



VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
WISCONSIN STATE COUNCIL

State Council Meeting
The HighGround
Neillsville, Wisconsin

June 16, 2018

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Toxic Exposure Committee Meeting (Formerly Agent Orange Committee)



This meeting was respectfully postponed to the September 2018, State Council meeting to be held in Waupaca, Wisconsin.

Wisconsin State Council Meeting

President Lindbeck called the State Council Meeting to order at 10:10 A.M. on June 16, 2018, at The HighGround, Neillsville, Wisconsin. The Pledge of Allegiance was given by all present and a *moment of silence* was offered to our POWs, MIAs, and our active duty service members. The Secretary took the roll call of Officers, Directors, VVA Chapter delegates, and guests.

The following were present: WSC President Richard Lindbeck, WSC Vice-President Joseph Eiting, WSC Secretary James Mullarkey, and WSC Treasurer Patrick J. Craney, WSC Region 2 Director Mike Johnson, WSC Region 3 Director Thomas Hoffman, WSC Region 4 Director Bob Morzenti, and WSC At-Large Director Greg Foye. VVA At-Large Director, John Margowski and Wisconsin's AVVA State Representative Pat Furno were present. The VVA WSC Chapters present¹ included:

¹ As per VVA WSC letter sent (October 6, 2014) to all VVA WSC Officers, WSC Region Directors, and VVA WSC Chapter Presidents, Officers and their delegates; it was declared that all VVA WSC Chapters must be represented at no less than one-half or 50 percent of the scheduled WSC Meetings – held quarterly during the calendar year. Failure to meet this minimum requirement will result in disciplinary action and VVA WSC suspension – refer to VVA Constitution and National Disciplinary Policy. The () following the VVA Chapters number (e.g., 007 **(3)**) indicates the number of meetings recorded as attended in the calendar year as of the roll call. The # refers to the VVA Chapters WSC region.

005(2)#4, 101(1)#2, 220(2)#2, 221(2)#2, 236(2)#1, 256 (2)#4, 324(2)#1, 331(1)#4, 351(2)#4, 409(2)#1, 425(2)#3, 437(2)#1, 448(2)#4, 479(2)#1, 529(2)#4, 635(1)#1, 731(2)#2, 767(1)#1, and At-Large(1). AVVA representation was from VVA Chapters 005, 206, 351, 409, 425, 437, 635, and At-Large. A quorum was present.

Readings of the Scholarship Essays

Those in attendance had the privilege of listening to two readings by recipients of Richard T. Nuske Memorial Scholarship. Each recipient honored their grandfather's military service as a Veteran of the Vietnam War. Heather Greenburg, from the Stratford area, honored her grandfather Jesse C. Greenberg by reading her essay. Addison Watkins, from the Germantown area, honored her grandfather. As Secretary I had the good fortune to read these essays prior to their readings at the HighGround. Each young lady's oration with their grandfather next to them added even greater honor to the essay and the honoree. Following each reading the entire Wisconsin State Council Delegation, AVVA member, and guests in attendance stood for a resounding ovation, salutes, and a heartfelt "Welcome Home!" by all.

Michael Demske strongly recommended a change to the Agenda, Minutes and WSC website information, specifically to the VVA WSC Calendar for the September meeting. The dates had to be changed due to availability. The new dates for the September meeting is Saturday, September 29, 2018. Rooms will be available on Friday, September 28th at the VVA WSC rate. In turn, John Margowski made a motion to make the changes to the Agenda, and the Unapproved Minutes from March 2018 as well as the calendar(s) on the WSC website. Tom Hoffman seconded the motion and President Lindbeck without objection approved the motion.

President's Report: President Lindbeck attended the CSCP/BOD meeting in Silver Spring, MD from April 11-15, 2018.

Lindbeck shared there is a proposed bill or "idea" to limit who may use the VA. This could affect Vietnam Veterans since it is aimed at the Iraq/Afghanistan Veterans. Please contact your representative on this matter. (If you need information on how to contact elected officials click [here](https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials) or go to <https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials> on your computer, tablet or smartphone.)

The Blue Water Navy Bill has a plan to establish a surcharge on the VA Home Loan that would cover the cost of the bill. The surcharge is \$5.00.

There will be a working group seminar at Leadership in Palm Springs, CA, being held in July. A checklist of items for discussion will be issued. The VVA Constitution does not mandate termination of VVA.

An underline of the VVA WSC Chapter number (e.g., 009 (1)) indicates that they have been suspended in the previous calendar year and have as yet attended the minimum meetings for the present calendar year. The number following the # sign indicates the number VVA members represented and ## the number of AVVA members.

