

Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter 324 - PO Box 18631 - Milwaukee, WI 53218

In Service to America



Meeting Notice

16 October, '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

20 November, 18 December

2014

15 January, 19 February, 19 March, 16 April, 21 May,
18 June, 16 July, 20 August, 17 September,
15 October, 19 November, 17 December

Chapter 324 Officers

President -

Vice President - Pat Moore 354-2533

Secretary - Dennis Symanski 453-3600

Treasurer - Kent Draper 963-0375

Director - Pat Ciofani 702-7734

Director - Ron Coppersmith 262-255-2832

Director - John Morgan 871-9274

Director - Joe Murray 262-389-7325

Director - Oliver Williams 538-4416

Marine Corps Declares 'Lack of Spiritual Faith' as Sign of Instability

07/25/2013 http://www.huffingtonpost.com/blake-page/marine-corps-religious-discrimination_b_3647235.html

Article VI of our constitution clearly establishes that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." This clause was included by our country's founders with the unmistakable intent of preventing any body of the United States government from levying legal authority as a tool of tyranny by the religious majority.

In 2011 the Army faced public scrutiny after the exposition of once mandatory "Spiritual Fitness" testing which assessed the resiliency of soldiers on such qualitative measures as frequency of prayer or attendance of religious services. When a soldier failed this religious test they were denigrated.

Of course, no military organization is content with a tongue lashing as a response to failing a mandatory test. For the test to have been worth anything, Army leadership determined remedial training in the form of training modules and even the requirement to visit with chaplains for religious counseling was appropriate.

Fortunately, after extensive efforts by concerned soldiers, the Army decided in February of 2011 that religious testing would cease to be

mandatory and remedial training for failing such tests would be optional.

Sadly, this was not the end of religious tests being included in formal policy throughout our military. The United States Marine Corps (USMC) maintains in its doctrine that a "Lack or loss of spiritual faith" is just cause to increase scrutiny of any given Marine. This clause is present in at least two USMC publications.

"Lack or loss of spiritual faith" is included as a "Guidance/moral compass issue" in both of these documents under a list of risk indicators for use by "leaders at all levels" to "identify and address risky behavior or events that may lead to risky behavior, as soon as possible." This apparent character flaw is juxtaposed with such things as "lack of courage," "history of psychiatric hospitalizations," "past or current substance abuse history," and being "anti-social." The documents go on to include directives on how to convene a "Force Preservation Council" with the mission to evaluate and assist Marines that are identified as high risk through the checklist of undesirable traits (such as lack of religion).

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
Milwaukee Chapter 324
September 18, 2013

Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm by 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, John Morgan, Joe Herbert, David Titter, Milan Mursec, John Zutz, Pap Ciofani, Pat Moore

Minutes of July 17, 2013 meeting reviewed and accepted

Treasurer's Report – Due to health reasons, Treasurer Kent Draper has stepped aside. We thank him for his years of service and keep him in our prayers and thoughts.

Communications – Thank yous were received from the Memorial Day Parade Committee and from Being There- Reaching out for our donations.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership – Joe Herbert – We welcome David Ryba and Dale Darrow as new members and hope to see them soon at our meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Brewers Fund Raiser – The chapter raised \$3,011.80 over our 3 days at Miller Park. Thanks to all who participated.

Acupuncture – Free acupuncture clinic is offered on Mondays from 3-6 at the Dry Hootch office in the War Memorial.

NEW BUSINESS

Veterans Day Parade – We will participate in the annual Veterans Day Parade on Sat. November 9th. Details will follow.

Treasurer's Office – Due to Kent Draper's health, Pat Moore and Joe Herbert will assume the duties of treasurer.

Adjournment – 7:30

AGENT ORANGE TOWN HALL MEETING
Saturday, October 26

Two sessions: 9 a.m - noon, 1 p.m - 4 p.m
Johnson Creek Community Center
417 Union Street, Johnson Creek WI, 53038
Free. Everyone is invited.

Hear about how Agent Orange has affected Wisconsin families. Tell your story.

VETERANS DAY DINNER
Sunday, November 10

4 pm. - 7 p.m.
Knights of Columbus Hall
1800 S. 92nd Street, West Allis, WI
Adults: \$10, Kids 5 - 12 \$5, under 5 free

Sponsored by Milwaukee Homeless Veterans Initiative and Food for the Hungry.

Donate a raffle prize, Volunteer to help, Sponsor a needy Vet, Buy Raffle Tickets.

