

Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter 324 - PO Box 18631 - Milwaukee, WI 53218

In Service to America



Meeting Notice

17 April, 2019

Elks Lodge 5555 W. Good Hope Rd.

Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.

Chapter Meeting 7 - 8 p.m.

Future Meetings: 2019

15 May, 19 June, 17 July, 21 August, 18 September

Chapter web page: www.vietnamvetschapter324.com

National web page: www.vva.org

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John is listed in the phone book - good luck finding one

ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD AT THE APRIL MEETING

Directors will be elected to help manage the organization

Be a leader - run for office

This is our last printed newsletter

First Class mail has increased to \$.55. The April newsletter is the last that Chapter 324 will send via USPS.

We will e-mail it to you on request. It will be available on our web page. This will allow color photos, etc. and also allow expanded coverage.

Members deserve to know what your Chapter is doing. Others are welcome to be included on our mailing list.

Members and Friends:

- If you get the newsletter via e-mail you don't have to do anything.
- If you'd like to get the newsletter via e-mail, send an e-mail to [john\(at\)zutz.org](mailto:john(at)zutz.org) to order your copy.

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
Milwaukee Chapter 324
March 20, 2019

Meeting called to Order at 7:00 pm by President Pat Ciofani

A Moment of Silence was observed for our brothers and sisters no longer with us, for all POW/MIA's and their families and for all serving our country

Pledge of Allegiance

Attendance – Dennis Szymanski, Pat Ciofani, Pat Moore, Paul Balge, John Morgan, Joe Herbert

Minutes - There was no February meeting due to weather – Minutes from the January 16, 2019 meeting were reviewed and accepted

Treasurer's Report – Pat Moore - \$2527.17 balance in our checking account

Communications

COMMITTEE REPORTS

VVA Membership Update – Joe Herbert

Fund-Raising – Miller Park changes – See New Business

Website – Contact Pat Moore to post items of interest on our website

OLD BUSINESS

UWM Foundation Donation – Moved and passed to donate \$200 to the UWM Foundation MAVRC Fund to help with veterans' expenses

April Elections – Director's will be elected at the April meeting – Please consider stepping forward and taking a leadership roll in **your chapter**

NEW BUSINESS

Miller Park Date Change – At the request of the Oconomowoc chapter, we have changed fund raising dates with them – Our new Miller Park dates are **Friday June 28th and Sunday June 30th – Details will follow**

Vet's Court Talk – Tabled until April

Memorial Day Parade – Moved and passed to donate \$100 to parade fund

Wauwatosa 4th of July Parade – We have been invited to participate

Adjournment – 7:35

It's A Long Way To Tipperary

: Frontlines of Freedom | Denny Gillem | February 8, 2019

This famous world war I British anthem was first recorded by John McCormack(1884-1945) in 1914. It became one of the most popular anthems sung by soldiers on the way to the Western Front during the early enthusiasm of summer 1914, the song was written by Jack Judge and Harry Williams some two years earlier in 1912. To listen to the song go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XVM-tFAdADg>.

Lyrics are as follows:

Up to mighty London came An Irish man one day,
All the streets were paved with gold, So everyone was gay!
Singing songs of Piccadilly, Strand, and Leicester Square,
'Til Paddy got excited and He shouted to them there:

Chorus:

It's a long way to Tipperary, It's a long way to go.
It's a long way to Tipperary To the sweetest girl I know!
Goodbye Piccadilly, Farewell Leicester Square!
It's a long long way to Tipperary, But my heart's right there.

Paddy wrote a letter To his Irish Molly O',
Saying, "Should you not receive it, Write and let me know!
If I make mistakes in "spelling", Molly dear", said he,
"Remember it's the pen, that's bad, Don't lay the blame on me".

Chorus

Molly wrote a neat reply To Irish Paddy O',
Saying, "Mike Maloney wants To marry me, and so
Leave the Strand and Piccadilly, Or you'll be to blame,
For love has fairly drove me silly, Hoping you're the same!"

Chorus

(Extra wartime verse)
That's the wrong way to tickle Mary, That's the wrong way to kiss!
Don't you know that over here, lad, They like it best like this!
Hooray pour le Francais! Farewell, Angleterre!
We didn't know the way to tickle Mary, But we learned how, over there!

