

# Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter 324 - PO Box 18631 - Milwaukee, WI 53218

*In Service to America*



## Meeting Notice

16 July, '14 ~ No August Meeting!

**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](http://www.vva.org)

## Future Meetings

**2014**

17 September, 15 October, 19 November,  
17 December

**2015**

21 January, 18 February, 18 March, 15 April

## Chapter 324 Officers

President - Pat Ciofani 702-7734

Vice Pres. - Oliver Williams 538-4416

Secretary - Dennis Symanski 453-3600

Treasurer - Pat Moore 354-2533

Director - Ron Coppersmith 262-255-2832

Director - John Morgan 871-9274

Director - Joe Murray 262-389-7325

Director - Mike Ducette 262-968-5508

## CHAPTER MEMBERS

### AND FRIENDS NEEDED

We need a few hours of your time.

Miller Park ~ Outside Home Plate

**Friday, July 25 vs. Mets 7:10**

**Tuesday, Aug 5 vs. Giants 7:10**

**Wednesday, Aug 6 vs. Giants 1:10\***

Parking lots open 3 hours before game time.

We'll pay your parking!

Please tell us you will be joining us.

**Contact Pat Ciofani 702-7734**

\* Day games give kids and Senior Citizens  
(that's us) half price admission.

Join your fellow veterans for  
**the Wauwatosa July 4 Parade**

**Parade runs east to west this year**

Stage in the parking lot behind the Civic Center at  
76th and North beginning at 7am.

We've got a ride, if you can't walk

**Parade begins at 9am**

Chapter 324 is unit 35

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**August meeting is cancelled**

**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA**  
**Milwaukee Chapter 324**  
**June 18, 2014**

**Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm by President Pat Ciofani**

**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 all serving our country

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Prayer**

**Minutes of the May 21, 2014 meeting were reviewed and accepted**

**Treasurer's Report – Pat Moore - \$4155.77 balance in our checking account**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**VVA Membership – Joe Herbert – 70% of our members are life members**

**Fund Raising – July 25, August 5-6 are our fund raising dates at Miller Park – Volunteers are needed – Parking will be paid by the chapter – More details to come**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**State Council Sweepstakes – A check to cover our tickets was mailed to the State Council on June 10, 2014**

**Memorial Day Parade – 7 members participated – Thanks**

**Cav Reunion in Milwaukee – August 28-31 – We are looking into some type of welcome presentation**

**National Veterans Art Fest – October 27 – November 2 – We are looking into how we can become involved in this national event**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**July 4<sup>th</sup> Wauwatosa Parade – Steps off at 9:00 am – Assemble at the Tosa Municipal Building, 76-77 and North Ave. - Parade will head west to Mayfair – We are unit 35**