Come to the dinner, invite your friends.

Disabled Veterans Memorial Will Open Oct. 12, 2014

A different kind of war memorial will open to the public next year in Washington, D.C. It may be the most unique tribute to veterans since the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund surprised the design world by building the somber and powerful wall of names more than 30 years ago.

Unlike the Vietnam Wall and scores of other memorials, this one will honor wounded warriors. "You had your whole lives ahead of you, but you were willing to risk all of it for this land that we love," President Obama said on 10 AUG to more than 3,000 veterans who gathered there for the Disabled American Veterans national convention. "And next year, your profound sacrifice will be recognized in the heart of our nation's capital when our country dedicates the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial."

The \$81.5 million memorial, which will feature 48 glass display panels, will open on Oct. 12, 2014, according to the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation. It will sit on a 2.4-acre site across from the U.S. Botanic Garden. Its centerpiece will be a star-shaped fountain -- each point representing a service

branch -- and pool that will capture the reflection of the nearby U.S. Capitol.

Inscribed on the thick, transparent panels will be quotations that help tell the story of war's wounded and crippled, along with historic images of servicemembers and veterans reproduced from archival photos. Behind the images -- seen through the transparent panels -- will be bronze sculptures depicting the returned wounded veterans.

For Barry Owenby, the construction marks his second turn as project executive on a major memorial for veterans in Washington. Owenby also was project director for the World War II Memorial. A common question Owenby has received thus far has been: "Where do the names go?"

The foundation behind the project was established in 1998, largely through the drive and initial funding of Lois Pope, a Florida philanthropist. Pope previously told interviewers that during her days as a singer in New York City she performed for a group of wounded veterans just back from Vietnam. She was so moved by them that she hoped to one day honor them in some way.

Breach of Trust: How Americans Failed Their Soldiers and Their Country

Andrew C. Bacevich. Metropolitan, \$26 (256p) ISBN 978-0-8050-8296-8

[Publishers Weekly] Release date: 09/10/2013

<http://www.publishersweekly.com/978-0-8050-8296-8>

Despite our ostensible admiration of our men and women in arms, Americans have "offloaded" the full burden of war onto their shoulders—with dismal results, argues Boston University history professor and Army vet Bacevich (Washington Rules: America's Path to Permanent War) in this impassioned and painfully convincing polemic.

Our Founding Fathers proclaimed that all free people must make sacrifices when the nation goes to war. As late as WWII, the draft affected nearly everyone, with most people having a family member, friend, or colleague in the service. F.D.R.'s government raised taxes and instituted price controls and rationing, yet few complained.

Bacevich emphasizes that eliminating

the draft in 1973 sowed the seeds of disaster. When Bush announced the war on terror in 2001, the president mobilized volunteer troops, but not the nation; he urged Americans to "enjoy life," and he cut taxes. Since borrowing paid the bill, and there was no draft, few complained.

When the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan turned sour, protests were mild compared to the upheavals over Vietnam. Bacevich asserts bluntly that a disengaged and compliant citizenry has reduced military service from a universal duty to a matter of individual choice, allowing our leaders to wage war whenever (and for however long) they choose—with little to fear from an electorate who are neither paying nor perishing.

Legendary Vietnamese Gen. Giap Dies

By JAMES HOOKWAY Wall Street Journal October 4, 2013

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304176904579115140470967458.html>

Fifty-nine years ago, Vietnam's Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap rang a death knell for Western colonialism in Asia, masterminding the defeat of France's armed forces at the battle of Dien Bien Phu in northern Vietnam. He later went on to play a crucial role in forcing the U.S. out of Vietnam, burnishing his standing as one of the 20th century's most important military leaders.

But at the time of his death—in a Hanoi military hospital Friday at the age of 102—Gen. Giap was engaged in a fresh battle: This time, to protect Vietnam's fragile ecology from the strip mining driven by its fast-growing economy and that of its giant neighbor, China.

Gen. Giap's re-emergence as an eco-warrior in his twilight years was typical of his unconventional style, and demonstrated how he never quite fit in with the Communist Party ideologues who later came to run Vietnam, even as they promoted the nationalist cult that soon grew up around the feisty commander.

A schoolteacher and journalist in his 20s and 30s, Gen. Giap had no military training prior to joining Ho Chi Minh and Vietnam's nationalist Viet Minh forces in China, to evade French colonial authorities. While Gen. Giap was in exile, his wife was arrested and later died in prison, he told historian Cecil B. Currey in 1988. His sister-in-law and grandfather were executed.

