

Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter 324 - PO Box 18631 - Milwaukee, WI 53218

In Service to America



Meeting Notice

19 January, '11

Elks Lodge

5555 W. Good Hope Rd.

Board Meeting 6 p.m.

Chapter Meeting 7 - 8 p.m.

Meetings are held on the third Wednesday each month. You are also invited to join members for conversation and discussion after the meeting.

Chapter web page :

National web page: www.vva.org

Future Meetings

2011

19 January, 16 February, 16 March, 20 April, 18 May,
15 June, 20 July, 17 August, 21 September,
19 October, 16 November, 21 December

Chapter 324 Officers

President -

Vice President - Pat Moore 354-2533

Secretary - Dennis Symanski 453-3600

Treasurer - Kent Draper 963-0375

Director - Pat Ciofani 332-7734

Director - Ron Coppersmith 262-255-2832

Director - John Morgan 871-9274

Jason Moon CD Release Party

featuring Little Mischief, Mambo Surfers, more
7:30, Feb. 5, Linneman's, 1101E. Locust, \$5.00

Fundraiser for Homeless Veterans Initiative

Welcome to New Members:

Michael Lang
Dennis Anderson
Joseph Murray
Michael Sahrner

New Life Members:

Robert Bartlett
Oliver Williams

Police: Arizona man shot, wounded in Army-Navy argument

by Nathan Gonzalez - The Arizona Republic Dec. 27, 2010

A Christmas Day argument between two servicemen over which branch of the military was better - the U.S. Army or Navy - escalated from a fight into a shooting.

Pinal County Sheriff's deputies were called about 8 p.m. to a home on the 6700 block of Stacy Street in Florence where they found Navy seaman David Provost, 24, sitting outside with a gunshot wound to his left foot, said Tim Gaffney, a sheriff's spokesman.

Investigators learned Provost was invited to celebrate the holiday with the family of his former roommate, Dustin Jakes, 27, an Army soldier.

The men were on leave and began arguing over which branch of the service was better, Gaffney said. "The confrontation escalated into a physical fight,"

Gaffney said. "Dustin recently had surgery on his shoulder, his arm was in a sling and he could not defend himself from the physical attack."

Jakes told investigators he feared for his safety and pointed a handgun at Provost, who reportedly told Jakes, "What are you going to do? Shoot me? I don't care, shoot me," Gaffney said.

Provost advanced on Jakes, who then fired two rounds toward the floor from a handgun. One round struck Provost in the foot. He was transported to a local hospital and treated for his wound.

The Sheriff's Criminal Investigations Bureau and County Attorney's Office will review the case for possible charges. However, Gaffney added that "at this time, it appears that Dustin fired the handgun at David in self defense."

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
Milwaukee Chapter 324
November 17, 2010

Meeting called to order at 7:00 by acting president Pat Moore.

A moment of silence was observed for our brothers and sisters no longer with us and for all POW/MIA's and their families.

Pledge of Allegiance

Prayer

Self-Introductions – Dennis Szymanski, John Morgan, Ron Coppersmith, Ronald G. Seidner, Paul Javins, Joseph Murray, John Zutz, Bob Rugg, Michael Fahrner, Oliver L. Williams, Joe Herbert, Mike Lang, Kent Draper, Pat Moore.

Minutes of October 20, 2010 meeting reviewed and approved.

Treasurer's Report submitted by Treasurer Kent Draper.

Communications

COMMITTEE REPORTS

VVA Membership Update – Joe Herbert

Stand-Down Update – Next Stand-Down will be the 3rd Saturday in February.

Volunteering at the VA – Moved and passed to give Hank Kulesza and Bob Laske \$50 each in appreciation and to help pay for expenses in their continuing volunteer service at the VA.

Education Outreach – Several members reported on their experiences speaking at local schools. We need to find a way to let schools know that we have members willing to talk to their classes about our experiences.

Website – In progress – We will start a face book page to get our information on-line.

OLD BUSINESS

Tuesday Bingo - We continue to look for volunteers to help in the kitchen on the 1, 3, 4 & 5th Tuesdays at the Elks Club.

Veterans Day Parade – We had 11 participants – Thanks to all who were there on a beautiful November Day.

Americanism Breakfast – Bob Rugg and Kearney Bennet were recognized for their efforts.

Chapter Christmas Party – December 15th 6 – 10 at the Elks Club – Moved and passed to spend up to \$300.

Packer Party at the Doms – Greatly appreciated by the residents.

By-Laws – Bob Rugg and John Zutz are finalizing the first draft and will present it to the officers and board soon.