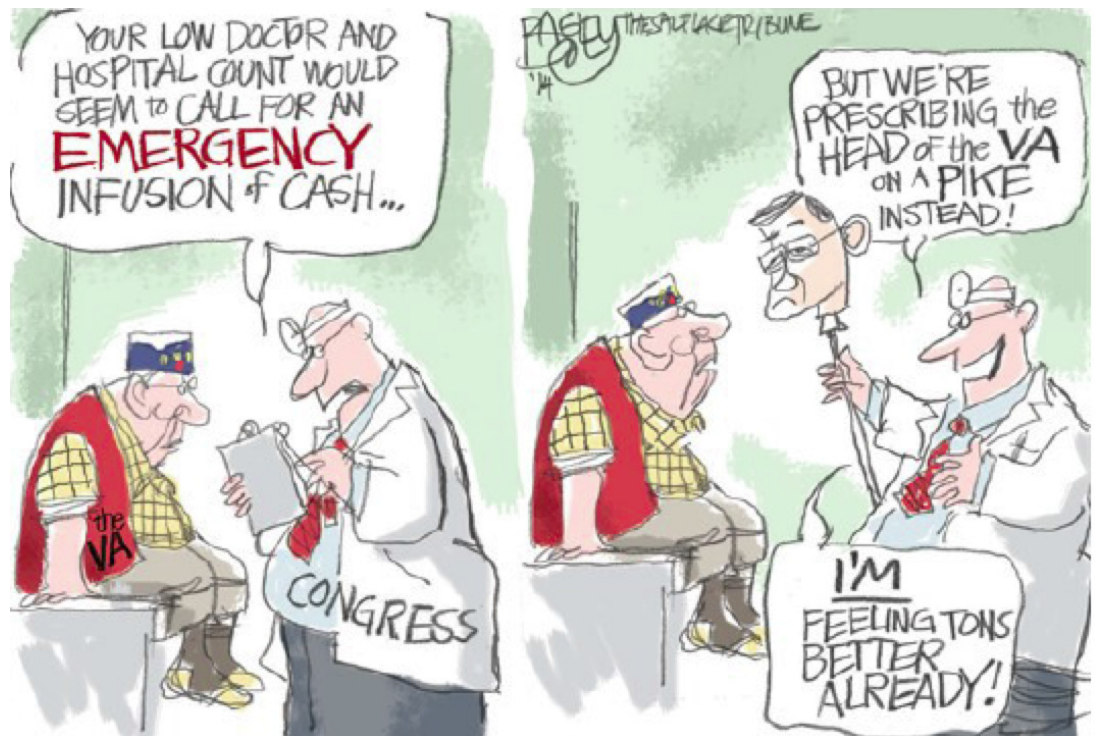
**August Meeting – NO AUGUST MEETING**

**Children's Library**

**International, Inc – Moved and approved to donate \$200 to this organization to help in their efforts to build libraries in Southeast Asia**

**Attendance – Dennis Szymanski, Pat Ciofani, Patrick Moore, John Zutz, Ron Coppersmith, John Morgan, Joe Herbert, Milan Mursec, Oliver Williams**

**Adjournment – 7:35**  
**NO AUGUST MEETING**



# Military Considers Shopping Perk for Most Veterans

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS JUNE 22, 2014

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — The U.S. military is looking into allowing all of the nation's veterans who served honorably to shop online at exchanges that sell discounted, name-brand goods — a perk that is currently available only to a small minority.

The change is proposed by the Army & Air Force Exchange Service director as a way to show appreciation for veterans and to offset a loss of revenue as troops return from overseas, where they had few alternatives but to shop at the military retail stores.

For now, the online shopping is generally limited to current service members, veterans who served for 20 years or longer and their family members. Tom Shull, the director of the exchange service, said 20 million veterans would be affected if the Defense Department allows all veterans who served honorably to use the shopping website.

Veterans who use the site typically save 25 percent or more and do not pay state sales tax. Top-selling brands include Michael Kors, Under Armour and Levi's. Levi's jeans for children are \$15 to \$20 a pair versus \$28 or more in department stores.

In his seven years in the Army, Aleksandr Morosky deployed once to Kosovo and twice to Iraq. He said former service members have not asked for shopping privileges because they accepted that they are not entitled to the benefit. But if the policy changed, Morosky, 34, said he would use the site, and he thinks many other people would, too.

"I think that this makes a lot of sense," Morosky said. "I think it would be good for everybody involved."

Shull is adding more name-brand products and revamping the website, which last year broke even. He said he hopes to invite all veterans who served honorably to begin shopping online on Veterans Day in 2015.

Shull said it is coincidental that he proposed his idea during the Department of Veterans Affairs scandal over long waits for patient care and falsified records covering up the delays at hospitals and clinics nationwide. He said he thought of it a year ago. And while it would benefit those who have been affected by the current challenges within the VA, Shull said, he did not suggest it for that reason.

U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal, a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, said, "It's a good idea. We should do it, but not view it as a way to make up for the VA's failings."

"Many, many veterans have not served a full 20 years but have nonetheless contributed immensely to the defense of our nation," said Blumenthal, D-Connecticut. "That service ought to be recognized more fully."

Former Army Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Preston, who retired in 2011, said he supports Shull's proposal because "we have asked a lot from these young men and women." Both the Navy and the Marine Corps said it would be premature to comment.

The Defense Department says it must weigh whether the policy change would diminish the benefit for current patrons, cost the department more, or harm other local businesses and tax collection. It historically has not supported expanding the benefits that are designed to recruit and retain service members, and has scrutinized how any changes would affect the entire benefits package.

There are about 2 million people nationwide who served at least 20 years in the military, according to the Defense Department.

Shull, who is the first civilian director of the exchange, suggested letting veterans from all of the branches who served honorably use the exchange website but not the brick-and-mortar stores. He expects less revenue from the physical stores as troops return from overseas, and he worries people won't shop on U.S. bases as much in the coming years if commissaries, or grocery stores, raise prices because of budget cuts.

