



**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
WISCONSIN STATE COUNCIL**

State Council Meeting
Comfort Suites/Foxfire
Waupaca, Wisconsin

December 2, 2017

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Toxic Exposure Committee Meeting (Formerly Agent Orange Committee)



Attendance: Co-Chairs Mike Demske(VVA) and Pat Furno (AVVA), Joe Eiting, John Margowski, and Jim Mullarkey

Called to Order by Chairperson - Mike Demske at 9:00 A.M.

AO/Toxic Exposure Town Hall possibility in Racine. At present Racine is looking for a location which will also determine date. Will await contact from Racine.

Madison had an informational meeting for professional staff on AO/Toxic Exposure; unfortunately, the WSC's Team Wisconsin received late notification of the date and were unable to be represented. Mike Demske

did get the informational materials from VVA sent to Madison for the meeting. Due to the nature of the meeting, Team Wisconsin learned no information was shared on children.

Children records are scanned in Janesville and then sent to Denver. Records are missing in Denver.

[VVA partnered with Wounded Warriors](#) and Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) regarding toxic exposure. TAPS president, Bonnie Carrol, expressed her goal of this partnership being – “the primary focus of the partnership will be to ensure that the families of military service members and veterans who have died as a result of illnesses related to toxic exposure are recognized, cared for, and are able to receive all benefits they are entitled.”

Blue Water Navy bill did not pass. They are now planning to remove carriers since there are so many personnel onboard.

John Rowan reported that all military installations in the U.S., especially over 150 Air Force bases where deicing and anti-icing agents are used are being studied relative to consideration for inclusion in the Toxic Exposure Act.

The Medical College of Wisconsin in concert with C. Zablocki VAMC has been operating [Suicide Prevention](#) program with the VA, VSOs, and in Wisconsin. If the members of the Education Committee of the WSC would like to establish a linkage with or have preliminary discussions Jim Mullarkey will set-up a meeting.

The WSC recognizes that we need to maintain our focus on Suicide Prevention, especially with the response received at the WSC Suicide Prevention Program held in September. To either develop or be a conduit for suicide prevention the WSC needs viable, reliable, and most importantly valid materials with skilled presenters and resource personnel, especially at any given presentation. At present the WSC does not have the resources or trained personnel to conduct such a program.

The 2016 report on Suicide Prevention is now indicating ≥ 22 Veterans commit suicide a day – down from 24 per day. Important factors for the WSC to consider with respect to this report is that the greatest percentage of Veteran suicides is between the ages of 55-75 years and that women Veterans are the fastest growing segment within the Veteran cohort.

Appleton High School system has a program on recognizing suicide indicators. It is similar to EMT, but for Suicide.

We need to look at other Veteran organizations, since they all seem to be on a path to work on suicide prevention. VVA WSC should make an effort to get out to the American Legion/VFW Mid-Winter Conference to bring Agent Orange/Toxic Exposure and Suicide Prevention Programs to them.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 A.M. (0950)

Wisconsin State Council Meeting

President Lindbeck called the State Council Meeting to order at 10:20 A.M. on December 2, 2018, at the Ramada Waupaca, Waupaca, 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 Lindbeck, WSC Vice-President Eiting, WSC Secretary Mullarkey, and WSC Treasurer (Excused), WSC Region 1 Director Mueller, WSC Region 3 Director Hoffman, WSC Region 4 Director Morzenti, and WSC At-Large Director Foye. VVA At-Large Director, John Margowski, and Wisconsin's AVVA State Representative Pat Furno were present. The VVA WSC Chapters present¹ included: 005(4)#4, 092(3)#4, 101(4)#3, 206(4)#1, 220(4)#2,

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.

236(4)#1, 351(4)#4, 425(4)#3, 437(4)#1, 448(4)#4, 479(4)#1, 529(4)1#, 618(2)#1, 635(2)1#, 729(3)#2, 731(4)#2, 767(4)#2, At-Large(4).

