

Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter 324 - PO Box 18631 - Milwaukee, WI 53218

In Service to America



Meeting Notice

18 May, '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

15 June, 20 July, 17 August, 21 September,
19 October, 16 November, 21 December

Chapter 324 Officers

President - Paul Javins 358-2813

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

GET INVOLVED

HELP WANTED - SALES

Your help is needed now to sell raffle tickets for our Chapter Raffle.

We will raffle a Dell Laptop, a 32" HDTV with Blue Ray player, and a GPS at our May 18 meeting.

Proceeds will be donated to Dryhooch

Contact Kent Draper

HELP WANTED - KITCHEN

Tuesday Evenings Chapter 324 makes sandwiches for Bingo players at the Elks Club. This work funds much of the Chapter giving.

Contact Pat Moore

HELP WANTED - SOLICITATION

June 8 and June 9 - Miller Park Orange Blossom Sales

The Brewers allow solicitation before the games. This effort could generate thousands of dollars for the chapter. The more volunteers soliciting, the more money we bring in.

Work is followed by a tailgate party.

Contact Ron Coppersmith

The Milwaukee County Zoo invites you to

Military/Veterans Family Day

Enjoy free admission to and parking at the Zoo
Sunday July 3, 2011 • 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Milwaukee County Zoo
10001 W. Bluemound Road
Milwaukee, WI 53226
414-771-3040



Don't miss the Supermarket of Veterans Benefits at the US Bank Gathering Place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. This is a one-stop shop where veterans can learn about getting the benefits they deserve. Sponsored by the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs and the Milwaukee County Veterans Service Office. Bring your DD-214.

Admission tickets will be available from June 1 to July 1. Tickets can be picked up at your local County Veterans Service Office (CVSO). Contact your local CVSO for details on ticket pick up.

Tickets are required for entry and will be available for immediate family only, with a limited number of 10 tickets per family.

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

Milwaukee Chapter 324

April 20, 2011

Meeting Called To Order at 7:00 pm by Vice 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, Michael Lang, Kearney Bennet, Oliver Williams, Ron Coppersmith, Robert Rugg, Patrick Ciofani, John Morgan, David Titter, Paul Javins, Janice E. Dahlke, John Zutz, Milan Mursec, Joe Herbert, Joseph Murray, Pat Moore, Kent Draper.

Minutes of the March 16, 2011 meeting reviewed and accepted.

Treasurer's Report submitted by Kent Draper.

Communications

COMMITTEE REPORTS

VVA/AVVA Membership – Joe Herbert – approaching 140 members.

Allied Veterans Meeting Update – moved and passed to host April meeting with refreshments.

Fund-Raising – Kent Draper – Raffle has passed break even point – Kent Draper was reimbursed \$1325.16 for purchasing prizes and for start-up costs – Other fund raising opportunities were discussed.

OLD BUSINESS

Tuesday Evening Bingo – Always looking for help in the kitchen during bingo.

By Laws – Initial draft received and will be reviewed by Officers and Board Members before being presented to membership – Thanks to Bob Rugg and John Zutz for their work on this.

NEW BUSINESS

Election of Officers – Elections were held and your 2011 officers and board members are: President – Paul Javins, Vice President – Pat Moore, Treasurer – Kent Draper, Secretary – Dennis Szymanski, Board of Directors – Pat Ciofani, John Morgan, Ron Coppersmith, Oliver Williams, and Michael Lang. – Thanks to all who stepped forward to take a leadership role in our chapter and thanks to all outgoing officers and board members.

Memorial Day Parade – Join us at 2:00 pm on Memorial Day as we participate in the downtown Milwaukee parade to remember our fallen brothers and sisters. Details will be posted soon.

Brewers Game Fund Raisers – June 8 – 9 and Aug. 3 – Join us before these games as we distribute our Orange Blossoms to fans attending these games – Parking will be paid for by the chapter – We will have a tailgate party after the games start. – More details to follow.

Reclaiming Our Heritage – We will have an information table at the Reclaiming Our Heritage Days at the VA Grounds June 4 – 5.

Military and Veterans Day at the Zoo – July 3 – 9am – 5pm.

