



VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA  
WISCONSIN STATE COUNCIL

State Council Meeting  
March 21, 2015  
Comfort Suites - Foxfire  
Waupaca, Wisconsin 54981

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

**Agent Orange Committee**



Called to order by Richard Lindbeck at 9:00 A.M.

Members present: Richard Lindbeck, John Margowski, Jim Mullarkey, Tom Heitman, Robert Piaro, Pat Craney, Pat Furno, Bob Morzenti, and Joseph Diting.

There was discussion on developing and publishing a booklet on how to establishing and present Agent Orange Town Hall Meetings. Suggestions for revisions will be discussed on a telephone conference call to be arranged by Jim Mullarkey after a DRAFT is developed.

There will be a Town Hall Meeting April 18, 2015, in Appleton at the Fox Valley Technical College. A flier has been provided with all necessary information.

The committee discussed that VVA Chapters who have not attended a Town Hall Meeting should have the opportunity to attend a mini Agent Orange Town Hall. This mini will provide the opportunity to see the content and how a meeting is conducted.

Those interested in holding a Town Hall were advised of the costs for printing the material. Printing is the major cost associated with a Town Hall Meeting. Several individuals who participated in the AO Committee meeting indicated they had contacts to do printing as well as places to hold the meetings.

Minoqua advised that they had the American Legion Hall and could access it for a possible Town Hall in the summer of 2015. Others were interested in having a Town Hall in the future.

VVA Chapters interested in hosting an Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting in their area should put a small planning group together including their CVSO, other Veteran Service Organizations, allied veterans groups or societies in the area. Once an agreement to have a Town Hall Meeting is made, the VVA Chapter or committee/group representative should contact a member of Team Wisconsin: Michael Demske (VVA), Pat Furno (AVVA), Richard Lindbeck (VVA), or John Margowski (VVA Region 6). One of the team will work with you relative to basic organization, establishing the presentation team, and identifying material resources needed (e.g., fliers, folders, printed materials)

Jim Mullarkey will provide the local Chapter or VSO group working with Team Wisconsin with a DVD (i.e., videos produced by VVA and AVVA), CD or thumb drive with all printed materials.

The Committee will do a mini Town Hall Meeting at The HighGround in Neillsville on June 20, 2015, at the June WSC Meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 A.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Richard Lindbeck*

## Wisconsin State Council Meeting

President Lindbeck Called the State Council Meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. on March 21, 2015. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was offered to our POW/MIA's and active duty service members. The Secretary completed the roll call of Officers, Directors and Chapters. The President confirmed a quorum.

The following officers were present: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Director from Region 4. The Chapters represented<sup>1</sup> included: 005(1), 092(1), 101(1), 206(1), 221(1), 224(1), 236(1), 324(1), 331(1), 351(1), 425(1), 437(1), 448(1), 529(1), 729(1), 767(1) and At Large (1). VVA Region 6 Director, John Margowski was also present.

There was no reinstatement of suspended Chapters.

President Lindbeck recognized 3 past Council presidents in attendance: Bob Piaro, John Margowski and Bob Morzenti

Secretary John Scocos, *Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs*, spoke to the group on a variety of topics.

- Veterans' facilities:
  - progressed from possibility of closing some facilities in 2011 to being \$10 million in the black in 2015
  - average age of resident at Veterans' homes is 86; average length of stay is 300 days
  - all facilities compete favorably with private facilities
  - facilities located at King, Chippewa Falls, Union Grove, Fox Valley, Madison and Milwaukee
  - beds being added at all Veterans' homes
  - local services from the federal government is the "trend of the future"
  - King Veterans' Home and has a cemetery, homeless facility and a new wing (named for John Moses) is being added; there are more than 300 Vietnam Veterans at King
  - Chippewa Falls Veteran Home includes a homeless facility and is a "model for the future"
  - Union Grove Veteran Home has a cemetery, homeless center, assisted living and is working on a project with Hispanic Veterans
  - Fox Valley
- Veterans' Trust Fund is no longer in home loan business; will only be providing personal loans in the future; can transfer money from any Veterans account to the trust fund.

