



Together Always

**AVVA - AT LARGE NEWSLETTER  
VOLUME 1  
MAY, 2018**

Hello Everyone,

I am very pleased to be the representative for AVVA at large members in the State of Wisconsin. Since this is a new position, your input in how I can best serve you is greatly appreciated. My goal is to send you a quarterly newsletter—hopefully shortly after each Wisconsin State Council meeting to provide you with information on what was discussed at the meetings.

I already know some of you, but others are new to me. For those who don't know me, I became involved with Chapter 479 (based in Wausau) in the summer of 1992. My husband, Greg, joined Chapter 479 and I later became an Associate member. After AVVA was formed, I continued attending Chapter meetings and alternated being the Chapter AVVA representative with another Chapter AVVA member (Joyce Lawrence). After learning about the position of the State AVVA At Large Representative, I made the difficult decision to leave Chapter 479 and apply for the new position.

**AVVA members will vote on the State AVVA Representative at the June 16<sup>th</sup> quarterly Wisconsin State Council meeting.** There are 2 AVVA members running for the office: Pat Furno (incumbent) and Rick Talford. I am providing the following information from the letters they submitted when declaring their candidacy for the position and would like your input so I may best represent your vote for this important office.

Rick Talford:

*I believe it is very important to have the communication skills to be able to keep all of Wisconsin's AVVA members informed of the many programs the AVVA has to assist the Veterans we all so dearly appreciate. As State Representative my goal would be to have open, consistent and direct communication with members and their VVA Chapters. I further believe that mentoring of all AVVA members, especially those new to the AVVA, will help foster growth in our organization not only on a local and state level, but regionally and nationally. One day it will be up to the AVVA to continue the work that our Vietnam Veterans have achieved through the VVA and to help future generations of Veterans.*

Pat Furno:

*AVVA members in Wisconsin continue to work along side Vietnam veterans in their local chapters and at the state level. This is a valuable relationship and I hope to continue my work making sure that we all work together towards common goals. There are changes taking place at the national level that require experience and knowledge of how we were formed and what our core mission is supposed to be, to keep those tenets in the forefront and being followed. In addition to having that experience and knowledge, I have an open mind and will always strive to do what is best for the organization as a whole and within those values. I try, always, to be mindful of my responsibility to Wisconsin members.*

Now that I have provided you with the most time sensitive information, here are my notes from the March 17, 2018 Wisconsin State Council meeting.

President's Report (Richard Lindbeck):

- National VVA President, John Rowan, gave a presentation on non-US Citizens listed on The Wall.
- The bill for toxic exposure for Blue Water Navy veterans will be re-introduced.
- The 2018 VVA Leadership Conference is scheduled for July 24-28 in Palm Springs, California; the 2021 National Convention will be held in Greensboro, North Carolina.

- March has been designated as women veterans month.

#### Guest Speaker (Steven, Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs):

- Governor Walker declared 3/29/18 as Vietnam Veterans Day with a commemorative event held in Eau Claire at 2:30 PM. VFW Post #305 is hosting the event; WDVA Secretary Daniel Zimmerman will speak.

#### General Information:

- The Veteran's Home at King received money to expand the cemetery.
- Land has been purchased in Oneida County for another national veterans cemetery. A listening session is scheduled for 2:00 PM on 4/4 at the veterans building in Rhinelander.
- Bob Morzenti, Region 4 Representative, will present the charter to the new Hayward Chapter (#1130) on Tuesday, March 20.
- VVA's 40th anniversary celebration is October 19th. A commemorative challenge coin is available at a cost of \$5 each (minimum of 10 coin order); there is no deadline to place the order.
- State Council Vice President, Joe Eiting, discussed the upcoming Toxic Exposure Town Hall meeting in Appleton on 3/20; details can be found at [vvawi.org](http://vvawi.org). Another Town Hall meeting will be held on 4/21; details can be found at [vvawi.org](http://vvawi.org) or [vvawi351.org](http://vvawi351.org).