Shull said he needs to boost profits so the exchange service can continue to pay for programs for service members and their families on Army and Air Force bases.

Headquartered in Dallas, the exchange did \$8.3 billion in sales in 2013 and netted \$332 million in earnings, its data shows. It gave \$208 million of its earnings as a dividend to the Army and the Air Force for Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs, including family counseling and youth services. Online sales could grow from about \$200 million annually to \$1 billion by 2019, Shull said.

# The Heavy Burden of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

By THE EDITORIAL BOARD New York Times JUNE 20, 2014

Post-traumatic stress disorder has reached staggering levels in the American military. An estimated 7 percent to 20 percent of all service members and veterans who have served in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq may have the disorder, and rising percentages of veterans from earlier conflicts are also afflicted.

The Departments of Defense and of Veterans Affairs have poured billions of dollars into treating the debilitating condition. Yet neither department really knows whether the treatments offered and applied are effective, according to a report issued Friday by the Institute of Medicine, a unit of the National Academy of Sciences, which had been asked by Congress to evaluate the programs.

The disorder is characterized by severe mental health problems — like repeatedly reliving a battlefield trauma, hiding from anything that might trigger those memories, and adverse swings in moods or thoughts — that persist for at least a month and impair functioning.

Such symptoms can occur soon after a traumatic event or not until years later. The disorder can last a lifetime, and it can impair physical and mental health, family and social relationships and the ability to perform a job.

Since October 2001, more than 2.6 million American military personnel have been deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq. The proportion of service members who have PTSD increased from less than 1

percent in 2004 to more than 5 percent in 2012. In that year, some 500,000 veterans made at least two visits to veterans' hospitals or clinics for outpatient care of the disorder; they made up 9 percent of all users of V.A. health services, up from 4 percent in 2002. The Defense Department spent some \$294 million and Veterans Affairs some \$3 billion on care for the disorder in 2012.

The agencies have combined to develop and disseminate clinical guidelines to help doctors choose the best treatments, such as various psychotherapies and pharmacotherapies that are backed by scientific evidence. Yet none of this knowledge is applied consistently. The Institute of Medicine said it was unclear what therapies most military members or veterans get and whether their symptoms improve as a result.

Although the departments have substantially increased their mental health staffing in recent years, the demand for services has increased even faster, causing yearslong waits for what V.A. doctors consider “minimally adequate mental health care.” Another impediment is lack of coordination between the two huge departments.

What is needed, the institute's report says, is a better integrated approach and the collection of data to document which practices and treatments work best and how patients progress over the years. Those who have suffered mental trauma on the battlefield deserve the best care the nation can provide.

## **Study: Oral THC Safely Addresses Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms**

NORML News of the Week 6/20/14

Jerusalem, Israel: The administration of oral THC mitigates symptoms of post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD), according to clinical trial data published online ahead of print in the journal *Clinical Drug Investigation*.

Investigators at the Hebrew University Medical Center in Jerusalem assessed the safety and efficacy of oral THC as an adjunct treatment in ten subjects with chronic PTSD.

Researchers reported, “The intervention caused a statistically significant improvement in global symptom severity, sleep quality, frequency of nightmares, and PTSD hyperarousal symptoms.”

They concluded, “Orally absorbable delta-9-THC was safe and well tolerated by patients with chronic PTSD.” Separate clinical trial data has previously reported that the administration of nabilone, a synthetic endocannabinoid agonist, can reduce the severity and frequency of nightmares in patients with PTSD.

In 2013, researchers at the New York University School of Medicine published findings indicating that PTSD subjects experience a decrease in their natural production of anandamide, an endogenous cannabinoid neurotransmitter. They hypothesized that an increase in the body's production of cannabinoids would likely restore subjects' natural brain chemistry and psychological balance. They affirmed, “[Our] findings substantiate, at least in part, emerging evidence that ... plant-derived cannabinoids such as marijuana may possess some benefits in individuals with PTSD by helping relieve haunting nightmares and other symptoms of PTSD.”

## VA Gulf War Claims ► 4 of every 5 Denied

Patricia Kime NavyTimes Jun 05, 2014

While the Veterans Affairs Department encourages former troops with Gulf War illness symptoms to file claims for health care and benefits, only one in five applications are approved, according to data obtained by Military Times.