There is [JROTC Medal Program](https://taylorsvillehighjrotc.weebly.com/national-awards.html) (check this website: <https://taylorsvillehighjrotc.weebly.com/national-awards.html>) for students in the program. Wisconsin has a program at St. John's Northwestern Military Academy in Delafield and we i.e. VVA Wisconsin State Council should become involved. In September this will be placed on the Agenda to establish a WSC working group to research how the VVA WSC can become involved and what we should do to facilitate the VVA WSC's involvement. If interested please review the above website.

There is a new membership program that is on hold until a study of funds can be completed. This program will be discussed at the Leadership Conference and should, if approved, will become effective following the Conference. The program being discussed is Life Membership at \$50.00. Active three-year VVA members will be upgraded to Life members and active annual members from April 2017 can pay \$30.00 by December 1, 2018, to become Life members. If this program is approved there will be only one class of membership in VVA – Life. Again, this has been proposed and is presently on hold until after the study is completed and voted on at the Conference.

On April 21st there was a Toxic Exposure/Agent Orange Town Hall held in Appleton under the auspices of VVA Chapter 351 and the direction of VVA WSC Team Wisconsin. There was an excellent turnout of more than 80 people.

Just a friendly reminder that the Leadership Conference is July-24-29 in Palm Springs, CA. Registration deadline is June 30th after which the cost increases. All information is on the VVA website (<https://vva.org>) under **Events**. If you are planning or thinking of any kind of leadership role in your VVA Chapter or the State Council you should consider attending the Leadership Conference.

Secretary's Report

The Secretary reminded those present that the National Constitution states that both Election Reports and Annual Financial Reports must be submitted to the designated recipient at National and the Secretary of the Wisconsin State Council, both available on the National website (<https://vva.org>) and the VVA WSC website (<https://vva.wsc.org>), **no later** than July 15th. Failure to submit these documents under Article III will result in suspension by National. Please note the latest forms for Election and Financials are much easier to complete and submit.

Note to those VVA Chapter that submitted a two-year Election Report in 2017; you are not required to re-submit your forms in 2018 to either National or the Wisconsin State Council. However, if an Officer, Director on the Board, WSC Delegate or Alternate is deceased, retired from the position, changed VVA Chapters, or has become At-Large then you must follow the Constitution to place a member in the position for the length of the person's term. Once completed that Amended Election Report is submitted in total to National and the Secretary of the WSC. If you have questions contact the WSC Secretary.

VVA At-Large Report: John Margowski, VVA At-Large Director, shared that VA's Million Vet Program (MVP) which is a "national, **voluntary** research program... to partner with Veterans receiving their care in the VA Healthcare System to study how genes affect health." has the

potential to adversely effect a Veterans compensation claim. Moreover, Vietnam veterans **should not** be taking the **Dioxin test** – taking this test goes against pending legislation.

Margowski reiterated the “no steps” one-time \$50 lifetime VVA membership proposal which is pending the results of a cost-benefit analysis within National. Margowski concurred with President Lindbeck’s analysis provided in his report, specifically, a determination/resolution should occur at the Leadership Conference in July.

Margowski echoed the fact that the Region 6 Conference will be held August 24-25, 2018, in Aimes, Iowa.

Finally, Margowski shared that additional information on the progress of the strategic planning will be in May-June 2018, The Veteran – a [copy](#) of the updates can be viewed on the Wisconsin State Council website

Treasurer’s Report: Patrick J. Craney, VVA WSC Treasurer, presented the VVA WSC Financial Report for the Quarter to the WSC delegates.

Craney indicated that the WSC is awaiting National’s response to our MOU. We still have no idea of the dollar amount in the HGDP.

Finally, Craney shared that the glassware program is still operating successfully. VVA Chapters interested in the glassware program should review ideas on the website. Mullarkey suggested that VVA Chapters who have obtained glassware through this program as a fundraising tool should do a brief write-up to be posted in the fundraiser section of the WSC website.

AVVA State Representative Report: Pat Furno, AVVA Wisconsin State Representative, shared that the elections were held previous to this meeting and Pat Furno was re-elected.

Furno that AVVA life memberships are:

\$100 for individuals 60 years and older.	\$175 for individuals 59 years and younger.
---	---

Furno gave an update provided a fairly lengthy explanation and rationale for AVVA proposed IRS status from a 501(c)(4) to a 501(c)(3).

First, one must understand the IRS designation of 501(c)...