VVA Chapter 221, as of December 2, 2018, has attended only one meeting during the 2016 calendar year. The WSC Secretary reiterated the October 2014 process to follow for those VVA Chapters who were not represented at a minimum of two or 50 percent of the WSC Meetings during a calendar year (please see footnote 1 on page 2 above). The WSC Secretary will send a letter of suspension as per the WSC 2014 directive.

President Lindbeck appointed Tom Heitman as Parliamentarian, and Mike Demske as Timekeeper.

There was a motion by Duane Cannon and seconded by Thomas Hoffman to approve the Agenda. This motion was carried without objection.

John Margowski moved the VVA WSC Unapproved Minutes of the September 2016 be approved with the suggested changes. Thomas Hoffman seconded the motion; which was approved without objection.

President's Report: President Lindbeck reported he attended the VVA National Convention in New Orleans. The National Elections were done and John Rowan President, Marsha Four VP, Bill Meeks Secretary, and Wayne Reynolds Treasurer were elected for another two-year term. John Margowski was elected as At-Large Director and Bob Grabinski as the Region 6 Director. Mike Demske was appointed to the Agent Orange Committee.

Lindbeck shared how proud he was to be appointed Credential Chair – this was Lindbeck's first time. The Convention had 844 delegates registered and only 18 registered on site. Lindbeck stressed pre-registration prior to the Conference and it made his job a lot easier. President Rowan reappointed Lindbeck as the Credential Chair for the next convention in Spokane, WA in 2019. Lindbeck suggests that you plan now if you are considering attending.

Leadership will be in Palm Springs, CA in 2018. It is scheduled for late July and once again it will probably be warm. If you are interested in taking a leadership role in the Chapter or State it is a great time to learn.

In late August Lindbeck attended the Air Force Security Forces Convention in Washington D.C. Lindbeck had the opportunity to go to Andrews AFB and meet with the unit that he was assigned to in Oklahoma. Lindbeck gave the commander information on where the 11th Security Forces came from. They were unaware of its history prior to 1995.

President Lindbeck attended Indian Summer in Milwaukee to hand out information on Agent Orange/Toxic Exposure. Also, Lindbeck shared information on benefits the Native Americans are entitled to for their military service. John Margowski, Jim Hackbarth and my wife also

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.

helped on Saturday. We all got to attend the Grand Entry and as usual it was outstanding. There is a possibility that we may be doing an Agent Orange Town Hall next year.

Our next State Council meeting is December 1st and 2nd. December 1st is the annual White Elephant Christmas Party and now is the time to clear out the closet of the gifts that you may want to re-gift. December 2nd is the State Council meeting. Hope to see you there and don't forget to notify Mike Demske so we can order the meals.

VVA At-Large Report: John Margowski, VVA At-Large Director, shared that Florida had submitted, scanned, and forwarded to Denver five (5) spina bifida claims. Presently, these claims are missing.

Margowski shared that the VA contends that their statistical evidence does not support spina bifida as disability for children of Vietnam Veterans or certain Veterans who served in the Korean demilitarized zone.

It appears clear that regardless of the rhetoric, the present Administration neither cares for or supports the VA and return Veterans.

Secretary's Report: Jim Mullarkey, Secretary reported that the first *Veteran Suicide Prevention Program* was held at the Ramada Waupaca. While the formal head count was 92 more than 100 individuals were present for the program. It should be noted that more than 5,000 emails went out for the program between June and September 2017 with the greatest response rates were in the months of July, August, and September.

This was the second time we used a registration program, Eventbrite, to register individuals for the program. One of the key things learned as a result of using this program is that we did not collect enough critical data at registration and did not have an automatic evaluation or survey going out to those who participated in the program. We will use the tool for future events but will become more aware of data collection and analytics for future events or programs.

The Secretary has concern as to Election and Financial Reports for 2017. **First, two VVA Chapters are missing reports at the WSC level.** One has not submitted their Election Report and another has not submitted their Financial Report. One of the responsibilities of the Secretary is to maintain the WSC records which includes these two reports. And failure to submit required reports is supposed to lead to disciplinary action.