#### Secretary's Report (Jim Mullarkey):

- Jim receives a monthly membership roster from VVA National that he uses for mailings. Jim requested that everyone make sure National has their actual current address.
- Your e-mail address on election forms must be correct and current.
- Effective immediately, only the most current version of the financial forms will be accepted by National.
- Don't forget to complete the 990-N form as well.

#### Treasurer's Report (Pat Craney):

- The 501(c)(19) Foundation will be dissolved and won't be shown on the next quarterly Treasurer's report.
- Toxic Exposure budget amounts were transferred to the Special Project-Toxic Exposure Capital account.
- The Chapters (3) who haven't signed and returned forms allowing the State Council to receive any Household Good Program funds from National will be contacted.

#### National VVA At-Large Report (John Margowski):

- John does not recommend using the RAMP (Rapid Appeals Modernization Program) program due to how the program functions; it appears to benefit the VA rather than the veteran. Steve House mentioned filing a new claim instead of an appeal if a claim is denied. If the appeal is successful, payments will be paid based on the original filing date. If a new claim is filed and approved, payments will begin on the date the new claim was filed—not the date the formerly denied claim was filed.
- The paper copies of Agent Orange claims for 5 children of Vietnam veterans are missing; VVA National is following up on this issue.
- The Blue Water Navy veterans bill, including new conditions, won't be presented to Congress until funding amounts are attached to the bill by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

#### AVVA Report (Pat Furno):

- AVVA Chapter elections must be held in April. Ballots, sign-in sheets and results sheets must be used and sent to Pat within 30 days of the election. The appropriate forms can be found at [AVVA.org](http://AVVA.org).
- AVVA National is looking for award nominees; forms can be found at [avva.org](http://avva.org).
- The election for the State AVVA Representative will be held at 9:30 AM at the June quarterly meeting.

#### Old Business:

- The Scholarship Committee Chair, Ginny Nuske, reported that 16 scholarship applications were received: 12 were direct Vietnam veteran descendants; 2 were relatives of Vietnam veterans; 3 recipients were chosen (winners are from Appleton, Stratford and Grafton). A VVA member will present the scholarship at each school's scholarship ceremony.
- Jim Mullarkey shared information on an updated State Council website. Updating the site is necessary to ensure it doesn't drop to the "bottom" of the Google list, the site is secure, and that it is available on all types of devices. The "alpha" version of the website can be accessed at [vvawi.org/new](http://vvawi.org/new). He will add a "blog"

to the site if it's requested. Jim would like for members to go to the website and provide feedback. Jim is also looking for corporate paperwork and/or history on the Wisconsin State Council.

New Business:

- The date for the 9/22 meeting is changing to 9/29 due to a conflict with the 30th anniversary celebration of the dedication of the Fragments tribute at The Highground.
- Agent Orange/Toxic Exposure patches are now available for sale.

Upcoming Events:

June 2, 2018:

- Dedication of the military working dog tribute at The Highground

June 16, 2018:

- Wisconsin State Council quarterly meeting and annual picnic; The Highground, Neillsville; **AVVA meeting and election of State Representative at 9:30 AM**

September 22, 2018;

- 30th Anniversary of the dedication of Fragments at The Highground

September 29, 2018:

- Wisconsin State Council quarterly meeting; Ramada Inn, Waupaca

November 30-December 1, 2018:

- Wisconsin State Council quarterly holiday party (11/30) and meeting (12/1); Ramada Inn, Waupaca

May I send you this newsletter by e-mail? If so, please contact me at [jfoye@frontier.com](mailto:jfoye@frontier.com) with a subject line of "AVVA At-Large Newsletter" or by phone at 715-842-9197 (please leave a message—we don't have caller ID so you'll need to leave your phone number if you'd like a return call). If you have any suggestions on the appropriate amount of information to include in the newsletter, please let me know. Thank you!



Joy L. Foye  
Wisconsin AVVA At-Large Representative