

Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter 324 - PO Box 18631 - Milwaukee, WI 53218

In Service to America



Meeting Notice

20 March, '13

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

2013

17 April, 15 May, 19 June, 17 July, 21 August,
18 September, 16 October, 20 November, 18 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 - Michael Lang 355-1496

Director - John Morgan 871-9274

Director - Oliver Williams 538-4416

Help us stock an emergency food pantry for veterans

We are opening an emergency food pantry to help homeless and at-risk veterans who need immediate, short-term help – vets who need enough food to get through a day or two until they get their next check or can get help from a pantry during normal operating hours.

Can you help? Canned goods, peanut butter and jelly, soups, cereal, breakfast bars, snacks, cookies, crackers, instant coffee – things that can be used by someone who may not have access to a kitchen or microwave.

Drop off at:

Milwaukee Labor Council at 633 S. Hawley Rd.,

Dryhooch on Brady St. and on National Ave.,

Wisconsin Federation of Nurses 9629 W. Greenfield.

For pick up call 414-763-5596.

MILWAUKEE



**HOMELESS
VETERANS
INITIATIVE**

Bring your donations to the March meeting

ATTENTION!

Chapter elections will be held at the April meeting

May and June meetings of Chapter 324 will be held at the War Memorial

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
Milwaukee Chapter 324
February 20, 2013

The meeting called to order by President Paul Javins.

A Moment of Silence was observed for all our Brothers and Sisters no longer with us, and for all POW's / MIA's and their families.

Members Present were; Pat Ciofani, John Zutz, Milan Mursec, Joe Herbert, Paul Balge, Oliver Williams, John Morgan, Tracey Sperko, Bill Christoffson, Patrick G. Moore, Paul Javins, Kent Draper, and Ron Coppersmith.

Treasurer's Report was passed out to members for their review. The Brewer Games fundraisers prove to be our biggest source of income. The more people we can have to participate, the bigger the amount the Chapter can donate. If you are a member of this Chapter or a friend of someone who is, **GET OFF YOUR BUTTS AND GET INVOLVED.** Do not be a Wannabe.

Old Business

50th anniversary of Vietnam War. Preparations are now being made to remember. Pat Ciofani will attend the State Council meeting in March. He will ask how the State VVA will participate in it, and how the Chapter can get involved.

New Business:

The Chapter is discussing having some future meetings at the War Memorial. This would be tried once every 3 months. This is in hope that it would be more convenient for members in the surrounding area would attend meetings. This is going to be done on a trial basis.

The Chapter also has a received an invitation to participate in the July 4th Parade in Wauwatosa. The Chapter has agreed to take part. More info will be available as the date gets closer.

Good of the Chapter Homeless Veterans Initiative organizers, Tracey Sperko, and Bill Christofferson, introduced themselves

and their newly formed charitable organization to help Veterans.

President Paul Javins has submitted his resignation as of this meeting date.

He wants to pursue other endeavors. We wish him well in the future, and thank him for his service to the Chapter and the Veteran community. Pat Moore will take over the position in the interim.

Motion made to adjourn



Draft Women?

By Richard Lardner 25 Feb 2013 Stars & Stripes

The Obama administration's recent decision to lift the ban on women in combat has opened the door for a change in the law that currently compels only men between age 18 and 25 to register for a draft, according to legal experts and military historians.

Never before has the country drafted women into military service, and neither the administration nor Congress is in a hurry to make them register for a future call-up. But, legally, they may have no choice.

It is constitutional to register only men for a draft, the Supreme Court ruled more than three decades ago, because the reason for registration is to create a pool of potential combat troops should a national emergency demand a rapid increase in the size of the military.

Women were excluded from serving in battlefield jobs, so there was no reason to register them for possible conscription into the armed forces, the court held. Now that front-line infantry, armor, artillery and special operations jobs are open to female volunteers who can meet the physical requirements, it will be difficult for anyone to make an argument that women should continue to be exempt from registration, said Diane Mazur, a law professor at the University of Florida and a former Air Force officer.

"They're going to have to show that excluding women from the draft actually improves military readiness," Mazur said. "I just don't see how you can make that argument."

Groups that backed the end of the ban on women in combat also support including women in draft registration as a matter of basic citizenship. Women should have the same civic obligations as men, said Greg Jacob, a former Marine Corps officer and policy director for the Service Women's Action Network. "We see registration as another step forward in terms of equality and fairness," Jacob said.

The chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Sen. Carl Levin (D-MI) supports draft registration for women, according to his spokeswoman. Rep. Howard "Buck" McKeon (R-CA), who heads the House Armed Services Committee, hasn't made up his mind. McKeon said through a spokesman that he's awaiting a Defense Department report due in the coming weeks that will assess the legal impact of lifting the ban women in combat on draft registration.

But if you're worried a draft notice is going to

soon be in your mailbox, take a deep breath. There is no looming national crisis that makes a military draft likely. A draft would be enormously unpopular; a new poll by Quinnipiac University found that American voters firmly oppose a return to conscription. Also, adding women to the mix just doesn't appear to be a high priority for a battle-weary nation nearing the end of more than a decade of war.

The U.S. military has been an all-volunteer force for the past 40 years and women have become an integral part of it. Nearly 15 percent of the 1.4 million troops on active duty are female. More than 280,000 women have served in Iraq, Afghanistan or other countries in support of the wars. There have been 152 women killed in the fighting. Americans overwhelmingly support allowing female volunteers to serve in ground combat roles by a 75-25 margin, according to the Quinnipiac poll.

But the survey of 1,772 registered voters found them conflicted over mandated military service for women. On the question of re-establishing a military draft, male and female voters said they were opposed, 65-28, according to the poll. If a draft were called, however, men backed the conscription of women as well as men, by 59-36, the poll said. But 48 percent of the women surveyed said they did not want women to be drafted while 45 percent said they should be.

Maj. Mary Jennings Hegar, a California Air National Guard pilot who served three tours in Afghanistan, said excluding women from a draft reinforces a stereotype that they are less capable than men and need to be protected.

Not every woman can handle a close combat job, she said, and neither can every man. But they can contribute in other ways if a crisis demands their service, said Hegar, who received a Purple Heart for wounds she suffered when her Medevac helicopter was shot at during a mission near Kandahar.

Hegar and three other female service members filed a lawsuit last year challenging the combat ban on the grounds that the policy unfairly blocked them from promotions and other advancements open to men.

"You can't pick and choose when equality should apply to you," Hegar said. "Making generalized statements like, 'Women are capable of being in combat' or 'Women are incapable of being in combat,' are equally ignorant. People are either competent or they're not."

Lawmakers Seek End to Draft Registration

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS February 25, 2013

WASHINGTON (AP) — Two lawmakers are waging a little-noticed campaign to abolish the Selective Service System, the independent federal agency that manages draft registration.

Reps. Peter DeFazio, D-Ore., and Rep. Mike Coffman, R-Colo., say the millions of dollars the agency spends each year preparing for the possibility of a military draft is a waste of money. They say the Pentagon has no interest in returning to conscription due to the success of the all-volunteer force.

Here's a quick look at the Selective Service System: — The Selective Service has a budget of \$24 million and a full-time staff of 130. It maintains a database of about 17 million potential male draftees. In the event of a draft, the agency would mobilize as many as 11,000 volunteers to serve on local draft boards that would decide if exemptions or deferments to military

service were warranted.

The Selective Service is an “inexpensive insurance policy,” said Lawrence Romo, the agency’s director. “We are the true backup for the true emergency.”

— Men between the ages of 18 and 25 are required to register and can do so online or by mail. Those who fail to register with the Selective Service can be charged with a felony. The Justice Department hasn’t prosecuted anyone for that offense since 1986.

— There can be other consequences, though. Failing to register can mean the loss of financial aid for college, being refused employment with the federal government, and denied U.S. citizenship.

DeFazio says it makes no sense to threaten to penalize men who don’t register when the odds of a draft are so remote.

First Lady Asks Governors to Aid Certification for Veterans

By Amaani Lyle American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Feb. 25, 2013 – As the war in Afghanistan winds down and more than 1 million veterans return to civilian life, the nation’s responsibility to help them in that transition will ramp up, First Lady Michelle Obama told the National Governors Association at the White House today.

Obama and Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, spoke to the nation’s governors to seek their help with the “Joining Forces” initiative to foster support for service members and their families. The first lady noted that President Barack Obama created a task force to help service members obtain the national certification that they need to fill high-demand civilian jobs.

“We’re expanding this effort to the state level to focus on the health care and transportation industries,” she told the governors. “We want to make it easier for those who served as medics or drivers in the military to get new jobs as paramedics and nurses and physician assistants or truck drivers.”

Troops who have these skills shouldn’t have to start from scratch in the civilian job market, the first lady said.

“If a service member has spent years treating wounded troops in a military hospital, they shouldn’t have to then spend thousands of dollars to get back into the classroom and study things that they’ve already learned just to get the same kind of job in

the civilian world,” she said. “We want to make it easier for those who served as medics or drivers in the military to get new jobs as paramedics and nurses and physician assistants or truck drivers.”