Birth defect numbers in children of Vietnam veterans alarm experts

By: [Steve Andrews](#) Mar 08, 2019

Orlando, Fla. (WFLA) - Rates of cancer, learning disabilities and physical birth defects in the children of Vietnam veterans are staggering when compared to those in children of non-veterans.

Birth Defect Research for Children's latest research shows mounting evidence that these children, now in their 30s, 40s and 50s exhibit health problems across the board. "It's so compelling to look at the data, I mean every time I look at it, I go wow!" said Betty Mekdeci, Executive Director of Birth Defect Research for Children.

More than 2.5 million Americans served in South Vietnam during the war. Each one was presumably exposed to a harmful herbicide called Agent Orange, which is known to cause cancers, leukemia, heart disease and more.

Ms. Mekdeci is alarmed by what she sees in children of Vietnam Veterans. "The proof is mounting every day. Because you don't like it, that doesn't make it go away," she said. Her research reveals birth defects showing up at a higher rate in children of Vietnam veterans than non-veterans.

Leukemia, thyroid cancer, along with ovarian cysts are showing up at 10 times and higher than the rate of children of non-veterans. "We're also starting to see auto-immune problems, childhood cancers, increases in allergic conditions," she said. Learning disabilities numbers are eye-popping.

"We have an avalanche of children with the

main thing are these neurodevelopmental problems," Ms. Mekdeci added. Dyslexia, attention deficit disorders and depression rates are all much higher than those in children of non-veterans.

"We have had a lot of indication that the mothers may be having some effect from the fathers being exposed, mental disorders, female cancer, things like that," Ms. Mekdeci explained. "We know that there are chemicals that are found in seminal fluid, this is not new stuff."

Agent Orange ravaged Navy veteran Lonnie Kilpatrick's heart. He was exposed on Guam.

"I've had heart issues my whole life," Lonnie's daughter Keri Ackerson said. Keri and her daughter Emma suffer from brain malformations tied to Agent Orange. By age 9, Emma had to have brain surgery.

"You've got lots of the veterans dying but the children and the grandchildren are going on and we're talking about thousands and thousands," Ms. Mekdeci stated. Following my report last year raising questions about passing on the poison to grandchildren, Birth Defect Research for Children began more research.

The findings are preliminary, but concerning. "It's very concerning, it's very much like what we're seeing with the children," Ms. Mekdeci added. "You can't afford to ignore this because you don't like what we're finding, you can't afford to say, it's going to go away if you just look the other way."



H.R.840/S.91 | Veterans' Access to Child Care Act

Matt Saintsing, ConnectingVets.com, February 05, 2019

For some veterans, getting a timely appointment at a VA health care facility is not the only barrier to getting medical treatment. Many struggle with childcare issues. But a new proposal passed by the House on 8 FEB would connect veterans with that childcare, free of cost. The Veterans' Access to Child Care Act, introduced by Reps. Julia Brownley (D-CA) and Brian Higgins (R-NY), would greatly expand and make permanent a pilot program veterans can take advantage of when deciding how best to balance their own care and the well-being of their children and grandchildren.

"The lack of affordable and convenient childcare should never be a barrier for veterans trying to access the VA healthcare they've earned and deserve," said Brownley. "This is especially important for the growing population of women veterans, who are more often taking care of young children. I look forward to continuing to work with Rep. Higgins and all of our colleagues to see this important program finally become permanent and nationwide."

Similar legislation was introduced in the Senate by Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) has not yet

passed. Launched in 2011, the VA Childcare Pilot Program provides drop-in childcare service cost-free for qualified veterans receiving VA health care at a few participating VA sites nationwide.

The program has been especially popular with women, a growing veteran population, who use the program four times that of the broader veteran community. When asked, a majority of women say that without the program, they have had to bring their children to the appointment, or cancel it, according to a VA satisfaction survey. "Treating our veterans right means removing barriers to quality care," said Higgins. "This bill gives parents and grandparents, who have served this nation, access to child care during their health and mental health appointments.

Higgins added he'd seen the success this program has had on his constituents around Buffalo and western New York. Congress has reauthorized the program four times, but unless lawmakers act again, it'll expire in October 2019. The bill would also expand the program to every VA facility in the country, leaving veteran parents one less hoop to jump through when coordinating their care.

