

Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter 324 - PO Box 18631 - Milwaukee, WI 53218

In Service to America

Chapter Elections will be held at the April Meeting. Consider a holding an office.

Meeting Notice

19 February, '14

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

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

Chapter 324 Officers

President - Pat Moore 354-2533

Vice Pres. - Pat Ciofani 702-7734

Secretary - Dennis Symanski 453-3600

Treasurer - Kent Draper 963-0375

Director -

Director - Ron Coppersmith 262-255-2832

Director - John Morgan 871-9274

Director - Joe Murray 262-389-7325

Director - Oliver Williams 538-4416

Chapter 324... A 2013 Review

By Joe Herbert

Last year, chapter members came together to plan actions to carry them out. Summary follows.

Chapter meetings were held monthly. Pat Moore took helm with the departure of Paul Javins. Pat Ciofani jumped in to handle the vice-president position. At the same time he continued his responsibility of being our delegate to State Council meetings.

Initiative. Later in the year we listened to a presentation on the Milwaukee Veterans Court, given by Dennis Paulak. In an effort to draw other members to a more convenient meeting site, the War Memorial Center was chosen for two monthly meetings in summer.

A number of events drew our participation. We were in the Milwaukee Memorial Day parade, the July 4 Wauwatosa parade and the Veterans Day parade. We were fully engaged in the grand opening of the new Vets Center location. Along with Chapter 448, we prepared and served the luncheon. Coverage of this event appeared in the VVA Veteran magazine.

We were able to complete significant

fundraising before three Brewers games by offering orange blossoms and accepting donations. \$3,000 was collected. This income allowed for our broad distribution of donations. These ranged from \$50 to \$350. Ten of the recipients were repeated from last year. New additions included the following:

1.A donation to help cover the travel expenses of Vera Roddy to D.C. as she gave a Congressional committee a report on art as therapy for vets.

2.A donation to help veterans pay for monitoring bracelets that would allow the opportunity for them to reside at home while being processed through the Veterans Court.

3.A donation to help pay for the luncheon in conjunction with the opening of the new Vet Center location.

In 2013, Chapter 324 continued to perform its best as a veterans service organization. We worked for the benefit of others. In the process we exhibited stalwartness and grow in many ways. We gained several new members, including Michael Ducette, Dale Darrow, and David Ryba.

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
Milwaukee Chapter 324
January 15, 2014

Meeting called to order at 7:15 by 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 and for the men and women serving our country.

Pledge of Allegiance

Prayer

Member Self-Introductions – Dennis Szymanski, John Zutz, Pat Ciofani, Bob O'Neil, John Morgan, Joe Herbert, Pat Moore

Minutes of the November 20, 2013 meeting reviewed and accepted

Treasurer's Report - \$5221.18 balance in our checking account

Communications – Thank you from the Vets Center for the food certificates

COMMITTEE REPORTS

VVA Membership Update – **Joe Herbert** – Currently 98 vets and 23 associates

Volunteering at the VA – Always looking for volunteers

Fund Raising – We have 3 dates this summer at Miller Park

OLD BUSINESS

Christmas Party – 27 attended at a cost of \$276.39 to the chapter

Candy Cane Lane – We only had 1 member attend, hopefully we can do better in 2014

