and other harmful materials.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

President Rowan acknowledged the hard work of Kristofer Goldsmith and Cathleen Wiblemo of the Government Affairs Department.

Agent Orange/Dioxin – M. Kaderlik – Verbal report and made the following motions.

Motion 20

VVA Board of Directors adopt the position that the USAF Health Study will not be completed until the collected 1) biological specimens collected from study subjects are compared with their physical health data, 2) VVA President convey this position to Secretary Veterans Affairs, Chief of Staff USAF and appropriate Institute of Medicine Administrators with a request that adequate funding for these comparisons including modernization of the computer language of the study data be authorized.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Motion 21

The BOD to direct a comprehensive plan to address the IOM Assessment results, whether positive or negative, for full further research and feasibility as directed by Public Law 114-315 relating to as expressed by the results and determination when published currently expected January 2019.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Motion 22

VVA to request to JSRRC and C&P's Agent Orange desk in support of Agent Orange Presumptive Service Connection for veterans of 905th Consolidated Maintenance Squadron between 1972-1982.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

Motion 23

To appoint John Hargens and John Weiss to be as members of the Agent Orange/Dioxin Committee at no cost to VVA National.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0

Non Vote: 1

Not Present: 1

VAVS Report – K. Rose – Verbal and written reports with no motions.

Credentials Committee – R. Lindbeck – Verbal report.

Unfinished Business

Working Group I & II Funding Issue – Director McVicker made the following motion with a second from Director Stenvold.

Motion 24

To amend the previous motion funding the Future of VVA Work Groups to allow expenditure of the allocated funding until expended past 2-28-19.

Without objection motion passed.

Yes: 22

No: 0
Non Vote: 1
Not Present: 1

New Business

There was no new business since agenda item had already been handled.

Working Group I & Working Group II BOD Presentation – Working Groups' members present were introduced, each Working Group Chairman made a presentation on their work and took questions.

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bill Meeks, Jr.", written in dark ink.

Bill Meeks, Jr.
National Secretary
Approved 1/11/2019

Veterans Initiative Program POW-MIA Committee

20 October 2018

Report to the Board

VVA National Board of Directors Meeting

- **To Date: Missing** – 1,592
- 1,592 Americans are listed by DOD as missing and unaccounted.
 - a. In addition, 63 US personnel were accounted for between 1973 and 1975.
 - b. Loss Locations: Vietnam – (South- 795, North – 452) 1,247, Laos – 297, Cambodia – 48, and the PRC – 7.
- Accounted: 991 since 1975
 - a. Recovery Locations: Vietnam – 671, Laos – 275 Cambodia – 42, PRC - 3
- Since April DPAA accounted for:
 - a. Lt. Cdr. Larry R. Kilpatrick, U.S. Navy, of Stone Mountain, Ga. Listed as MIA 06/18/1972, in North Vietnam. Recovered 12/12/2017. Identified 05/18/2018
 - b. Col Frederick M. Mellor, USAF, of Cranston, RI. Listed as MIA 08/13/1965. Recovered 03/30/1992. Identified 07/13/2018.
 - c. Col. Richard A. Kibbey, USAF, of Delmar, NY. Listed as MIA 02/06/1967 in North Vietnam. Recovered 04/03/2017. Identified 08/06/2018.
 - d. Cmdr. James B. Mills, USN, of Bakersfield, Ca. Listed as MIA 09/21/1966 in North Vietnam. Recovered 07/09/2018. Identified 08/20/2018
 - e. Mr. George L. Ritter, Air America, of PA. Listed as MIA 12/27/1971 in Laos. Recovered 12/13/2017. Identified 09/25/2018.
 - f. Lt. Richard C. Lannom, USN, of Union City, Tn. Listed as MIA 03/01/1968 in North Vietnam. Recovered 12/13/2017. Identified 09/25/2018.
- Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Agency(DPAA) Fiscal Year 2018 Report
 - Accounted for 203 formerly missing persons from past conflicts
 - Highest yearly total reached by DPAA or previous federal organizations
 - Additionally identified the remains of three additional personnel who were previously accounted for as part of group burials.
 - Broken down by conflicts:
 - 10 Vietnam War
 - 37 Korean War
 - 156 World War 2
- 4. Are focused on the research, investigation, recovery and identification of the approximately 34,000 (out of approximately 83,000 missing DoD personnel) believed to be recoverable, who were lost in conflicts from World War 2 to Operation Iraqi Freedom.
- U.S.S. Oklahoma facts and report to date:

- Original crew of 1,398
 - 32 were rescued from hull of ship
 - 429 were killed as a result of bombing
 - 14 Marines
 - 415 Sailors
 - 388 unknowns buried at Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl)
 - 61 caskets
 - 45 grave sites
 - 09/04/2015
 - Last 4 caskets disinterred
 - 127 I.D.'d (as of 10/17/18)
 - 261 Unknown (as of 10/17/18)
- Korean War Remains
 - 27 July 2018 - 55 sets of remains were released by North Korea to United Nations Command.
 - 27 Sept, 2018 – Identification of Army M/Sgt Charles H. McDaniel, of Vernon, Ind. Listed as MIA 11/02/1950. Identified 09/12/2018.
 - 27 sept, 2018 – Identification of Army PFC William H. Jones, of Nash County, N.C. Listed as MIA 11/26/50. Identified 09/13/2018
 - Lectured at the United Auto Workers Veterans Conference held at Black Lake, Michigan, along with Mokie Porter, VVA Director of Communications. Rick Weidman, Director of Government Affairs was a keynote speaker at the conference. Conference was held August 19-24.
 - Met with V-US Ambassador Nguyen Tam Chien and Secretary General Bui Van Nghi in New York City on August 30 at Forbes Headquarters w/ VVA President John Rowan. Attended second meeting on September 3 in NYC.
- 7) Chair will be attending VFW reception honoring U.S.-Russian Joint Commission on POW/MIA's November 29.