He returned to Vietnam in the 1940s as a top military commander, hoping to take advantage of Japan's defeat to prevent France reasserting control. A close student of Mao Zedong's guerrilla tactics in China, he argued for gradually wearing down French colonists before abruptly switching tactics at the battle of Dien Bien Phu in the far north of Vietnam, near the border with Laos in 1954. It was the battle that would make his name.

Gen. Giap executed a ruse, sending Viet Minh forces toward Laos to lure French troops into the area in a bid to cut them off. The general then built a series of trenches around the French garrison to starve his opponents of food and ammunition, in a brutal 57-day siege.

The battle of Dien Bien Phu was, many historians say, a turning point in post-World War II history. Gen. Giap himself said in a 1999 interview

with the U.S. Public Broadcasting System that it was "the first great victory for a weak, colonized people struggling against the full strength of modern Western forces. This is why it was the first great defeat for the West. It shook the foundations of colonialism and called on people to fight for their freedom."

Later, he drew plans for the 2,000-mile-long Ho Chi Minh trail—a snaking series of roads and jungle paths that became one of the most-bombed stretches of land in the history of warfare and a vital supply chain from northern Vietnam to the Viet Cong guerrillas fighting U.S.-backed forces in the south of the country. People win wars, Gen. Giap was fond of saying, not weapons.

Still, Gen. Giap had his rifts with other leading members of the Communists' ruling politburo. One of the most serious was over the planning of the Tet Offensive in 1968, which eventually helped turn the course of the war.

A number of historians say Gen. Giap wasn't as keen as some of his colleagues on the plan, which called for a massive land assault on the southern Vietnamese government in the hope of provoking a popular uprising and bringing a rapid end to the war against the U.S.-backed forces.

Conservatives in Hanoi overruled Gen. Giap, who was by then defense minister, and he was left to oversee the implementation of the plan.

The Tet Offensive was, at many levels, a failure. It didn't trigger the uprising that the Communist Party mandarins in Hanoi had hoped for. It also cost the lives of several tens of thousands of troops, not to mention the many thousands of civilians who died. The offensive did, however, undermine U.S. public opinion toward supporting the war in Vietnam and, as southern Vietnamese forces retreated to defend the cities, the countryside was left for the Viet Cong guerrillas to control. The war dragged on for another seven years.

Nonetheless, in his later years, Gen. Giap began to focus heavily on environmental causes. Like other older Vietnamese, he worried that the breakneck pace of modernization in the country was uprooting traditional ways of life. He also was concerned about China's growing economic and political influence on Hanoi.



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Take a Walking Tour of the Milwaukee Soldiers Home

The National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Milwaukee Preservation Alliance have launched a free walking tour of the Milwaukee Soldiers Home. The Milwaukee Soldiers Home Walking Tour takes users on a fascinating journey through a hidden jewel in the heart of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Featuring stunning architecture, and history dating back to the Civil War, the Milwaukee Soldiers Home, a National Historic Landmark, is one of Milwaukee's most cherished historic assets.

The walking tour is an excellent way for community organizations, business groups, school classrooms and interested community members to learn more about an important piece of Milwaukee's history.

Downloading the Walking Tour is Easy!

- **Smartphone Users:** The app is currently available for free download on iTunes for iPhone users and Google Play for Android users. To download the app, visit the store on your mobile device and search Milwaukee Soldiers Home.



- **MP3 Player Users:** The walking tour audio is also available for download and use on MP3 players. To download the files from Amazon.com to play your MP3 player, visit: <http://goo.gl/ARfEm>.

Download the Corresponding Map:

A map of the historic district, complete with stops and building names is available for download at: <http://goo.gl/H9NrA>.

Share Your Photos:



We want to see your photos and hear your feedback! Help spread the word about Milwaukee's Soldiers Home Historic District to your friends, family and followers using the hashtag #MKESoldiersHome on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

Acknowledgments:

The National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Milwaukee Preservation Alliance are extremely grateful to all those who have contributed their time, resources and expertise to this project, including:

- Jim Draeger, Wisconsin Historical Society
- Patricia Lynch, Harvest Graphics and West Side Soldiers Aid Society
- Jill Zahn, VAMC Librarian
- Laura Rinaldi, Reclaiming Our Heritage

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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