Nonprofits are business that are created for a purpose other than generating profit. An organization is not precluded from raising revenue, but the funds must be used to support the purpose of the nonprofit and not paid out to directors, members, or staff beyond reasonable compensation. Although this definition is expansive, many nonprofits choose to be subject to more limited rules created by the Internal Revenue Service. Adherence these guidelines can make the nonprofit eligible for a federal tax exemption, meaning that it does not need to pay income taxes. Further, depending on the laws of the state in which it is formed, certain sales, property, and state income tax exemptions may be pursued once the federal exemption is obtained.

Second, there are differences between the 501(c)(3) and (4).

A 501(c)(3) is a particular nonprofit organization has been approved by the Internal Revenue Service as a tax-exempt, charitable organization. "Charitable" is broadly defined as being established for purposes that are religious, educational, charitable, scientific, literary, testing for public safety, fostering of

national or international amateur sports, or prevention of cruelty to animals and children.

There are two different types of (4) designations with AVVA falling under:

[Social welfare organizations](#): Civic leagues or organizations not organized for profit but operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare, and

As Pat Furno explained, AVVA is presently sought and received from the IRS 501(c)(4) designation. There are discussions by AVVA National as to whether it is in the organizations best interest to remain a (c)(4) or seek (c)(3) designation. As these discussions either progress or are tabled Furno will report to the WSC.

Furno reiterated the Wisconsin AVVA is not incorporated.

VVA WSC Region Director Reports:

Region 1 Director: Excused

Region 2 Director: Mike Johnson had no report at this time.

Region 3 Director: Tom Hoffman reported that the VVA Chapters were busy with school programs, Memorial Day Programs, and successful fundraisers. In fact, VVA Chapters in my Region reported great Orange Blossom sales.

As an example of Bi-Chapter cooperation, the VVA Chapters from Mantotowoc and Appleton teamed-up to do a School Education Program at Valders High School. What an exciting experience for our Veterans and more importantly the students.

Region 4 Director, Bob Morzenti wanted to share that VVA Chapter 1130 is fully installed at National and is represented here at our HighGround meeting.

At Large Director, Greg Foye, no report at this time.

Committee Reports:

Scholarship Committee: Virginia Nuske, Chairperson, was proud to introduce the scholarship winners, especially the two essay readers present at these proceedings along with their Vietnam Veteran grandfathers – subjects of the essays.

Note that the scholarship winners along with their essays are on the VVA WSC website (<https://www.vvawi.org>).

POW/MIA Committee: No report at this time.

VVA WSC Elections:

The Election Committee, co-chaired by John Margowski, Bob Morzenti, and Mike Demske, conducted the Wisconsin State Council Elections of Officers followed by the VVA Chapter delegates electing each of the four Wisconsin Region Directors. The outcome of the elections is for the period of 2018-2020.

The results of the elections were:

President:	Richard Lindbeck	Region 1	Thomas Banner	VVA Chapter 767
Vice-President:	Dan Sciuti	Region 2	Mike Johnson	VVA Chapter 236
Secretary:	James Mullarkey	Region 3	Thomas Hoffman	VVA Chapter 731

Treasurer: [Patrick Craney](#) Region 4 [Robert Morzenti](#) VVA Chapter 526
 At-Large [Greg Foye](#) VVA At-Large

(Due to the elections and the timing for the Annual Picnic VVA Chapters were requested to submit their delegate reports in writing via email to Secretary@vvawi.org)

VVA Chapter Reports: [Following are those delegate reports submitted at the HighGround]

VVA Chapter 005, James “Mac” McBee reported the re-election of the present slate of officers with the addition of two *new* Directors for the VVA Chapters Board. Julia McBee continues as VVA Chapter 005’s AVVA representative.

Fundraising for the VVA Chapter started with AVVA’s successful fundraiser at Pizza Ranch in April netting close to \$400. The VVA Chapter began our raffle ticket sales which will conclude at our Fall Harvest Fundraiser, Saturday, September 8th at VFW Post 7232. Our first outing in May at the Eleva Broiler Festival resulted in \$950 in ticket sales. We are looking forward to ongoing sales and booths in county fairs at Northwestern Wisconsin State Fair, Buffalo, Clark, and counties.

The upside of fundraising is the ability to offer educational scholarships and in May our VVA Chapter awarded two high school scholarships and are initiating a *veteran only* scholarship in honor of our past president Dennis Werlin. Our hope is that the first recipient will be from Buffalo County but thereafter is open to all veterans, including those who have served as Reservists or the National Guard from Eau Claire and its immediate collar counties. Additionally, our educational outreach extends to our *Vets in the Classroom* program which has been successful from our view but has also received positive responses from teachers and students. We are gearing up to begin our program *Vets in the Classroom* program with the new academic year in September.