NEW BUSINESS

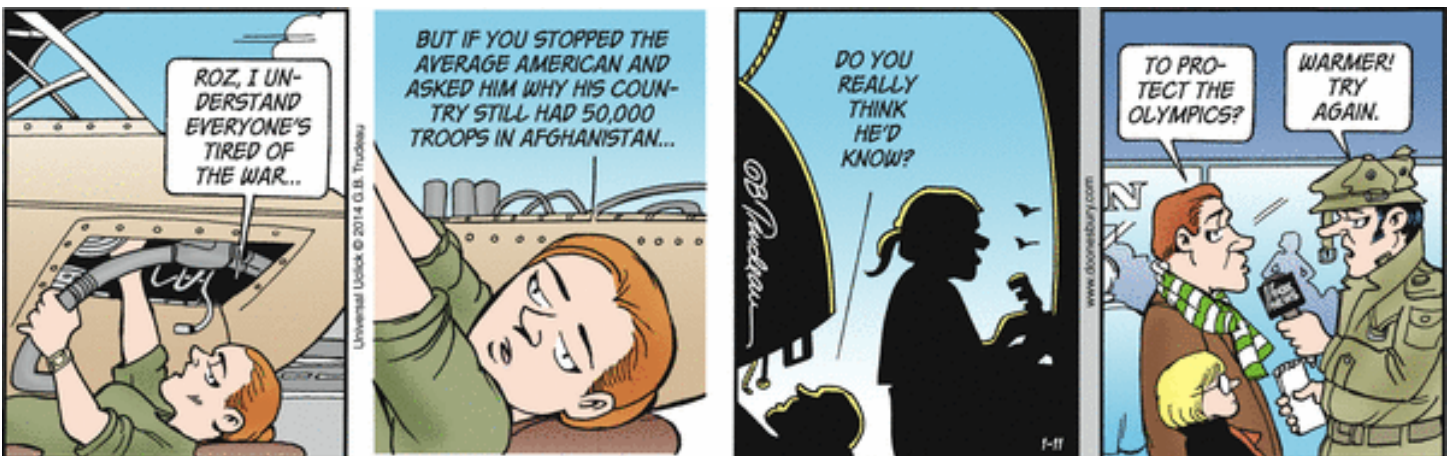
Elections – We will have elections for President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary in April. Please consider stepping forward and running for one of these offices.

Stand Down – Moved and passed to donate \$300 to the February Stand Down

For the Good of the Chapter – Discussed having a social event with some of the other veteran organizations that meet at the Elks Club – Possibly a bowling event

ADJOURNMENT – 7:40

All members are requested to attend the April meeting.
Officers will be elected. Now is the time to consider running for office.



Marines who suffered brain injuries doubled risk of PTSD, study finds

By Alan Zarembo December 12, LA Times
<http://www.latimes.com/science/sciencenow/la-sci-sn-ptsd-tbi-brain-injury-combat-marines-20131212,0,917125.story>

Up to a fifth of U.S. service members who served in Iraq and Afghanistan have come home with a blast-related concussion or post-traumatic stress disorder — or both.

A study published Wednesday in the journal *JAMA Psychiatry* helps detail the relationship between the two conditions. Marines who suffered mild traumatic brain injuries while deployed were roughly twice as likely to get PTSD, researchers found.

One likely explanation is that the bomb blasts, the most common cause of brain injuries during the wars, are psychologically traumatizing as well.

In addition, structural changes in the brain after a head injury may increase the likelihood of developing PTSD and decrease the chances of recovery, said Dr. Dewleen Baker, a co-author of the study and research director at the Veterans Affairs Center of Excellence for Stress and Mental Health in

San Diego.

The study followed 1,648 Marines from four battalions in Southern California as they deployed to war and returned between 2008 and 2012.

Each Marine was assessed for PTSD and other mental health issues a month before deployment, then again three to six months after returning. A total of 327 Marines — about 20% — reported having suffered at least one traumatic brain injury during their deployment.

Not surprisingly, Marines who were already suffering from PTSD when they went to Iraq or Afghanistan, and then saw intense combat, had the highest risk of testing positive for PTSD once they came home. Adding a brain injury raised the risk from 23% to 34%.

At the other extreme — Marines who were deployed without any pre-existing mental health problems and experienced minimal combat — the risk of developing PTSD was minimal, with or without a brain injury. Most of the Marines fell somewhere in the middle.

Phoenix Becomes First To End Chronic Homelessness Among Vets

BY SCOTT KEYES DECEMBER 23, 2013

<http://thinkprogress.org/economy/2013/12/23/3099911/phoenix-homeless/#>

The Obama administration has set a goal of ending homelessness among veterans by 2015, but one city reached that mark a year early. Phoenix announced last week that it has eradicated chronic veteran homelessness — making it the first city in the country to do so — after it housed an additional 56 veterans on Wednesday.

Chronic homelessness is defined as an individual who has experienced homelessness for at least a year or has gone through four episodes of homelessness in the past three years and has a disability. Ending chronic homelessness is particularly important because, even among the homeless population in general, they have the highest rates of health and substance abuse problems, which also puts the most strain on emergency services to treat them.

