

# Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter 324 - PO Box 18631 - Milwaukee, WI 53218

*In Service to America*



## Meeting Notice

20 October, '10

**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

**2010**

17 November, 15 December

**2011**

19 January, 16 February, 16 March, 20 April, 18 May,

15 June, 20 July, 17 August, 21 September,

19 October, 16 November, 21 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 - John Morgan 871-9274

## Call for Volunteers at Dryhooch

Is there any interest to volunteering your time to cover one night – 5pm – 9pm serving coffee at the Dry Hootch. 2 (TWO) people are needed per shift. It would be nice to show our support through a VVA night.

No interest in standing behind a counter and selling coffee? How about volunteering for a cleaning crew. A number of craftsman worked very hard to make the Dry Hootch building look as good as it does today. You can't always count on volunteers to do a good clean up job at the end of their shift.

I'm looking for one or more people who want join me to go down once or twice a week and clean the two bathrooms, clean up the second floor, sweep the court yard, shovel snow in the winter, and police the area. Not a very glamorous job but somebody's got to do it. We can contribute to the well being of this facility in a small way that will be appreciated by all.

This is not like the fund raising we do on Tuesday night at the Elks Bingo, this is directly helping an organization that is making a real effort to reach out to the Veterans of the Gulf war, Iraq, and Afghanistan conflict. With any luck the help that is being provided may just prevent a few marriages from breaking up and help a few veterans to living a fuller life.

How about it? Please respond to Kent Draper at [khdraper@ticon.net](mailto:khdraper@ticon.net) or call 414-963-0375 if you have any interest.

## VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

Milwaukee Chapter 324

September 15, 2010

**Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm by acting 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**

**Membership Introductions-** Dennis Szymanski, Patrick Ciofani, John Morgan, Joseph Murray, Ronald G. Schneider, Janice Dahlke, Carolyn Tyler, Milan Mursec, Joe Herbert, Bob Rugg, Kearney Bennet, Jim Mickelfelder, Kent Draper, Pat Moore-Guests-Bill Baumgartner, Dennis Johnson, Leslie Patterson.

**Homeless Veterans Initiative Presentation by Dennis Johnson – Part of Veterans for Peace – Provide furniture, household goods and food for homeless Vets – Need volunteers to help distribute food.**

**Minutes of August 18, 2010 Meeting Reviewed and Approved.**

**Treasurer's Report Submitted by Kent Draper and Approved.**

**Communications Read by Pat Moore.**

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

**VVA Membership Update – Joe Herbert –** About 132 members.

**Stand-Down Update –** Sat. September 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Volunteering & Activity at the VA -** Always in need of volunteers.

**Fund-Raising –** Moved and passed to hold a raffle benefiting the Dry Hootch – Drawing will be in December – Moved and passed to allocated necessary funds to purchase laptop computer and TV for prizes and to pay for printing of tickets.

### OLD BUSINESS

**Working the kitchen for Tuesday bingo at the Elks Club -** \$765 check received for our efforts in past months – volunteers are needed for the 1, 3, 4, 5 Tuesdays of each month – A volunteer sign-up sheet was passed around.

**August Meeting at the VA –** Our efforts to reach members by having a meeting at a more central location was a disappointment as only 9 members showed up even after the change was announced for 3 months prior – We will discuss whether to try this again after the first of the year.

**VA Packer Pizza Party –** Moved and passed to have a pizza party for the Dom residents at the VA probably for the November 7<sup>th</sup> game against Dallas. We will provide pizza and refreshments.

**Chapter By-Laws –** We are looking to update our by-laws. Anyone with a copy or any other related information, please contact one of your officers or board members.

### NEW BUSINESS

**Veterans Day Parade – November 6<sup>th</sup> –** We will be participating in the annual Veterans Day Parade in downtown Milwaukee –Moved and passed to spend \$40 to purchase centerpiece for the luncheon provided for parade participants.

**Americanism Awards Breakfast – October 24<sup>th</sup> at the War Memorial –** Kearney Bennet and Bob Rugg were nominated by the chapter to receive awards.

**VVA Christmas Party – December 15<sup>th</sup> at the Elks Club –** Moved and passed to have a Christmas Party for members and their families on our normal meeting night – Food and non-alcoholic refreshments will be provided – Details to follow soon.

**For the Good of the Chapter –** State Convention Update

**Adjournment 8:15**

**Blood Pressure Screenings**

## Army's largest base reeling

# Four apparent suicides in one weekend

By Larry Shaughnessy, CNN September 29, 2010

(CNN) -- Four soldiers from Fort Hood, Texas died over the week. In all four cases, it appears the soldiers, all decorated veterans from the wars in Iraq or Afghanistan, took their own lives, according to Christopher Haug, a Fort Hood spokesman.