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<sup>1</sup> As per letter sent (October 6, 2014) to all VVA WSC Officers, WSC Region Directors, and VVA Chapter Presidents and Officers must have representation at half of the State Council's scheduled meetings. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. The () followed by the VVA Chapter # indicates the number of meetings attended in the calendar year i.e., 2015.

- Educational benefits: Wisconsin GI Bill; bill passed to allow spouse/children to attend school if the Veteran has been a Wisconsin resident at least 5 years and has a 30% or higher disability rating.
- Wisconsin Property Tax Credits
- a one time \$250,000 grant for Veterans services was given to 45 non-profits; \$1M in requests received
- WDVA requested \$286M in current budget—an increase.
- requesting initial free licensing for certain occupations
- requesting equivalent credits across UW system
- Veteran unemployment rate has gone down
- WDVA is trying to educate employers about Veterans available for open positions
- WDVA worked with the Oneida and Stockbridge to use their facilities for medical care for veterans
- Claims: 23,000 were handled in Milwaukee out of the 56,000 total claims
- Q&A
  - Seven (7) counties have Veterans Courts
    - While seven counties have Veterans Courts following is a listing of court programs for Wisconsin Veterans. Complete information, including services and contacts, for Wisconsin's Court programs for veterans is online at:  
<http://wicourts.gov/services/veteran/index.htm>
      - **Brown County:** See Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court
      - **Calumet County:** See Sheboygan Area Veterans Court
      - **Chippewa County:** See Chippewa Valley Veterans Treatment Court
      - **Chippewa Valley Veterans Treatment Court** - Chippewa, Dunn and Eau Claire counties.
      - **Columbia County**
      - **Dane County**
      - **Dodge County**
      - **Door County:** See Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court
      - **Dunn County:** See Chippewa Valley Veterans Treatment Court
      - **Eau Claire County:** See Chippewa Valley Veterans Treatment Court
      - **Fond du Lac County:** See Sheboygan Area Veterans Court
      - **Green County**
      - **Iowa County**
      - **Iron County Veterans Court**
      - **Jefferson County**
      - **Kenosha County:** See Second Judicial District Veterans Treatment Court

- **Kewaunee County:** See Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court
- **La Crosse County Veterans Court Initiative**
- **Manitowoc County:** See Sheboygan Area Veterans Court
- **Marinette County:** See Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court
- **Milwaukee Veterans Program**
- **Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court**
- **Oconto County:** See Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Treatment Court
- **Outagamie County**
- **Ozaukee County:** See Sheboygan Area Veterans Court
- **Pierce County Veterans Court Racine County:** See Second Judicial District Veterans Treatment Court
- **Rock County Veterans Treatment Court Program**
- **Sauk County**
- **Second Judicial District Veterans Treatment Court – Kenosha, Racine, and Walworth counties**
- **Sheboygan Area Veterans Court**
- **Walworth County:** See Second Judicial District Veterans Treatment Court
- **Washington County:** See Sheboygan Area Veterans Court
- **Waupaca County Veterans Assistance Program**
- **Winnebago County:** See Sheboygan Area Veterans Court

Kent Falstad, *WDVA Outreach Supervisor*

- Veterans can call 1-800-WISVETS (947-8387) and talk to a real person about programs, benefits and services during regular office hours
- Talked about awareness of available benefits and the force multiplier (one veteran sharing with another, who shares with another)
- Asked everyone to remind veterans that things change and veterans should check every 3-5 year to see if/how they are affected
- WDVA Claims Bureau advises and assists veterans and their dependents in obtaining benefits from the federal VA
- Wisconsin is not a next of kin state so paperwork is required when a veteran passes away
- Q&A
  - CVSO can be a 1<sup>st</sup> point of contact
  - 2013 – Year of the Vietnam Veteran
  - there will be a capstone event for Vietnam veterans in 2016

President Lindbeck appointed John Margowski as Parliamentarian and Paul Pankoff as Timekeeper.