Second, while some VVA Chapters use the **two-year option for Election Reporting**; however, in the off year they elect new Directors to their VVA Chapter's Board. When this occurs the Election Report either must be redone or amended dated, signed, and submitted to both Membership at VVA National and to the Secretary at VVA WSC.

Finally, often after the National Convention **there may be a new or revised Election or Financial Report.** It is important that the latest form be used. The forms are located on VVA National's website by going to the bottom of the home page and click on Resources. Locate forms click on the plus sign and click on the form. You can also go to the WSC website go to Info and click on forms. Regardless of method you can locate the most up-to-date forms in Adobe PDF – these can either filled in, saved, and printed or printed and filled out by hand.

Mullarkey, shared that he will be changing the present WSC website for two reasons. First, to be a part of the Google search process the website must be secure. Secure sites are recognized with the website address starting with **https** – (e.g., <https://www.vvawi.org>). This type of security is “bidirectional and, in practice, provides a reasonable level of assurance the one is communicating without interference by attackers with the the website that one intended to communicate with, as opposed to an impostor.”

Second, to be included in Google’s search algorithm today’s websites must be written in such a manner as to be read on a computer (i.e., desktop or laptop), a tablet (e.g., Kindle, iPad, Galaxy or Surface tablets, etc.) and smartphones regardless of operating system (OS).

In an effort to accomplish these demands while both improving upon our present website, but maintaining ease in accessibility I have elected to work with a template company that produced our present template for our state council website. The template package is called Reactive and only provides a framework for writing and developing a website. Content, formatting, and unique properties are still coded and written. However, the goal is to make this website more interactive so VVA Chapters can have access to enter data in certain areas of the site while not forfeiting content or security. This latter option is being developed by the third party template developer and will not be available immediately.

The goal is a Alpha or Beta Version will be revealed at the March 17, 2018, WSC Meeting.

Treasurer’s Report: Pat Furno presented the VVA WSC Financial Report for the Quarter in the absence of Patrick Craney, VVA WSC Tresurer (excused).

AVVA State Representative Report: Pat Furno, AVVA Wisconsin State Representative, shared that the new AVVA Board is coming together.

AVVA elections are in April 2018. Recognizing the importance of Wisconsin’s statewide election Furno informed everyone to goto AVVA’s website avva.org, specifically the Governing Documents/Policy and Procedure/Section 5 Elections for step-by-step guidance.

VVA WSC Region Director Reports:

Region 1 Director: Frank Mueller, no report at this time.

Region 2 Director: Absent

Region 3 Director, Tom Hoffman, no report at this time.

Region 4 Director, Robert Morzenti reported he is expecting the **NEW** VVA Chapter in Hayward will be formalized and running by next quarter.

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

Committee Reports:

Scholarship Committee: Virginia Nuske, Chairperson, reiterated that the Scholarship deadline is February 18, 2018. All materials for the scholarship are located on the WSC website.

POW/MIA Committee: Duane Canon shared the latest POW/MIA Accounting Agency information. Although there has been no change from the last report for service members in the Vietnam War, a total of 10 service members were identified for the Korean War (i.e., U.S. Army: 8 and U.S. Marine Corps: 2). Additionally, a total of 26 World War II service members have been accounted for since the last reporting (i.e., U.S. Marine Corps: 13, U.S. Navy: 11, and U.S. Arm Air Force: 2).

Due to the extensive nature of the reporting under the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency the VVA WSC has added a tab on the VVA WSC website – select Meetings, then Reports, then POW/MIA.

VVA Chapter Reports:

VVA Chapter 005, James “Mac” McBee, Secretary, reported their 5th Annual Chicken Feed Fundraiser was the most financially successful to-date. Those who participated not only enjoyed good food prepared by the Eagles Club in Lake Hallie, but fine entertainment by [The Highwayman Tribute Artist, Jerry Allan](#).