Adjournment – 8:03 pm.

The Lawn Chemical Ritual

McKay Jenkins, Ph.D. Posted: 04/21/11 10:53 PM ET

Tilghman Professor of English and Director of Journalism, University of Delaware; Author, 'What's Gotten Into Us: Staying Healthy in a Toxic World'

Ah, spring. The robins are back, the cherry trees are in bloom, and the armies of lawn chemical trucks are prowling the neighborhood, looking for business. It's that time of year again.

I was startled from my work this afternoon by a knock on the door: The driver of a lawn care truck had pulled up in front of our house, and now, looking askance at our decidedly shabby-looking lawn, he gave me The Look. What you need, he said, is a two-year contract for pesticide treatments that would "really take care of the weeds."

To be fair, his timing could not have been worse. I had just finished two years of research into the health and environmental effects of synthetic chemicals, and here he was trying to convince me to spread pesticides on the lawn where my kids and dogs play every afternoon. The exchange did not last long.

I wondered: would the lawn care guy, who was just doing his job, be interested in the research I had discovered? Would he want to know of a study that showed a three-fold increase in lung cancer in lawn care workers who used a common chemical known as 2,4-D, or another that found a higher rate of birth defects among the children of chemical applicators?

Probably not. Business is business, and his business is a big. Americans spend roughly \$40 billion a year on lawn care. In 1999, more than two-thirds of America's home lawns were being treated with chemical fertilizer or pesticides -- 14 million of them through a professional lawn care company.

A year later, the federal General Accounting Office reported that Americans were spraying 67 million pounds of synthetic chemicals on their lawns every year, and that annual sales of lawn care pesticides had grown to \$700 million. Lawn care companies were doing an additional \$1.5 billion in business.

But at what cost? 2,4-D, for example, was once used as a constituent of Agent Orange. Now in wide domestic use, 2,4-D has properties considered very attractive by lawn chemical companies: it kills broad-leaf plants, like dandelions and clover, without killing grass.

Today, annual sales of 2,4-D have surpassed \$300 million worldwide. Since it does not require a license to buy, or to use, 2,4-D can be found in many "weed and feed" products like Scotts Green Sweep,

Ortho Weed B Gon, Salvo, Weedone, and Spectracide.

Because it is designed to mimic a plant's natural growth hormone, 2,4-D causes such rapid cell growth that a plant's normal transport systems become destroyed by abnormally fast tissue growth. The stems of plants treated with 2,4-D tend to become grotesquely twisted; the roots become swollen; the leaves turned yellow and die. Plants quickly starve to death.

Given its effects on the cell growth in plants, it should perhaps not be surprising that 2,4-D has also been shown to disrupt human hormones. The National Institute of Health Sciences lists 2,4-D as a suspected endocrine disruptor, and several studies point to its possible contribution to genetic mutations and problems with reproductive health.

Although the EPA continues to list 2,4-D as lacking enough evidence to be classed as a carcinogen, a growing body of research has begun to link it to a variety of cancers, including non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. A 1986 National Cancer Institute study found that farmers in Kansas exposed to 2,4-D for 20 or more days a year had a six-fold higher risk for developing non-Hodgkins lymphoma.

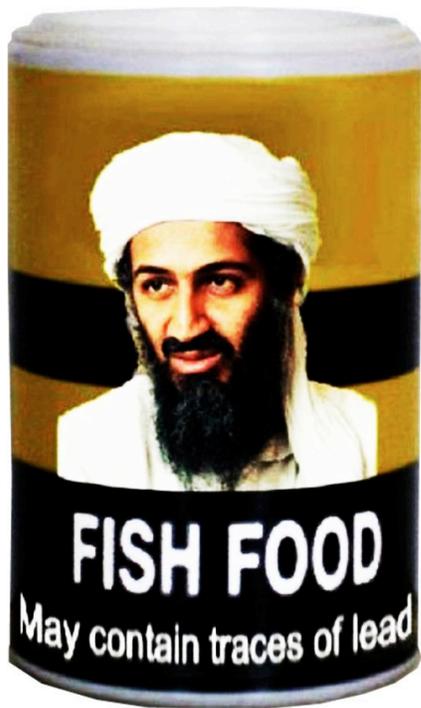
Five years later, another National Cancer Institute study showed that dogs were twice as likely to contract lymphoma if their owners used 2,4-D on their lawns.