NEW BUSINESS

Candy Cane Lane – Friday, December 17th from 6 – 9 – Come out and join your fellow Vietnam Vets as we collect donations and spread some Holiday cheer for the MAC Fund.

Christmas With the Vets – December 18th – Moved and passed to donate \$100.

Packer Party 2 – December 19th – We will host a second Sunday evening pizza party at the doms for the Sunday Night Packer game. Arrive at 6:30 at building 123 if you can help.

Vets Center – Moved and passed to donate 6 \$25 gift certificates to be distributed by the Vets Center to needy vets.

Flapjack Fund Raiser at Applebee's – John Morgan is looking into a fund-raising opportunity at Applebee's and will report back on it after the NABVETS have theirs.

For the Good of the Chapter – Bob Rugg gave a presentation on winter safety as part of our on going participation in the VA blood pressure survey. We are looking for someone to take Bob's place as representative of this program.

Adjournment – 8:00



Award Breakfast



**Your photo could be here -
join Chapter 324 activities.**

Christmas Party



As Iraq winds down, U.S. Army confronts a broken force

Nancy A. Youssef | McClatchy Newspapers September 17, 2010

http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2010/09/17/100771/as-iraq-winds-down-us-army-tries.html#storylink=omni_popular

WASHINGTON — When Lt. Col. Dave Wilson took command of a battalion of the 4th Brigade of the 1st Armored Division, the unit had just returned to Texas from 14 months traveling some of Iraq’s most dangerous roads as part of a logistics mission.

What he found, he said, was a unit far more damaged than the single death it had suffered in its two deployments to Iraq. Nearly 70 soldiers in his 1,163-member battalion had tested positive for drugs: methamphetamine, cocaine and marijuana. Others were abusing prescription drugs. Troops were pass-

ing around a tape of a female lieutenant having sex with five soldiers from the unit. Seven soldiers in the brigade died from drug overdoses and traffic accidents when they returned to Fort Bliss, near El Paso, after their first deployment.

“The inmates were running the prison,” Wilson said. What Wilson had to deal with, however, was hardly an isolated instance.

With the U.S. drawdown in Iraq, the Army is finally confronting an epidemic of drug abuse and
See Broken - next page

Broken - from previous page

criminal behavior that many commanders acknowledge has been made worse because they'd largely ignored it during nearly a decade of wars on two fronts.

The Army concedes that it faces a mammoth problem. A 350-page report issued in July after a 15-month investigation into the Army's rising suicide rate found that levels of illegal drug use and criminal activity have reached record highs, while the number of disciplinary actions and forced discharges were at record lows.

The result, the Army found, is that "drug and alcohol abuse is a significant health problem in the Army." Where the Army once rigidly enforced rules on drug use, it got sloppy in the rush to get soldiers ready for the battlefield, commanders say. Officers who once trained soldiers on everything from drug abuse to financial planning had only enough time to get their troops ready for battle.

The number of misdemeanors that soldiers committed — including traffic infractions, drunk driving and being absent without leave — rose to 50,523 in fiscal year 2009 — a sign, the report said, that "good order and discipline" were declining in the ranks. Five years earlier, the number was 28,388.

No disciplinary action was taken in at least 15,074 of the 2009 cases, the report said.

From 2001 to 2009, only 70 percent of DUIs and 61 percent of positive drug tests were referred to the Army's substance abuse program, and drug testing became haphazard, as well: In 2009, 78,517 soldiers went untested for illegal drug use. Statistically, the Army estimated, that meant that 1,311 offenders probably escaped detection.

Sexual assault more than tripled in the same period, from 302 cases in 2001 to 1,015 in 2009. The increase in drug abuse and bad behavior came at the same time that the Army enlisted thousands of recruits who in previous years would have been ruled ineligible because of drug or other criminal convictions. According to the report, nearly 20 percent of the soldiers who've enlisted in the Army since 2004 — perhaps as many as 10,000 — would "not have been eligible for entry into the Army before."

"I think we've got to understand that the force we have today is different from the force we had 10 years ago," said Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, the vice chief of staff of the Army, who oversaw the study and is heading up the Army's response to it. "We've got kids that are going to have some behavioral health issues.

The real hard part for us is to determine, 'OK, I am willing to help this kid with behavioral health issues, but how long can I help him? How long can I do that and make sure I have a force capable of doing whatever the nation asks it to do?'"

Chiarelli said that simply discharging soldiers with drug and behavioral problems wasn't an option. "We can't use these people up, have them develop a problem and then throw them away and not take care of them. There is no way. I can't be part of an organization like that," he said. "Part of the reason they're having the problem is the situation we put them into."

Wilson said he found a failure of leadership to be a major factor in the deterioration of his unit. When the brigade returned from Iraq in December 2007, many commanders were moved to other units, and new soldiers were rushed through the system to get them to the battlefield quickly, without the proper guidance.