Our Color Guard was present for the Veterans Day Program held at the North Star Middle School. Concurrently, members participated in Veterans Day activities in the Eau Claire schools, Minnesota Wire, Eau Claire Senior Center, and the Veterans Home in Chippewa Falls.

Several of our members traveled to the State Assembly in Madison on November 16th to participate in hearings on Veterans Affairs, specifically on three bills – [AB520](#), [AB585](#), and [AB436](#).

VVA Chapter 005 has recently made a monetary donation to Wisconsin Adventures on Wheels in Willard, WI. Their mission of providing Veterans, especially those who are mobility challenged, with and outdoor experience for hunting, fishing, camping or just relaxing **at no charge** is not only a worthy, but forever memorable.

The VVA Chapter is looking into ways to provide for better meal satisfaction for the homeless Veterans who are staying at Klein Hall in Chippewa Falls. We should know more at our next meeting as to how we will be able to assist them on an ongoing basis; or AVVA members are looking to make Christmas a little more enjoyable for these men also with special gifts and *goodies*.

On December 8th our VVA Chapter along with DAV 21 is hosting a Christmas Party at the Veterans Home where there will be food and entertainment for all residents to enjoy.

Members continue to be active in the community through speaking engagements at local schools, volunteering at the Veterans Home, The HighGround, and the Eau Claire Veterans Council all to further our VVA Chapter’s presence and to assist other Veterans.

VVA Chapter 101, Gary Schoenborn, State Delegate, reported in the past quarter the VVA Chapter gave a donation to *Quilts of Valor* project at Local Heroes Café in Wisconsin Rapids. Members attended the WSC meeting of Laos Veterans at their meeting place in Wisconsin Rapids.

Veterans Day the VVA Chapter members participated in ceremonies in Wisconsin Rapids and at the Woods County Veterans Legacy Stone Ceremony in Wisconsin Rapids.

Members of the VVA Chapter posted Colors at the Cranberry Classic Basketball Tournament hosted by Assumption High School in Wisconsin Rapids.

The VVA Chapter was inspired by the Annual Food Drive for South Wood County Emergency Pantry.

VVA Chapter 206, Marshal Giese, President, shared that the VVA Chapter has been active in the Veterans Day programs at Shawano Middle School Program, the County Court House Program, and the Bounduel School District where members spoke to the student body about Vietnam.

Our VVA Chapter donated \$500.00 to the Christmas Angel Program which buys Christmas gifts for needy children in the area.

And as the quarter comes to close our VVA Chapter is in the planning stage for our Spring Fling Banquet.

VVA Chapter 236, Bob Maves, State Delegate, presented the VVA Chapter's annual report – the last quarter follows (Note: Quarterly VVA Chapter activities were discussed throughout the year.). September was a filling month beginning with the VVA Chapter's participation in **Chilimania** held in Edgerton; a POW/MIA Ceremony was held by the VVA Chapter as well as a **Support the Troops Rally**, and our members assisted in removing the street flags.

October and November began with Orange Blossoms for Scholarships which totaled \$4,300.00, 18 scholarships to be awarded next year. A separate donation of \$2,000.00 by the Max Perkins family was made to the VVA Chapter for scholarships. The VVA Chapter sent \$500 to VVA WSC for the statewide hurricane relief efforts and donated an additional \$500.00 to Caravilla in Janesville for Homeless Vets. Members participated in the Veterans Day Ceremony at Traxler Park.

In December our VVA Chapter had its Christmas Party and in that same spirit held another **Support the Troops Rally**, and members proudly rang bells for the Salvation Army for two days.

Not unlike our fellow VVA Chapters members of VVA Chapter 236 participated in many other ceremonies and when called upon at numerous funerals throughout the year.

VVA Chapter 437, reported by Duane Canon, President, shared that in October the VVA Chapter donated \$500, through VVA WSC, for the Puerto Rico Hurricane Relief efforts, especially for VVA and AVVA members and their families impacted by the storm.

During this same time our AVVA members and some of our VVA Chapter members served supper, our members prepared, to the homeless at the Day by Day Warming Shelter – our VVA Chapter has committed to this from November to April once a month. Last year there were eight Veterans at the shelter this there are 11 Veterans.