Margowski moved to accept the Agenda, which was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Piaro, and passed without objection

Margowski moved to accept the December 2014 Minutes, which was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Piaro, and passed without objection

President's Report, Richard Lindbeck

- Jack McManus gave an Agent Orange presentation in February at San Diego
- President Rowan is supporting the Agent Orange Program
- Region 6 meeting is planned for May in Janesville
- National Convention
  - All information can be found at vva.org
  - Complete the delegate release form if no one from your Chapter will be attending the Convention
  - Get 1 bag free per registration; but can order extra bags (@ \$10 each) when registering--none will be available at the convention as in the past
  - Makes copies of all paperwork submitted to National and bring it with you
  - Bring a copy of your DD214 to the convention; bring copies of election and financial reports for your Chapter with you
  - Even if the Chapter is on a 2-year election cycle, you must still submit Election Reports each year and the Annual Financial Report - including a copy of your 990N information to National and Jim Mullarkey, Secretary, either by email, send as PDFs, to [secretary@vvawi.org](mailto:secretary@vvawi.org) or [jmullarkey@mac.com](mailto:jmullarkey@mac.com). If sending by USPS send to:

James Mullarkey, Secretary  
VVA Wisconsin State Council  
8541 W. Red Wing Drive  
Franklin, WI 53132

- The State Council has purchased 2 tables @ \$600 each (seats 10 each) for the banquet on Saturday night; if want to sit at that table, do not sign up for the banquet on the registration form (you'll then reimburse the State Council); let President Lindbeck know by 6/15 if you'd like to sit at the table so he can save you a spot. Send a check for \$50.00 per person, if you requested to be at the table to the VVA WSC Treasurer:

Patrick Craney, Treasurer  
VVA Wisconsin State Council  
P.O. Box 1917  
Waukesha, WI 53187-1917

- Flag Day is scheduled for May 13<sup>th</sup>.

Following the President's Report, Lindbeck responded to and encouraged further discussion on Agent Orange Town Hall Meetings as well as the Toxic Exposure Research Study bills in Congress.

VVA Region 6 Director's Report, John Margowski

- Janesville Conference set for May 15-16
  - please register early
  - Janesville Chapter is holding picnic on Saturday evening (brats, burgers, hot dogs, potato salad, beans, cash bar, soda and water)
- Agenda hasn't been finalized, but proposed items include:
  - proposed resolutions for National Convention
  - new resolutions for National Convention
  - proposed constitutional changes
  - candidates running for national office
- Tentative schedule:
  - Friday – dinner and entertainment
  - Saturday – all day meeting with lunch included
- Complete a separate registration form for each person attending the meeting
- Motion by Mullarkey that the Wisconsin State Council put forth \$500 to assist in expenses of the VVA Region 6 Conference, which was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Litrenta, VVA Chapter 767, and passed without objection.

#### Treasurer's Report, Patrick Craney

- Margowski Motion to designate a maximum of \$400 per delegate (i.e., a total maximum of \$8,000 by the WSC) to attend the National Convention, which was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Joe Heil, VVA Chapter 005. The motion was amended to include AVVA delegates to the AVVA National Convention; amendment to the motion was passed without objection.
- John Brandenburg, VVA Chapter 256 moved to accept the budget as presented, which was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tom Sachs, VVA Chapter 101, and accepted without objection.

#### AVVA Report, Pat Furno AVVA State Representative

- National is subsidizing Convention registration to keep it low (\$25)
- New/changed AVVA By-Laws will be given to the Board of Directors at the April meeting
- Two (2) different forms need to be submitted for registration – one (1) for Convention registration (due 06/20/2015) and one (1) for Delegate registration (due 06/24/2015)
- Pat Furno is running for AVVA National Treasurer
- Funding in budget for Pat Furno to attend Board Meetings and the Convention. Furno will not attend any additional AVVA National meetings if she doesn't become Treasurer.
- Policies and Procedures Manual can currently be changed at any time by the AVVA Board; Furno is proposing a change to require notification of proposed changes
- Copies of the By-Laws, Policies and Procedures Manual and the AVVA Constitution are on the AVVA website ([www.AVVVA.org](http://www.AVVVA.org)).