As a result, 37 of the 69 drug abusers in Wilson's battalion belonged to one company of 200, he said. When he was a company commander a decade ago, having five soldiers test positive would have been considered a lot, he added.

"We found that we had leaders that were dealing with combat stress issues as well. So when you have sick leaders, that leader can't care for the soldiers properly," said Wilson, who commanded 1,163 of the brigade's 3,800 soldiers. "The drug problem was just a symptom of the disease."

Wilson said he turned his unit around by keeping leaders in place, disciplining soldiers and making time during combat training for things such as leadership and the perils of drug abuse. He had them read the motivational books "Who Moved My Cheese?" and former Notre Dame coach Lou Holtz's "Winning Every Day." Positive drug tests later fell to five a year.

The brigade also kicked 200 soldiers out of the Army. "There were times I walked out of my headquarters at 2 and 3 in the morning and went back in an hour and a half later for PT," or physical training, Wilson said. "There are times the Army requires us to give up a little more juice than normal."

Chiarelli said he was hopeful that the draw-down of American troops in Iraq would give the Army more time to address the issue.

"As our soldiers start to spend more time at home, we can start to dust off some of the things we used to do ... and start tracking these kids, make sure we are taking care of them," he said.

Scam Alert - Seminars target vets with unwise investments

Taking Aim at Old Soldiers

by: Sid Kirchheimer AARP Bulletin October, 2010

At community centers, nursing homes and assisted living facilities, their spiel to older veterans goes something like this: We can get you instant eligibility for additional benefits through a quick overhaul of your investments. These self-described "veterans advocates" are in fact unscrupulous investment advisers.

"They say that if you purchase financial products through us, we'll make you eligible" for Department of Veterans Affairs pensions and other benefits, says Joe Foster, administrator of Montana's Veteran Affairs Division, which recently helped form a task force to combat this growing scam against vets.

The usual pitch involves getting a veteran to transfer retirement assets into an irrevocable trust so that the family appears to be impoverished. This helps it meet eligibility requirements for a VA pension and related programs such as Aid and Attendance, which pays an additional benefit to veterans who need assistance with everyday living.

As the salesmen explain it, the VA doesn't "look back" to examine veterans' asset histories in determining eligibility for a pension.

Although it's true that the VA doesn't examine why you may be a millionaire one day and appear poverty-stricken the next, "Medicaid does look back," Foster says. "And when they see you've transferred your assets in this manner, it could jeopardize your eligibility for those benefits."

The bigger concern is that the new trust usually contains annuities, long-term investments that are often considered inappropriate for older retirees. Some annuities must be held for a decade or longer before they pay out a monthly income.

Nevertheless, they are recommended by unscrupulous salesmen because they generate high sales commissions. A \$500,000 annuity, for instance, could yield the agent \$75,000 for just a few hours of work, says Neil Granger, a California consultant on investment scams and financial abuse of older people.

Other investments pitched by these salesmen at "free lunch" seminars are completely bogus. They just take the money and run.

If you're a vet, here's what else you should know:

- Don't be fooled by official-sounding names. Some sales agents operate as, or work with, "front" organizations, falsely claiming they have a veteran affiliation and nonprofit status.

- Don't depend on nursing homes, community centers and assisted living facilities to protect you. They may be unaware of the shady nature of the seminars. Often they are paid a fee to let volunteers give presentations.

- Get credible information on how to qualify for veterans benefits by contacting your state veterans affairs agency at nasdva.net.

- Before investing, check the agent's record at your state regulatory office. For a list, visit nasaa.org/QuickLinks/ContactYourRegulator.cfm.



Sign Up Now With Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 324

Anyone can join! Membership Options:

Vietnam Veterans (A copy of your DD214 must be included):

- Individual Member - 1 year \$20 • Individual Member 3 year \$50 • Life Member \$250
- Life Member Installment Plan (\$50 Deposit; \$25 per month for 8 Months)

Anyone Else:

- Associate Member - 1 year \$20 • Associate Member 3 year \$50 • Associate Life Member \$250
- Associate Life Member Installment Plan (\$50 Deposit; \$25 per month for 8 Months)

Please Print

Name _____ Membership # _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ E-mail _____

I would like to help Chapter 324 by donating \$ _____

Make checks payable to VVA324 and mail with this application to:
VVA Chapter 324 - Membership, PO Box 18631, Milwaukee, WI 53218

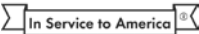


Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter 324

PO Box 18631

Milwaukee, WI 53218



Time Valued Material
Correction Service Requested
Forwarding Postage Guaranteed