On October 18th President Canon greeted the Veterans that came home on the "Old Glory Honor Flight" in Appleton. This was the 43rd mission for the "Old Glory Honor Flight" and the last one for 2017.

The VVA Chapter had its Annual Orange Blossom Drive on October 20-21 and while we got rained out so donations were down significantly. We will be using the money we raised for our Christmas projects which includes assisting two Veteran families.

At our November VVA Chapter meeting SFC Eric Estel from the 1157th Transportation Company presented our VVA Chapter with a Certificate of Appreciation for our support of the 1157th Transportation Company, specifically for "Our donations, active participation, and selfless service [which] positively impacted the lives of our 1157th family members and soldiers during the 1157th Transportation Company Family Day on June 4, 2017." They further thanked us for our continued support. The certificate was signed by Captain Wiarng, Commander.

President Canon was the guest speaker, November 10th at Carl Traeger Elementary School. Canon spoke about his trip on the "Yellow Ribbon Honor Flight" for Vietnam Veterans. Next, was the Veterans Program at the Oshkosh North High School where Canon was joined by other members of the VVA Chapter. Later that day Canon and VVA Chapter members attended the Veterans Program at Perry Tippler Middle School.

On Veterans Day, some of our VVA and AVVA members participated in the Veterans Day Program at the Winnebago County Courthouse. In the afternoon members attended the Program at Oshkosh West High School. The school presented the Veterans Honor Wall Commemorative Ceremony to honor all the Veterans that went to Oshkosh High/West High School. One of the seven speakers for the program was U.S. Air Force Brigadier General Steven A. Schaick, Chaplain at the Pentagon, Class of '76. One part of the program was a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the family of SP5 Richard Hentz (MIA) Vietnam War. Mrs. Dorothy Hammer, Richard Hentz's mother, did the ribbon cutting as the rest of the family stood by her side. After the program we visited the Veterans Honor Wall and it was impressive – a project started by a teacher, Andrew Schaller, in March of this year and completed before Veterans Day.

In December our VVA Chapter will be working on our Christmas projects.

On December 7th we will be attending the Peral Harbor Ceremony. Mr. Clyde Stephenson will be our guest speaker. Mr. Stephenson served in the U.S. Marine Corps and was on the U.S.S. California when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor.

VVA Chapter 448, reported by Frank Mueller

VVA Chapter 479, reported by John Willman

VVA Chapter 731, Tom Hoffman reported on the last quarter of activities which included the VVA Chapter being Color Guard for more than a dozen funerals.

As a result of the VVA Chapters fundraising activities, including a successful raffle, we were able to donate toward new Little League Baseball Dimands in Manitowoc, as well as supporting Badgers Boys State, the Haven Homeless Shelter, Friends of Red Arrow Memorial Park, and other small donations.

The VVA Chapter will be ringing Bells for the Salvation Army again during the Christmas Season.

Our members have a bus tripped planned to New York in May 2017, which is already full. This will be our VVA Chapter's fifth annual bus trip.

The VVA VETERAN (p. 6) carried a picture and brief statement on VVA Chapter 731's Color Guard services to members in the VVA Chapter who have passed as well as other veterans in the area. The VVA Chapter Color Guard is active in other presentations throughout the year. The VVA Chapter is also proud of their commitement to education through presentations on the Vietnam War and scholarships to high school seniors based on applications and interviews with veterans.

VVA Chapter 767, Tom Banner, Secretary, recounted the activies of the VVA Chapter for the past quarter which included, but was not limited to their assistance in building houses for homeless veterans; working with and benefitting from the J.I. Case High School Patriots Club which was established and is advised by a former Seabee and teacher Mark Pederson. The Patriots Club is active throughout the year, but during Veterans (Day) Week they put on a Chili Feed, march with the VVA Chapter, and assist at the Racine County Veterans Memorial.