Report filed with National Secretary

Constitution Committee Report

October 19,2018

2019 Convention

The forms for submitting proposed constitutional amendments and resolutions online are up and functioning under Events (2019 Convention) and the paper forms will be published in the next 3 editions of *The Veteran*.

Proposed constitutional amendments and resolutions must be submitted online by 12 midnight March 17, 2019 or, if mailed, must be postmarked no later than 12 midnight on March 17, 2019.

The reports of the constitution committee and the resolutions committees must be available on line and mailed to the chapters and state councils by May 17, 2019.

Each chapter and state council must have submitted their **2018 Financial and Election Reports** to be eligible to send delegates to the convention.

October 19, 2018 Constitution Committee meeting

Kerwin Stone and Bob Seal attended the meeting to discuss constitutional changes that will be necessary to prepare for dissolution of the corporation in the future and to get input from the committee concerning those changes.

Leslie DeLong, Chair
National Constitution Committee

Minority Affairs Committee Report to the Board

October 19, 2018

The Minority Committee met today to discuss our priorities after coming out of the Leadership, Education Conference in Palms Springs this pass July and other issues concerning Minority Veterans.

The first issue on the table that was discussed was the Office of Transition and Economic Development Puerto Rico Economic Round Table Summary coming up on November 8, 2018. At this round table that is being presented for military service members, Veterans and their families with programs and services as they relate to: Housing, Educational and Career Development, Financial Literacy; Estate Planning and Health and Well-Being.

The event will take place in Fort Buchanan; the Departments that will be there consist of the Veterans Health Administration, National Cemetery Administration, along with federal agencies such as the (Department of Defense, Department of Agriculture, Small Business Administration, and Housing and Urban Development), local government officials, Veterans Service Organizations, and other private and non-profit organization to discuss veteran economic well-being in Puerto Rico.

After a year of hurricane Maria passage through Puerto Rico the Island still have not completely recover, especially in the VA Health Department. Veterans are still having difficulties in getting health care, as VA is working out of trailers and tents in four different locations in the Island. This chair would like to be present at this event to represent VVA National, especially on the issue of veterans' care, but we have not the funding to do so. Mr. Jorge Pedraza, Puerto Rico State Council President will be there representing PR SC. At our next meeting in January 2019 he is to bring the committee up to date on what took place there.

Our seminar at the Leadership Education Conference in Palm Springs was a great success, it even surprised us at the committee to see how many members participated, we had just about 40 members that came in, including our National President and Vice-President, the group was divided into five groups, each group was given a question concerning recruitment of minority veterans into the Corporation, and ask for them to give us their feedback on the question that was assign to their group. This work out to be an outstanding approach in gathering the

information needed that we were looking for, especially coming from the membership. If this information is use by the chapters, State Councils and the membership as a whole they will have a tool on how to recruit minority veterans into the Corporation.

We are asking for a meeting with Mr. Michael Keating, Manger Editor of the Veteran, in asking for space on the Veteran where we can publish what the membership suggested at Palm Springs in the recruitment of minority veterans into the Corporation. This way every member of the Corporation can get the information direct and commence to implement the ideas given by the membership at the Conference. The plan is that from here on we will like to have an article concerning minority veterans in every issues of the veteran to keep the membership knowledgeable on minority issues and history of the participation of minorities in the diverse conflicts and wars of this Nation and other achievements by minority veterans in the military service

Gumersindo Gomez
MAC Chair

Membership Affairs Report

October 2018

The Leadership Conference in Palm Springs, CA. went well despite record high temperatures. I must thank Tracie Houston (National Membership Director) and Alfie Williams (VVA Database Manager) for their presentation of the Online Renewals and Joins Seminar. It was well attended and everyone went away with first-hand knowledge of how to accomplish this task.

Those chapters that grew the most during the 2017-2018 fiscal year were recognized for the efforts during the Conference also. The fourth annual 2018 National Membership Growth Awards winners were: 1000 +; No qualifiers; 901-1000 No qualifiers; 801-900; No qualifiers; 701-800 MI # 0154; 601-700: NY # 0077; 501-600: FL # 1036; 401-500: AL # 1067; 301400: WV # 0628; 201-300: ND # 0941; 101-200: IL # 0242; 51-100; CO # 1106; 25-50: OH # 0709. I congratulate you all. We will continue this program again this year, so it's not too early to begin working on membership growth and retention for the 2019 awards. Unfortunately there was a misprint in the Veteran magazine. The Veteran reported in the 701- 800 category that MI. Chapter 15 was the recipient, it should have reported 0154.

The MAC's long term goal for the 2017- 2019 term was 85,000 members. I announced in the last issue of the VVA Veteran that we were increasing in numbers. However, we have been informed from VVA Directory sales that we have a significant number of deceased members on our rosters; this conformation was of the result of speaking to family members of the deceased. With that said almost every State Council saw a negative number in August. Keep in mind that all known deceased have not been entered into the system so we anticipate more negative numbers in the September stats.

Charlie Hobbs, Chair

MAC