Like flame retardants, and countless other compounds, 2,4-D also tends to accumulate inside people's homes, even days after the lawn outside has been sprayed. One study found 2,4-D present in the indoor dust of 63 percent of sampled homes; another showed levels of 2,4-D in indoor air and on indoor surfaces like floors and tables increased after lawn applications.

Exposure levels for children were ten times higher than before the lawns were treated, an indication, among other things, of just how easily the chemical is tracked inside on the little feet of dogs, cats, and children.

2,4-D, of course, is just one of scores of pesticides in broad use today. Dr. David Pimentel, a professor of entomology at Cornell, has written that 110,000 people suffer from adverse health effects from pesticides each year, and that 10,000 cases of cancer may be attributable to pesticide exposure.

See Lawn Chemicals next page



Lawn Chemicals continued

And it's not just our health that suffers from our cultural obsession with lawn chemicals; our environment suffers too. And not just from herbicides. Synthetic fertilizers, which are as much part of a landscaping contract as the weedkillers, accumulate in streams and rivers after heavy rains, and wash downstream into lakes and bays.

Where I live, in Maryland, the Chesapeake Bay suffers catastrophic "dead zones" resulting from the excessive nutrients running off suburban lawns (and chicken farms -- but that's a topic for another day.) When you consider that there are roughly 50 million square acres of tended grass in the United States -- a patch of lawn the size of Nebraska -- you get a sense of the volume of chemicals we're talking about. Those chemicals are absorbed into our drinking water, into our wildlife, into our bodies.

Amputations and genital injuries increase sharply in Afghanistan

By David Brown Friday, Mar 4, 2011 http://mobile.washingtonpost.com/rss.jsp?rssid=613&item=http%3a%2f%2fwww.washingtonpost.com%2fwfp-syndication%2farticle%2f2011%2f03%2f04%2fAR2011030403258_mobile.xml+&cid=579&spf=1

Doctors and nurses treating soldiers injured in Afghanistan have begun speaking of a new "signature wound" - two legs blown off at the knee or higher, accompanied by damage to the genitals and pelvic injuries requiring at least a temporary colostomy.

Twice as many U.S. soldiers wounded in battle last year required limb amputations than in either of the two previous years. Three times as many lost more than one limb, and nearly three times as many suffered severe wounds to their genitals. In most cases, the limbs are severed in the field when a soldier steps on a buried mine.

The increase in both rate and number of such wounds is most likely a result of the troop surge in Afghanistan that began last spring, combined with a counterinsurgency strategy that emphasizes foot patrols in villages and on farm compounds. It was noticed by military surgeons in Afghanistan last fall and quantified in late December by a team of surgeons at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, where virtually every evacuated soldier stops en route to the United States.

"I've seen these types of injuries before. What I haven't seen is them coming in over and over and over again," said John B. Holcomb, a trauma surgeon at the University of Texas at Houston and retired Army colonel who helped identify the trend.

The report prepared by Holcomb and two surgeons at Landstuhl has circulated at the highest levels of civilian and military command in the past two months. An abbreviated version was provided to The Washington Post with Pentagon permission.

It shows that from 2009 to 2010, the proportion of war casualties arriving at Landstuhl who had had a limb amputated rose to 11 percent from 7 percent - a 60 percent increase. The fraction suffering genitourinary (GU) injuries increased to 9.1 percent from 4.8 percent - a 90 percent increase.

The actual number of patients with the injuries increased even more drastically.

In 2009, 75 soldiers underwent amputation and 21 lost more than one limb. In 2010, 171 soldiers had amputations and 65 lost more than one limb. GU injuries increased from 52 to 142 over the same period.