#### POW/MIA Report

- 1,636 still MIA from Vietnam; 27 MIA from Wisconsin

#### WSC Regional Director Reports

- Region 4: Robert Morzenti

#### Chapter Reports

- #005 – Sending electronic copies of newsletter; membership goal is 100, currently at 75
- #437 – The Chapter’s Annual (Post) Christmas Party was very well attended.  
 In April Chapter elections are coming up both for VVA and AVVA members. The Chapter will be represented at the retirement party of our Winnebago CVSO, Robert Stone at the end of March. The Chapter will be presenting Stone with a *Certificate of Appreciation* for his 38 years of service with seven (7) in Winnebago County.  
 As part of the Oshkosh Patriotic Council, which includes five (5) other VSOs, 1157<sup>th</sup> and 1158<sup>th</sup> Transportation Companies of the National Guard, and our CVSO we are planning a special memorial for five (5) sets of unclaimed cremated remains of veterans – one (1) from World War I. The event will be held on Memorial Day with a complete military funeral procession and interment with full military honors at the Veterans’ Cemetery within the Riverside Cemetery in Oshkosh.
- #351 – Agent Orange town hall on 04/18/2015
- #101 – The Chapter’s *After the Holidays* dinner party had a large turnout with both old and new members.  
 Chapter President Tom Sachs received *Citizen of the Year* from the City of Wisconsin Rapids – “He doesn’t know how to say “No.”  
 New Chapter members were given Vietnam Veteran baseball caps with the Chapter 101 sewn on the back.  
 Members voted to send two (2) members to the VVA Region 6 Conference and VVA National Convention.  
 Upcoming events include, but will not be limited to speaking to history students at Assumption and Lincoln High Schools as part of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Vietnam War, Highway Cleanup in May, eight (8) Brat Fries planned for summer when we will also raffle an Eagle wood carving, Orange Blossom distribution in June, and our Color Guard will be active in ceremonies throughout the summer.
- #425 – In November 2014, the Chapter approved helping four (4) Veterans with monetary issues as well as rent, food, and fuel issues. The Chapter had members attend the VVA Region 6 Conference in Clinton IA, plans on attending the VVA Region 6 Conference in Janesville, WI in preparation for National, and anticipates at least four (4) Chapter members and guests attending VVA National in Springfield.



As this will be my last report as President of Chapter 425, I thank my Chapter officers for their support.

- #256 – Christmas gifts for under privileged children.
- #767 – Continuing with Color Guard (Special Note: Presented at Bucks and Brewers games), Battlefield Cross, and POW/MIA Empty Table ceremonies. Working hard food pantry fundraising and donations.

Preparing for Traveling Wall will be in Racine from 08/27/2015 through 08/31/2015. We could use some additional Color Support. Contact <http://www.racineveterans.org> for more information.

- #206 – The Chapter's Spring Fling, February 28, 2015, had nearly 40 people in attendance with Michael Demske as guest speaker – discussing Agent Orange and its impact on Veterans, their families, children, grandchildren, and further generations.

The Chapter will present the Colors at the Annual American Cancer Walk held at the Shawano High School. Starting Memorial Day and throughout summer the Chapter will be sponsoring Brat Fries – a major fundraising activity.

The Chapter has provided a number of scholarships, has donated to the Wisconsin State Council and is honored to present WSC Agent Orange Team with \$200 to insure their work continues.