VVA Chapter 005 was pleased to contribute to the Women Veterans Retreat held June 8th at the [Trinity Equestrian Center](#) and the Horsepower for Veterans event in June.

VVA Chapter 101, Tom Sachs reported VVA Chapter 101 worked with American Legion Post 442 and VFW Post 2534 in a joint highway clean-up program.

As part of our fundraising efforts we had a successful Orange Blossom Distribution, two fun, and successful brat fries, and hosted a Car Show in conjunction with the Cranberry Blossom Festival.

Our VVA Chapter participated in *Welcome Home* ceremonies for Spring Never Forgotten Honor Flights.

As part of our continuing effort to educate high school students on the Vietnam War, three of our members went to the Assumption High School and the Lincoln High School in Wisconsin Rapids to discuss their service.

Members of our VVA Chapter participated in many parades including the Wood County Veterans Memorial Legacy stone ceremony, the Memorial Day ceremony in Wisconsin Rapids, the Flag Day ceremony in Wisconsin Rapids, and the Orange Blossom Parade in Wisconsin Rapids.

VVA Chapter 206, the VVA Chapter’s Spring Fling was held in February with John Margowski (VVA At-Large Director) as guest speaker focusing on Veterans’ Issues.

The VVA Chapter awarded a \$1,000 scholarship this year to the granddaughter of one of the members – Jim Szucs. She graduated from Menasha High School and plans to attend UW-Stevens Point. Jim Szucs was honored to present his granddaughter with her scholarship at the award ceremony.

The VVA Chapter's main fundraisers are brat fries held on Memorial Day weekend and the end of June. The VVA Chapter invested in Orange Blossoms and to-date has raised over \$600 in donations.

Members proudly participated in the Memorial Day Parade and honoring Veterans at services.

Five VVA Chapter members are planning to be on the Old Glory Honor Flight occurring during the July EAA Event in Oshkosh.

VVA Chapter 351, with membership now at 153, Larry Cavanaugh updated the delegates on the VVA Chapter's efforts on completing the people hauler (please refer to earlier reports). Now completed the people hauler trailer is ready to take 21 people on folding chairs. In fact, we full loads for both the Memorial Day Parade and Flag Day Parade. The Flag Day Parade was special as we had a member's father Clyde Stephenson (USMC) Peral Harbor survivor accompany us on the people hauler! It gets better. As we waited for the parade to start, the Marine band played the Marine Hymn for Clyde. *It was an awesome day.*

Our VVA Chapter's Reflections of Vietnam Education Program has completed 13 Missions including two WTCS Schools, two colleges, seven high schools, and King Veterans Home.

June 23rd our members will be at Appleton Airport for the Plane Pull – one of Old Glory Honor Flights fundraisers. This Fall, we are planning on three more Plane Pulls for sure with an additional two tentatively planned.

We've added another display box to explain the Toxic Exposure (previously, Agent Orange) element. The display box is complete with a media device for videos and other media.

Rumors are running unchecked about our EDU moderators and presenters having uniform shirts and trousers. Hmmm...

The VVA Chapter's EDU is in touch with The VVA Vietnam Veteran magazine, they're doing some interviewing now on our Reflections of Vietnam Program. We are hoping to they will write an article for publication, possibly for December 2018.

Our VVA Chapter has awarded four (4) \$1,500 scholarships. Next year we will be awarding two of the planned scholarships in the name of a local POW.

This year we saw a dip in our Orange Blossom fundraising. However, we are making new friend in the business community and they are making donations of their services, sometimes money, and materials. Fast Signs has donated all the decals (\$2,000) for our display trailer. Pete Sorenson, one of our VVA Chapter members, purchased, then donated an 8 ½' X 24' aluminum trailer for our parades. I applied and received a \$4,000 donation from the 4th HOOAH WI Chapter in Green Bay, to outfit with rails, banners, and steps. As I let membership know, 'that's what comes of good community, continues to expand.'

We also sponsored another Toxic Exposure (previously Agent Orange) Town Hall Meeting in April, we had a presence at the Connect to Courage event, and great turnouts for our Fish Frys. Finally, our members have started to visit and connect with Veterans confined to nursing facilities.

Our membership is looking forward to our upcoming Boat Cruise on the Chain 'O Lakes in Waupaca.

VVA Chapter 425, Joseph Deloria, Sr. reported on behalf of the VVA Chapter sharing that the April elections resulted in the re-election of the current officers.