One of our VVA Chapter members, Dan Heck, went on the Honor Flight to Washington D.C. Dan guardian for the day was his son.

One thing our VVA Chapter tries to do at our monthly meeting is to have the Racine County CVSO or his assistant come to our VVA Chapter's monthly meetings, especially when new information is available or changes to previously established services and benefits have changed.

VVA Chapter 767 also a part of [RAVI](#) or the Racine Area Veterans Initiative which is a coalition of 11 VSO – American Legion: two Posts, AMVETS, DAV, Korean War Veterans of America, Marine Corp League, Navy Club U.S.A., VFW: three Posts, and VVA Chapter 767) in the Racine County area. RAVI operates the [Veterans Center](#).

Old Business:

Reminder of the availability of the Libby glasses with VVA Logo and the Wisconsin State Council imprint. Information is available on the VVA WSC website at the News tab and then Fundraising Opportunity (<http://vvawi.org/news/fundraising-opportunity.html>).

New Business:

Mike Demske provided the new calendar for VVA WSC, including meeting locations. This calendar is available on the VVA WSC website under the State Council/Calendar tab or by clicking [here](#) if viewing this electronically.

2017 Meeting Dates, Times and Locations

March 17 th	Rooms – Ramada Waupaca, 110 Grand Seasons Dr. Waupaca, WI 54981 Telephone: 715-258-9212
March 18 th	VVA Wisconsin State Council Meeting 9:00 am Committee Meeting 10:00 am VVA WSC Meeting Ramada Waupaca, 110 Grand Seasons Dr. Waupaca, WI 54981 Telephone: 715-258-9212
June 16 th	Rooms – Super 8, Hwy 10, 1000 E Division Stret, Neillsville, WI 54456 Telephone: 715-743-8080
June 17 th	VVA Wisconsin State Council Meeting – Elections 9:00 am Committee Meeting 10:00 am VVA WSC Meeting 12:00 pm Annual Picnic <i>The Highground</i> W7031, Ridge Rd, Neillsville, WI 54456

This meeting is the VVA WSC meeting during which elections are held. Additionally, this is VVA WSC's ANNUAL PICNIC. Please bring a dish to pass and what you wish to drink (The Highground is an alcohol free zone.). The WSC will provide the meat, buns, etc. CONTACT Mike Demske by telephone at 920-684-1624 or Email Mike at Michael.Demske@yahoo.com so he has an accurate count for the meat, buns, etc. Thank you.

- Sept. 22nd Rooms – Ramada Waupaca, 110 Grand Seasons Dr. Waupaca, WI 54981
Telephone: 715-258-9212
- Sept. 23rd VVA Wisconsin State Council Meeting
9:00 am Committee Meeting
10:00 am VVA WSC Meeting
Ramada Waupaca, 110 Grand Seasons Dr. Waupaca, WI 54981
Telephone: 715-258-9212
- Dec. 1st Annual Christmas Social, Dinner and White Elephant Gift Exchange*
Rooms – Ramada Waupaca, 110 Grand Seasons Dr. Waupaca, WI 54981
Telephone: 715-258-9212
- Dec. 2nd VVA Wisconsin State Council Meeting
9:00 am Committee Meeting
10:00 am VVA WSC Meeting
Ramada Waupaca, 110 Grand Seasons Dr. Waupaca, WI 54981
Telephone: 715-258-9212

*Find and bring your best White Elephant Gift wrapped for fun and sharing.
Cost and menu is coming.

Mike Demske shared with the VVA WSC that the Homeless Veterans Assistance Program located on the southwest corner of the grounds (Need directions? Stop in at the Marden Building for complete directions.) needs any donations you can share when you come to the VVA WSC Meetings. Items in most demand include, but are not limited to:

- Cereal (please, no Corn Flakes)
- Fresh fruit
- Cookies (Homeade cookies are always welcome!)
- Books, especially mysteries and westerns
- Coffee
- Shoes

Please **no** clothing items.

The VVA WSC adjourned at 12:17 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

James E. Mullarkey, Secretary