Three years ago, city officials identified 222 homeless veterans living in Phoenix. Using both state and federal funds, the city had successfully housed the last veterans who were living without homes. They did so through an innovative idea known as “Housing First” — providing somewhere to live for homeless

individuals without first requiring that they be sober or drug-free. The thinking goes that homeless individuals with drug or alcohol problems will be far more capable to address these issues if they first have a stable place to live. Housing First works best when it’s coupled, as it was in Phoenix, with supportive services like job training and health care.

In 2009, President Obama and Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki announced an initiative to combat veteran homelessness with the goal of housing every veteran in the country by 2015. The most recent nationwide homeless count found 57,849 homeless veterans in the United States, fully 12 percent of the total adult homeless population. Though that number is still unbearably high, it represents a 24 percent decline over the past four years.

Still, the pace will need to pick up substantially in the next 24 months if the Obama administration is to meet its goal of ending veterans’ homelessness by 2015. Shinseki, however, remains optimistic, saying in November that “We are on the right track in the fight to end homelessness among veterans.”

Skin Cancer and Agent Orange

<http://vets4vets.zymichost.com/Bulletin%20140201.pdf>

Vietnam War veterans who were exposed to the herbicide Agent Orange may be at higher risk for certain types of skin cancer in old age, U.S. researchers say. Lead author Dr. Mark W. Clemens of The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center and colleagues said the study adds to previous evidence risk of non-melanotic invasive skin cancer could increase even four decades after Agent Orange exposure, with at least some exposed veterans having unusually aggressive non-melanoma skin cancers. Agent Orange has been linked to a wide range of cancers and other diseases, caused by the toxic dioxin contaminant TCDD. "TCDD is among the most carcinogenic compounds ever to undergo widespread use in the environment," Clemens said in a statement.

Veterans Affairs recognizes and provides benefits for certain cancers and health problems associated with prior dioxin exposure during military service, but skin cancer is currently not one of them, Clemens said.

The study, found the rate of non-melanotic invasive skin cancer in TCDD-exposed veterans was 51 percent -- about twice as high as the rate expected in men of similar age group. The risk of skin cancer increased to 73 percent for veterans who actively sprayed Agent Orange. In addition, 43 percent of the veterans had chloracne, a skin condition specifically caused by exposure to dioxins and for this group the rate of non-melanotic invasive skin cancer was more than 80 percent.

Do We Really Honor Our Veterans?

By Marc Dion

<http://www.creators.com/liberal/marc-dion/do-we-really-honor-our-veterans.html>

I was standing around at the dedication of a new veterans' memorial the other day, in city hall and not too far from the "wall" the city hall installed a couple years ago — the wall being a bulletin board where you can post pictures of your boy or girl overseas.

And I thought of the other memorials whose fundraising efforts or dedications I've written about in the last couple of years.

As a reporter, I've noticed that the worse things get in this country, the more memorials we dedicate, the more droolingly effusive we are in our thanks to the veterans, the more "If You Can Read This In English, Thank A Soldier" bumper stickers I see. The last bridge built in my town, opened recently, is called "Veterans Memorial Bridge."

There's no work and a lot of what work there is pays money that wouldn't support a duck, but we can always pour concrete for another memorial. If you see a vet, shake his hand. Just don't ask him where he's working. If your waitress tells you she just got out of the Navy, give her a bigger tip, but don't ask her how many hours a week she's getting.

Are these the two last things we can do as a nation: send you overseas to kill people and then shake your hand when you get home?

Can we only do that and then stop there? Do we stop short of good, union jobs with pensions for our vets, full-time jobs a man or woman can count on?

A little house? A weekly paycheck?

Freedom, as we endlessly yap, isn't free.

But neither is food or clothes or medicine for the baby.

But, hey, the people who start the wars are working steady. The senators get their pensions. The CEO gets his health care. You get a quick trip through some dirty little war in the Third World, and then you come home to a handshake and a part-time, \$9-an-hour job.

One of the most beautiful things about my country, America, is the men and women soldiers, most often working class, lower-middle class or poor, who have, for more than a decade, joined and kept joining and left little pieces of themselves in Iraq and Afghanistan in purposeless fights that never end. All we have asked, they have done, deployed two, three or four times.

Their actions are a sad poem of honor and determination and a lesson in how service to the nation, laughed at by the rich and sold by the elected, still keeps true those who have the least to gain in the fight.