The Color Guard participated in the Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony in Waukesha while preparing for the Fourth of July Parade and ceremonies.

Our VVA Chapter is still pleased to say we sent out six (6) packages to deployed service members.

The VVA Chapter's three fundraising events have all been successful. The VVA Chapter will be at the Waukesha County Fair.

The VVA Chapter will be represented at the upcoming Watertown Air Show in conjunction with the Moving Wall.

VVA Chapter 479, John Willman reported, using the VVA Chapter's June Report, that we have a new member – Maurice "Morris" Hager, "Welcome Home!"

The VVA Chapter received thank you letters/notes from UW – Marathon County and North Central Technical College and Heather Greenberg from Stratford High School who received the VVA WSC Richard T. Nuske Memorial Scholarship. Other notes of thanks from Camp American Legion and the HighGround.

Gary Moll the Treasurer spoke to the VVA Chapter about the VA Pain Clinic and alternative therapies.

VVA Chapter elections resulted in:

President	Roger Bartnik	Director	Eddie Dehnel
Vice-President	LeRoy Syring	Director	Sandy Ott
Treasurer	Gary Moll	Director	Belvin Bulgrin
Secretary	John Willman	Director	Maurice Hager

Our AVVA representative Joy Foye has moved to At-Large status and will no longer be VVA Chapter 479's AVVA representative.

Our CVSO will have tickets for Veterans Appreciation Day at the Milwaukee County Zoo being held July 8, 2018.

The VVA Chapter's two Brat Frys on April 27th and May 4th were held in Stratford.

Members attended and donated to the HighGround's Working Dog Tribute June 2nd. The VVA Chapter will be a part of the HighGround's July 4th celebration.

VVA Chapter 731, as reported by Mike Demske, indicated that the VVA Chapter participated in high school programs at Kiel High School, Mishicot High School, Valders High School, New Holstein High School, Washington Jr. High – Manitowoc and Wilson Jr. High Manitowoc.

The VVA Chapter Color Guard has marched in the St. Patrick's Day Parade and Memorial Day Parade – both in Manitowoc and the Elks Flag Day ceremonies. The Honor Guard did Military Rites at several funerals.

2,700 American Flags were placed at Ever Green Cemetery in Manitowoc for Memorial Day by our VVA Chapter.

Our **6th Annual Bus Trip** was a nine-day trip to Savannah, Georgia which simply wonderful, especially the many stops in-between.

Our VVA Chapter was honored to donate to several causes this past quarter.

Our VVA Chapter's Annual Picnic is planned for August 3rd; we will also be working a Beer and Food Stand at the Manitowoc County Fair.

August marks the opening of our VVA Chapter's Annual Raffle – ticket sales are open to all so if you run into Mike or anyone else from VVA Chapter 731 (Manitowoc) by one or by a pack of tickets to support our fundraising efforts and the possibility to be a WINNER!

VVA Chapter 767: Jon Rybar reported that three (3) members participated in a recent "Stars and Stripes" Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. and two members volunteered as "Ambassadors" welcoming Veterans back from their "Stars and Stripes" Honor Flight.

The VVA Chapter continues to host the 2nd Tuesday of the month Bingo Games at Boland Hall on the campus of the Union Grove Veterans Home.

The VVA Chapter awarded one \$1,000 Scholarship to a graduating senior at Waterford High School who will be pursuing a degree in Civil Engineering. The school invited five members of the Scholarship Committee to attend the awards ceremony.

Five members of our VVA Chapter participated in the Harborside Academy "Salute to Veterans" a time for interviewing and dinner in Kenosha – hosted by Ms. Melisa Thomas, Instructor.

Our VVA Chapter's fundraisers start at the Washington Avenue Piggly Wiggly Store on June 30th for "The Moving Wall exhibit being hosted by VVA Chapter 767 on May 16-21, 2019 in Prichard Park located in Racine.

Old Business:

None at this meeting.

New Business:

None at this meeting.

Next Meeting

VVA WSC Meeting September 29, 2018, at the Ramada Waupaca. Rooms will be available at special rates September 28th and 29th.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 P.M. (1245 Hours). Again, The next VVA WSC Meeting September 29, 2018, at the Ramada Waupaca.

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Mullarkey, Secretary

P.S. As VVA WSC Secretary I would like to thank John "Jaws" Willman VVA Chapter 479 Secretary for his detailed outline of this meeting. Jaws' recollection and recording was used to augment the WSC Secretary's minutes of the meeting (MoM). Thank you