Overheard in Afghanistan



The answer could have been, "In my crib."

When the VA misrepresents performance, veterans suffer

BY DANIEL E. HO AND DAVID MARCUS, The Hill, 03/05/19

<https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/432196-when-the-va-misrepresents-performance-veterans-suffer?>

Administrative judges appear to be performing better than ever, in spite of huge increases in performance quotas. The Trump Justice Department implemented an annual “production quota” of 700 cases for immigration judges. The Social Security Administration requested its disability judges to increase their output by almost 20 percent over the past few years. And the Board of Veterans’ Appeals (BVA) increased its output by a whopping 62 percent in one year, deciding 52,661 cases in 2017 and 85,288 cases in 2018.

The Constitution demands that agencies decide cases accurately. And in spite of the production increase, the BVA reported an “accuracy rate” of 94 percent for 2018. According to this reported rate, only 6 percent of BVA decisions contain legal mistakes. If true, these statistics would mean that agencies deciding hundreds of thousands of cases each year — more than all federal courts combined — can provide high quality justice for immigrants, veterans and the disabled at unprecedented rates.

Has the BVA finally cracked the constitutional code of mass adjudication? Nothing could be further from the truth. Our research teams at Stanford and UCLA unearthed data on nearly 600,000 cases never before studied by outside researchers, as well as hundreds of pages of agency documents. Drawing on this information and in-depth interviews with agency officials, our research shows that the BVA is seriously misrepresenting its performance.

Veterans suffer from this misrepresentation. The volume of veterans’ appeals is huge. The vast majority are related to disability compensation claims. Some 90 BVA judges decide cases, with an “inventory” of over 425,000 cases pending. A veteran must wait seven years for the BVA to decide his or her case. If the decision is incorrect, the veteran must hire a lawyer, appeal yet again, and spend years to get the error fixed. In one veteran’s assessment, VA’s error-prone case handling consists of “delay, deny, hope they die.”

Our research is the first to rigorously examine the BVA’s “quality assurance” program, which generates its accuracy statistics. We worked directly with the former chief of the BVA’s Office of Quality Review to test its efficacy. The program randomly sampled 5 percent of decisions for an elite team of attorneys to review. Attorneys looked for errors, namely

judicial decisions that were reversed or remanded by the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC), the court that independently reviews the BVA’s decisions.

Our results are sobering.

First, the quality review program was ineffective in improving decisions. A decision that underwent quality review was just as likely to be appealed and reversed by CAVC as any other decision. Even if a quality review attorney pronounced a decision error-free, that decision was about as likely to be appealed as one that was not reviewed.

Second, the quality review team graded opinions on a very forgiving curve. The BVA program identified defective rationales in decisions at one-sixth the rate as CAVC did for the same decisions. And when veterans appealed cases that the program deemed error-free, CAVC still reversed and remanded three-quarters of the time.

Third, as production expectations increased, morale plummeted. A typical case for veterans benefits involves thousands of pages of exhibits and numerous complicated legal issues. A veterans law judge must decide 25-30 of these cases each week. Commenting on the impact of rushed decision-making on the quality of his work, one veterans law judge confided that he found himself forced to sign decisions he never would have signed in earlier years: “I could have integrity here or I could stay employed.”

Why would an agency administer a program to such little effect? The answer is as obvious as it is troubling. The BVA’s rosy accuracy rate of 91-95 percent figures prominently in its public relations efforts. The BVA has emphasized this rate in annual reports and congressional oversight hearings. The program has kept Congress at bay with the appearance of effectiveness.

The tragedy is that the program gave the BVA no incentive to improve and Congress no meaningful performance measure to evaluate. If the board misrepresents its performance, other agencies may do so as well. Veterans, immigrants, disabled workers — and all Americans — deserve better.

Agencies need to disclose enough information so that judges, policymakers and the public can verify that these programs promote what the Constitution demands.



Vietnam Veterans of America #324
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Anyone can join! Membership Options:

Life Membership for all veterans \$50:

VVA is only offering LIFE memberships at \$50. If you have been getting a 1 year membership for \$20 you will need to pay \$50 at your next renew or be dropped from the VVA. If you paid \$50 at your last renewal you will become a LIFE member automatically without any further payment. NEW members will only have the \$50 LIFE membership when they join. (with a DD214 submitted).

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)

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