We at home build the America in which our soldiers will live.

A nation full of memorials is a cemetery. A nation of jobs and security and pensions is a place not just to fight for but a place to live when you come home.

For your amusement

C-130 Baghdad

Author Unknown – Retired USAF

There I was at six thousand feet over central Iraq, two hundred eighty knots and we're dropping faster than Paris Hilton's panties. It's a typical September evening in the Persian Gulf; hotter than a rectal thermometer and I'm sweating like a priest at a Cub Scout meeting. But that's neither here nor there.

The night is moonless over Baghdad, and blacker than a Steven King novel. But it's 2006, folks, and I'm sporting the latest in night-combat technology - namely, hand-me-down night vision goggles (NVGs) thrown out by the fighter boys.

Additionally, my 1962 Lockheed C-130E Hercules is equipped with an obsolete, yet semi-effective missile warning system (MWS). The MWS conveniently makes a nice soothing tone in your headset just before the missile explodes into your airplane. Who says you can't polish a turd?

At any rate, the NVGs are illuminating Baghdad International Airport like the Las Vegas Strip during a Mike Tyson fight. These NVGs are the cat's ass. But I've digressed.

The preferred method of approach tonight is the random shallow. This tactical maneuver allows the pilot to ingress the landing zone in an unpredictable manner, thus exploiting the supposedly secured perimeter of the airfield in an attempt to avoid enemy surface-to-air-missiles and small arms fire.

I wouldn't bet my pink ass on that, but the approach is fun as hell and that's the real reason we fly it.

We get a visual on the runway at three miles out, drop down to one thousand feet above the ground, still maintaining two hundred eighty knots. Now the fun starts. It's pilot appreciation time as I descend the mighty Herc to six hundred feet and smoothly, yet very deliberately, yank into a sixty degree left bank, turning the aircraft ninety degrees offset from runway heading.

As soon as we roll out of the turn, I reverse turn to the right a full two hundred seventy degrees in order to roll out aligned with the runway.

Some aeronautical genius coined this maneuver the "Ninety/Two-Seventy."

Chopping the power, I pull back on the yoke just to the point my nether regions start to sag, bleeding off energy in order to configure the pig for landing. "Flaps Fifty! Landing Gear Down! Before Landing Checklist!"

I look over at the copilot and he's shaking like a cat shitting on a sheet of ice. Looking further back at the navigator, and even through the Nags, I can clearly see the wet spot spreading around his crotch. Finally, I glance at my steely-eyed flight engineer. His eyebrows rise in unison as a grin forms on his face. I can tell he's thinking the same thing I am.... "Where do we find such fine young men?"

"Flaps One Hundred!" I bark at the shaking cat. Now it's all aim-point and airspeed. Aviation 101, except there are no lights, I'm on NVGs, it's Baghdad, and now tracers are starting to crisscross the black sky.

Naturally, and not at all surprisingly, I grease the Goodyear's on brick-one of runway 33 left, bring the throttles to ground idle and then force the props to full reverse pitch. Tonight, the sound of freedom is my four Hamilton Standard propellers chewing through the thick, putrid, Baghdad air. The huge, one hundred thirty-thousand pound, lumbering whisper pig comes to a lurching stop in less than two thousand feet. Let's see a Viper do that!

We exit the runway to a welcoming committee of government issued Army grunts. It's time to download their beans and bullets and letters from their sweethearts. It's time to look for war booty, and of course, urinate on Saddam's home.

Walking down the crew entry steps with my lowest-bidder Beretta 92F 9 millimeter strapped smartly to my side, I look around and thank God, not Allah, I'm an American and I'm on the winning team. Then I thank God I'm not in the Army.

Knowing once again I've cheated death, I ask myself, "What in the hell am I doing in this mess?" Is it Duty, Honor, and Country? You bet your ass.

Or could it possibly be for the glory, the swag, and not to mention, chicks who dig the Air Medal? There's probably some truth there, too. But now is not the time to derive the complexities of the superior, cerebral properties of the human portion of the aviator-man-machine model. It is however, time to get out of this hole. Hey Copilot, how's 'bout the 'Before Starting Engines Checklist.' God, I love this job!!!!

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



In Service to America

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