Month-by-month totals were not provided, but numerous people who have seen the full report say that multiple-limb amputations rose especially steeply starting in September. Lt. Col. Paul Pasquina, a physician who heads the amputee program at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, recently confirmed that those injuries had "gone up a lot." Also on the increase are patients requiring "hip disarticulation" - the removal of the entire thigh bone, which makes fitting and using

See amputations - next page

Amputations continued

a prosthesis more difficult.

Of the 142 soldiers with genitourinary wounds who arrived at Landstuhl last year, 40 percent - 58 men in all - suffered injury to the testicles. Of that group, 47 had injury to one testicle, and 21 men lost a testicle. Eleven soldiers had injuries to both testicles, and eight lost both testicles.

Body armor, which has greatly reduced fatalities, usually includes a triangular flap that protects the groin from projectiles coming from the front. It does not protect the area between the legs from an upward blast. Various laboratories are reportedly working on shielding that would provide such protection.

Although the U.S. Army Medical Command released the data on genital injuries, military officials are reluctant to discuss these wounds further.

“While these types of injuries are a reality of the combat we now face, detailed discussion . . . can potentially provide insights to our enemies into the effectiveness of their improvised explosive devices and other weapons they use,” said Maj. Gen. Stephen R. Lanza, chief of Army public affairs.

A recent medical journal article that reviewed more than 800 GU injuries suffered from 2001 to 2008 (mostly in Iraq, not Afghanistan) reported that 9 percent involved damage to the testicles. That suggests the proportion of GU injuries involving the testicles is growing. The review provided no data on the on soldiers who had lost both testicles, so it is unclear whether that number is rising.

Anecdotal evidence, however, suggests it is.

In mid-October, a Washington Post reporter attended a weekly videoconference in which military medical personnel from around the world discuss the previous week’s severe trauma cases. Of the 13 patients on the agenda, many had lost limbs, and three had lost both legs and both testicles.

Medical staff at Landstuhl also noticed a rise in severe genital injuries last fall.

“In my 21½ years here, it’s just started,” intensive-care unit nurse Kathryn Gillespie said in late October.

Most critically injured soldiers arrive at Landstuhl unconscious or heavily sedated. Some regain consciousness for the first time since the battlefield during their two- or three-day stay. Gillespie described a typical awakening.

“The first thing we let them know is they’re in Germany. We tell them, ‘You’re hurt, but you’re okay.’

Then they want to do a scan of their body. They ask, ‘Is my junk all together?’ They want to check their ‘package.’ Then they check their arms and legs. This all happens probably within 15 minutes of being off sedation.”

Many patients, minds clouded by illness and medication, “discover” their injuries more than once during the stay. Each time, they ask nurses and doctors to explain what happened and what lies ahead.

“It sickens us. It’s devastating,” said Gillespie, who has twin sons who served in the military in Iraq.

Long-term effects

The long-term prospects for the recent double-amputees are a mixture of the known and unknown.

A study published last year compared 73 Vietnam War veterans and 61 Iraq or Afghanistan veterans who had lost two or more limbs.

Of the Vietnam group, 76 percent reported being married or cohabitating, and 85 percent reported having children. Of the more recent veterans, 61 percent were married and 46 percent had children. Thirty-nine percent of the Vietnam veterans rated their health as “very good” or better, while 61 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans said so.

About 70 percent of each group experienced phantom pain in their lost limbs. An increased risk for cardiovascular disease is well-recognized in amputees, even in those who are fit: One in six of the Vietnam veterans, whose average age was 61, had suffered heart attacks.

Soldiers who have lost two limbs and their testicles, however, are a new category of survivor.

They will require testosterone supplementation for life. While infertile, some might be able to have sexual intercourse. A search of the medical literature found no articles about their long-term care, quality of life or psychological adjustment.

An Army spokeswoman, Cynthia Vaughan, said this week that a “severe and complex injury task force” had been formed to look into what constitutes optimal care and support.

“I don’t think anybody has really explored these issues in depth,” said Allen D. Seftel, a urologist and former editor of the International Journal of Impotence Research who worked in the Veterans Affairs medical system for 17 years before joining Cooper University Hospital in Camden, N.J. “We owe it to our veterans, and to the medical community, to understand what the effects of these injuries are.”

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

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