Just as the governors have helped to make it easier for military spouses with professional licenses move from state to state without starting over -- an effort still in progress and which Biden addressed in her remarks -- they can help to put troops back to work while retaining their state’s standards.

“This is not about lowering standards,” the first lady said. “We’ve done this for our troops with manufacturing skills, and hundreds of them have earned advanced certifications already. So now it’s time to get them back to work in the medical and transportation fields as well, and to do it right away.”

Obama set the end of 2015 as a goal for all 50 states to have taken legislative or executive action to help troops get the credentials they need.

“You’re not going to have to twist many arms to make this happen,” the first lady said. “People on both sides of the aisle will start lining up to help on this issue, because they know ... we’re not just upholding our values and honoring our troops -- we’ll also be lowering the unemployment rate. We’ll be improving our health care system; we’re going to be boosting economic growth in this country through these efforts.”

This may be the first time symptoms are linked to current Iraq and Afghanistan veterans.

Report: New vets showing Gulf War illness symptoms

Kelly Kennedy, USA TODAY January 23, 2013

WASHINGTON -- Veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan may be suffering from the 20-year-old set of symptoms known as Gulf War Illness, according to a new report released Wednesday by the federal Institute of Medicine. "Preliminary data suggest that (chronic multisymptom illness) is occurring in veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars as well," the report says.

This may be the first time that the symptoms suffered by veterans of the 1991 Gulf War have been linked to veterans of the current wars, which started in 2001 and 2003, said Paul Rieckhoff, CEO of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America.

It also means the Department of Veterans Affairs' definition of who qualifies for Gulf War veterans' benefits should include those who served in Afghanistan, said Paul Sullivan, a 1991 Gulf War veteran and founder of Veterans for Common Sense. Because Wednesday's report associates the symptoms with deployment, Sullivan said, the VA "should expand the geographical definition of the current Gulf War to include the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan."

The researchers investigated treatments for Gulf War illness, including any existing research, to see what worked for veterans. Their research included traumatic brain injury, which is caused by blunt force to the head or proximity to an explosion; post-traumatic stress disorder, which must involve exposure to trauma; respiratory problems, fibromyalgia and chronic pain.

Chronic multisymptom illness was formerly called Gulf War Syndrome, the Institute of Medicine report said. It includes symptoms in at least two of six categories: fatigue, mood and cognition issues, musculoskeletal problems, gastrointestinal problems, respiratory difficulties and neurologic issues that last for at least six months.

"We did redefine how we see the issue of chronic multisymptom illness," said committee chair Bernard M. Rosof, chairman of the board of directors at Huntington Hospital in Huntington, N.Y. He said the committee came out of the study with "no idea" what the cause might be, but that he expected data from veterans of the current wars to help. "We feel that the complaints will be the same."

Rosof said he believes the report will help veterans.

About one-third of Gulf War veterans -- or 175,000 to 250,000 people -- have Gulf War illness. The symptoms are too broad for any one treatment, the report said. "Based on the voluminous evidence we reviewed, our committee cannot recommend using one universal therapy to manage the health of veterans with chronic multisymptom illness, and we reject a 'one size fits all' treatment approach," Rosof, said. "Instead, we endorse individualized health care management plans as the best approach for treating this very real, highly diverse condition."

Researchers also said there may be no specific cause for the illness. "Despite considerable efforts by researchers in the United States and elsewhere, there is no consensus among physicians, researchers and others as to the cause of CMI," the report states. "There is a growing belief that no specific causal factor or agent will be identified."

Anthony Hardie, a Gulf War veteran and advocate, disagreed. "They've lumped together so many ill people that it's impossible to come up with one treatment," Hardie said.

Other recent research has shown possible causes for some of the symptoms suffered by Gulf War illness.

A large-scale study done by Robert Haley, chief of epidemiology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, showed veterans have damage to their autonomic nervous system caused by exposure to nerve agents after the U.S. Air Force bombed a chemical factory. Beatrice Golomb of the medical school at the University of California-San Diego tested the value of giving doses of the coenzyme Q10 to Gulf War veterans and found that "every single" veteran found improvement from 20 symptoms.

For current war veterans, scientists have connected chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder and bronchiolitis to exposures in Iraq and Afghanistan, including to garbage pits that burned as much as 240 tons of waste in an open pit a day, as well as to dust proved to be laden with bacteria and heavy metals.

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 # _____

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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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