If confirmed as suicides, it would be on top of 14 other suicides on the base this year. Base officials called a news conference for Wednesday afternoon to discuss the problem of suicides at the huge base in central Texas.

"Every one of these is tragic," said Maj. Gen. William Grimsley, the post commander. "It's personally and professionally frustrating as a leader."

Grimsley did not announce any major action or response during the news conference. "I don't think there is a simple answer," he said.

The recent spate of incidents, began Friday Sept. 24 when the body of Pvt. Antonio E. Heath, 24, of Warren, New York, was found in Temple, Texas, the victim of a gunshot wound. Heath was deployed to Iraq for most of 2009 and earned a number of medals including the Army Commendation Medal.

The next day, Master Sgt. Baldemar Gonzales, 39, of Victoria, Texas was found dead in his residence on Fort Hood. During his service he had fought in Operation Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom. During that time he earned a Bronze Star, a Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster, an Army Commendation Medal with four oak leaf clusters as well as numerous other decorations.

That same day the body of Sgt. Timothy Ryan Rinella, 29, of Chester, Virginia, was found in his home in Copperas Cove, just outside of Fort Hood. He had an "apparent gunshot wound," according to information released by Fort Hood.

Rinella served three tours of duty in Iraq and one tour in Afghanistan.

And then on Sunday, Sgt. Michael F. Franklin and his wife, Jessie, were found dead of apparent gunshot wounds in their home on the post. The case is being investigated as a murder-suicide. They were the parents of a 6-year-old daughter and 2-year-old son.

Franklin served two tours of duty in Iraq in just the past four years, earning an Army Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters and several other decorations.

The entire U.S. military has been focused for years on trying to stop or reduce suicides among service members. At times some have speculated that troops wouldn't seek help for emotional or mental problems because it would stigmatize them in the eyes of their comrades in arms and their commanders.

But that didn't always appear to be the case at Fort Hood this past weekend.

"Early indications are, in at least two of the cases, and I can't speak definitively about the others, a couple had been in counseling for certain things," Grimsley said.

He said the pace of Army operations, caused in large part by fighting two wars simultaneously over many years, may be one "stresser" leading to more suicides.

"We are certainly a busier force as we've ever been in my career, you put those and the other stressors of life, with finances and relationships and everything else, it's a tough life. It is a tough life," he said.

It's yet more violence for Fort Hood, which was the site of the worst shooting on an American military base in decades. On November 5 of last year, a gunman opened fire in a building on the post, killing 12 people and injuring dozens of others. Maj. Nidal Hasan, an Army psychiatrist was shot and paralyzed by police who responded to the incident and is facing murder charges in the case.

The first testimony in Hasan's pre-trial hearing is set to start in two weeks.



# The last draftee who served in Vietnam retires

By Jeffrey Scott The Atlanta Journal-Constitution September 30, 2010

<http://www.ajc.com/news/the-last-draftee-who-645726.html>

He was a kid who didn't want to be a soldier. There was a war in Vietnam and a peace movement in America.

But then he got the government's letter. So he quit his job at a furniture store, quit thinking about college and found himself on a cold December morning in 1970 standing in front of a post office in Sumter, S.C., listening to a soldier read names off a clip board until he heard his: "Clyde Green!"

With that, the 20-year-old kid climbed on the bus with the rest of the recruits and headed to a U.S. Army base where he'd get his hair shorn to stubble, a uniform, shots, a bunk in a barracks and quick indoctrination into the military.

"I didn't want to join the Army," Clyde Green said last week. "The Army came and got me."

When he retires as a chief warrant officer in a ceremony Thursday morning at Ft. McPherson -- after 39 years, 9 months and 15 days of continuous active duty -- he will be, by the best accounting, the last U.S. Army draftee who fought in Vietnam.

"It's hard for us to speak in absolutes," said Richard Stewart, Chief Historian for the U.S. Army Center of Military History. "We're not good at keeping records like that. As soon as we say he's the last, another four will pop up. But he's certainly one of the last."

It is hard to imagine now the days when soldiering wasn't always by choice, when supporting the troops could involve a great deal more than car decals and applauding men in uniform in airports. Often, it meant you might be one of them. It also meant you might go to war and it meant you might not come back.

Clyde Green, 60, is perhaps the last human link to those days.

The Army ended the draft in 1973 and at least one other draftee is still on active duty. But he was drafted later than Green and didn't serve in Vietnam. Green couldn't imagine serving in Vietnam either. At the time, his brother Willie was already in the Army, serving in the Signal Corps and stationed at Fort Gordon in Augusta. But Clyde Green wanted no part of this man's Army.

"When I got that letter I thought my whole world was ending," he said.