- #224 – 35 Veterans' in need received food baskets and gas cards for Christmas. The Scholarship Committee received many applications and are in the process of evaluation. Each recipient will receive \$1,000.00. The Chapter is also in the planning mode for July 11<sup>th</sup> – "Harley Rally and Raffle and Golf Outing." The Color Guard took part in 14 events throughout 2014 and has been invited to present the Colors at the Timber Rattlers game in Appleton on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

The Chapter will be conducting Memorial Services at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Green Bay, followed by marching in the De Pere Parade, and taking part in the United Patriotic Memorial Service all on Memorial Day.

The Chapter has their Annual Bingo scheduled at King Veterans Home in mid-June.

- #529 – Steak feed on 04/25/2015.

#### Scholarship Committee

- Received seven (7) scholarships this year, four (4) direct descendants of a Vietnam Veteran, two (2) a relative of a Vietnam Veteran, and one an interviewer of a Vietnam Veteran. The Scholarship Committee from VVA Chapter 206 included Virginia Nuske (AVVA), Terry Radtke (VVA), and Helen Waalkens (AVVA). The three (3) graduating high school seniors who were selected to receive \$1,500.00 for the 2015-2016 academic year were all grandchildren of a Vietnam Veteran.
  - Marissa Cephress – GPA 4.00  
Grandfather – Vietnam Veteran  
Stratford High School  
UW-Madison
  - Mathew Wald – GPA 3.87  
Grandfather – Vietnam Veteran  
Pardeeville High School  
Carroll Univ. or UWLC

Major: Biology/Pre-Med

Major: Pre-Med/Physical Therapy

- o Jessiqua Busch – GPA 4.0  
Grandfather – Vietnam Veteran  
Carroll University  
Major: Diagnostic Medical Sonography

- Request volunteers to present scholarships please contact Virginia (Ginny) Nuske at 715-524-2487 if you can assist

Old Business

- Jim Mullarkey advised everyone how much he appreciates the electronic and written information he receives from Chapters to include more content in the Minutes and post to WSC website – truly amazing things are always being done by VVA Members in Wisconsin.

- Membership:

<b>VVA</b>	74,705
<b>AVVA</b>	8,474
<b>Region 6</b>	7,905
<b>WI VVA</b>	2,044
<b>WI AVVA</b>	262

New Business

- Camp American Legion Vietnam Veteran Week (06/08/2015-06/14/2015) - can also go for a single day.
- June 21, 2015, State Council Quarterly Meeting is being held at The HighGround. Let Mike know if you are attending and other VVA and AVVA members and guests, so he can purchase enough meat and buns. Please bring a dish to pass.

This meeting will include a min-Agent Orange Town Hall meeting.

- VVA Region 6 Conference scheduled is May 16, 2015, with an evening of entertainment on Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>. Please check the WSC website at [www.vvawi.org](http://www.vvawi.org) as well as emails to WSC delegates and officers.
- Lao Hmong Veterans organization in the Wausau area is building a memorial tribute and is soliciting letter of endorsement for the memorial.
  - o Greg Foye (At Large) moved the Wisconsin State Council write a letter of endorsement for the Lao Hmong Memorial, which was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tom Sachs (Chapter 101) and passed without objection.
  - o VVA WSC Secretary should send letter to:
    - Mr. Mort McBain
    - 4802 Augustine
    - Weston, WI 54476
- Fund Raising – Bob Piaro will look into what is involved in setting up a new 501(c)3 for the Wisconsin State Council

Morzenti moved to adjourn; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tom (101)

A motion for Adjournment was made by Morzenti (Chapter 529), 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tom Sachs (Chapter 101) and accepted without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

*James E. Mullarkey*

James E. Mullarkey  
Secretary

Addendum:

The notes on the WSC Meeting in their entirety would not be possible without the assistance from Ms. Joy Foye. At a time when the Secretary was unable to hold a pen, let alone punch keys on a keyboard, Joy without hesitation took on the role of Secretary during the WSC's March 2015 meeting. For Joy's unwavering commitment and kindness I am truly grateful.

Thank you,

*Jim*