In 2011 — the last time VA published data on claims for undiagnosed illnesses related to service in the 1991 Gulf War — a total of 42,811 vets requested service connection for their symptoms, with 21,072, or 49 percent, approved. Yet new figures provided to Rep. Kerry Bentivolio (R-MI) by VA in April show 54,193 claims have been filed for Gulf War-related illnesses with 11,216 granted service connection — a denial rate of nearly 80 percent.

The figures come with caveats: They do not include compensation claims to Gulf War-era veterans who became sick while on active duty, and of those denied service connection for Gulf War illness, 52 percent are receiving compensation for another service-connected condition.

Nonetheless, the low approval rate — and the discrepancies between the 2011 data and the

more recent figures — has angered veteran advocates who have worked Gulf War illness issues for years. “VA prefers to deny the reality of the illness to keep benefits and wait lists down rather than address it honestly and aggressively pursue treatments while veterans suffer,” said Jim Binns, who heads the Research Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans’ Illnesses.

Bentivolio requested the updated information because VA had not published it since 2011. VA did not provide that data when it was requested by Military Times in May.

On 3 JUN, Binns wrote a letter to acting VA Secretary Sloan Gibson, White House Deputy Chief of Staff Rob Nabors and others asking for an investigation into the VA’s handling of Gulf War-era claims as well as research. Binns said VA has sought to manipulate research, data and independent observations in an effort to deny benefits. “Like the Gulf War battlefield, VA is a toxic environment,” Binns wrote.

### Names added to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in 2014

Stars & Stripes | Carlos Bongioanni | May 7, 2014

- Staff Sgt. Jerry Leon Antrich, U.S. Army June 20, 1930 – Aug. 10, 1969 Date of Casualty: Nov. 1, 1967
- Sgt. 1st Class Frederick Joseph Baum, U.S. Army Feb. 22, 1930 – Feb. 28, 1971 Date of Casualty: Unknown
- Pfc. Henry John Drozdowski, Jr., U.S. Army March 9, 1947 – April 30, 2011 Date of Casualty: Jan. 13, 1967
- Spc. 5 Michael Noel Faherty, U.S. Army Dec. 30, 1946 – July 25, 1968 Date of Casualty: Unknown
- Pfc. Gregory Jackson Franklin, U.S. Army July 19, 1949 – Feb. 12, 1979 Date of Casualty: Nov. 27, 1968
- Spc. 4 William Arthur Gabrielsen, U.S. Army April 2, 1947 – March 10, 1970 Date of Casualty: Aug. 12, 1968
- Pfc. Ronald Hall, U.S. Army July 20, 1948 – Oct. 2, 1967 Date of Casualty: Unknown
- Spc. 4 Robert Kroptavich, U.S. Army Oct. 26, 1942 – Sept. 10, 1968 Date of Casualty: Unknown
- Spc. 4 Thomas Charles Littles, U.S. Army Nov. 29, 1946 – June 3, 1971 Date of Casualty: Dec. 28, 1969
- Pfc. Paul Luther Loidolt, U.S. Army Aug. 30, 1948 – Feb. 21, 1969 Date of Casualty: April 4, 1968
- Master Sgt. Walter Hugh Mauldin, U.S. Army Sept. 9, 1931 – May 8, 1968 Date of Casualty: Unknown
- Spc. 4 Alan Leslie Seamans, U.S. Army June 10, 1949 – Jan. 25, 1998 Date of Casualty: Oct. 13, 1967
- Pfc. Danny Joe Wilson, U.S. Army July 8, 1944 – Nov. 16, 2012 Date of Casualty: Aug. 18, 1966

### Status changes

- Maj. Howard Vincent Andre, Jr.; USAF; Memphis, Tenn.; Panel 21W, Row 80
- Spc. 5 John Lawrence Burgess; USA; Kingsley, Mich.; Panel 9W, Row 104 32
- Col. Thomas Wayne Dugan; USAF; Reading, Pa.; Panel 36W, Row 14
- Maj. Louis Fulda Guillermin; USAF; of West Chester, Pa.; Panel 53E, Row 14
- Petty Officer 3rd Class Michael Barry Judd; USN; Cleveland, Ohio; Panel 22E, Row 88
- Lt. Col. Robert Edward Pietsch; USAF; Cleveland, Ohio; Panel 53E, Row 21
- Maj. James Elmo Sizemore, USAF; San Diego, Calif.; Panel 21W, Row 86
- Staff Sgt. Lawrence Woods; USA; Clarksville, Tenn.; Panel 1E, Row 68

# 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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