The bus ride, induction and basic training in

Fort Knox, Ky., in January confirmed there was indeed a new world order and Green was at the bottom of it -- freezing his fanny.

"It was cold and really tough at first," he said. "But then I kind of got where I enjoyed it, once I figured out who was in charge."

The discipline of military life he had feared became a comfort.

"I liked the order," he said. And his uncertainty about what to study in college was suddenly a riddle solved: "I really liked the idea of military intelligence."

For the next four decades the kid who grew up on a farm in South Carolina, whose dreams had once stretched no farther than Orangeburg, S.C., and South Carolina State University, traveled the world and lived a soldier's life. Over time, the reluctant draftee became the career soldier.

He rose from enlisted man to chief warrant officer in military intelligence and served extended tours in Italy and Korea. He visited 41 countries and posted in places -- the Middle East, Asia and East Africa -- he barely knew of, along with two stretches in the place he can least forget: Vietnam.

Green served his first stint there from June 1971 to May 1972 as an "intelligence soldier," deciphering information gathered in field. He examined captured equipment to determine, for instance, how many rounds an enemy anti-aircraft gun could fire. He interrogated captured enemy soldiers in a war that a growing number of Americans opposed back home.

That experience, as a soldier serving his country without any choice and risking his life, without much appreciation, still stings.

"At the time, we weren't really loved by the American people," said Green. "I never personally experienced it, but there was hostility. It was a different time. People weren't as supportive of the military."

It would be 23 years before Green returned to Vietnam. By then he had fought in his second war, the Persian Gulf in 1990. And he found America a different place for a returning soldier, even an old draftee, by then a bit grizzled, who had served in Vietnam.

"If you were in uniform in public, people would come up and start talking to you," he said, "and tell you what a good job you're doing."

**See Draftee on next page**

## Faces of Chapter 324 - Where Were You?



### Draftee from previous page

His second trip to Vietnam came with the Vietnam Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (MIA/POW), to seek for any POWs still in captivity and determine what happened to more than 1,700 Americans still missing in action in Southeast Asia. For six years, from 1995 to 2001, he and his team searched, scoured for remains and interviewed scores of witnesses.

They found no POWs but determined the fate of three MIAs, one of them an Army captain who served in Green's unit when he was in Vietnam the first time. They didn't find Capt. Frederick Krupa's remains, but they determined he was killed.

"He was shot in a helicopter and fell out during an extraction, so we were able to list him as KIA [killed in action]," said Green.

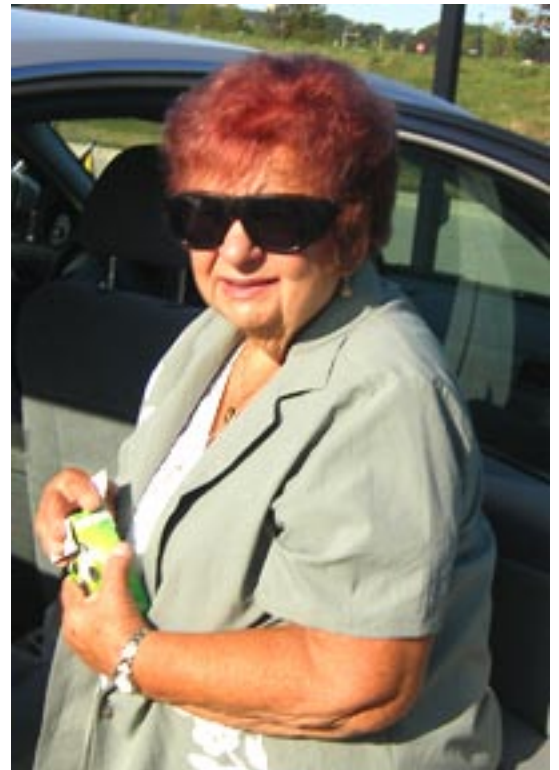
At today's ceremony Lt. Gen. Richard P. Zahner will praise the Army's longest serving draftee as a soldier who "has served his country with distinction and has touched the lives of countless men and women in uniform," and who has contributed immeasurably to the Army's Military Intelligence in his 30 years as a Warrant Officer.

Green's family will be there from all over the country: his sons Brian, 29, and Stephen, 27, and wife of 34 years, Veria. He'll live at Ft. McPherson for two more months -- "I have to pay rent now" -- in what fittingly is the oldest house on base, built in 1887.

After that, he's got a farm in North Carolina where he might settle, unless Veria wins that argument and they move to Arizona.

"I hope I can talk her into it," he said.

And if he doesn't, it won't be the first time Clyde Green's plans for the rest of his life changed.



# 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 \_\_\_\_\_

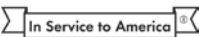
Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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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