

The Voice of 436

February 2019



Major Louis. F. Guillermin Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 436



Next meeting:
Feb. 13th, 7:30 p.m.

@VFW
4601 Lincoln Highway,
Downingtown, PA 19335

Bad weather cancellations:

email notices will be sent
or call 484 705-5041
A notice will also be
sent by email.

Chapter officers 2018-2019

President: Frank Houck
1st V.P.: Dave McTavish
2nd V.P.: Barry Amole
Secretary: Michael DiPuppo
Treasurer: Jim Doedderlein
Directors: Robert Gallagher
Chris Pitt
Sandy Lopacki
Vince DiLodovico
Bud McCullough
Rick Weimer

In a wonderful variation on our usual monthly meetings, the January 9th meeting of VVA Chapter 436 was held at the American Helicopter Museum and Education Center at American Boulevard, West Chester, adjacent to the airport. The meeting was co-hosted by the Museum staff and by the owners and staff of Mission BBQ, who provided a delicious pre-meeting buffet-style meal for all those in attendance [* see the related Of Interest item, on Page 2]. After the meal, there was a brief walk-through and photo-op prior to adjourning to their theater for the formal monthly meeting.

With 27 members and several guests (see Page 2) in attendance, in addition to a number of representatives of the two hosting agencies, President Frank Houck called the meeting to order at 1945 hours and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence for our POW-MIAs. Chaplain Joe Crescenz then gave the invocation. Secretary Mike DiPuppo called the roll; 10 Officers and Directors were present. Motion (Amole, Duncan) to skip the reading of the minutes and approve them as circulated and posted, was approved unanimously.

Following the introductions and some opening comments, the main speaker of the evening was Professor Bob Kodosky,

Chair of the West Chester University History Department, and also a Board Member of the Helicopter Museum. Dr. Kodosky introduced a film which focuses on 27 families who had a relative killed in Vietnam. The families were all from Philadelphia's Father Judge High School, and the film is titled "Remember the 27 Crusaders." The film will be shown locally, and a special showing will be held at the Historical Society in Philadelphia on June 13th this year. Dr. Kodosky has been to Vietnam, and will be taking students on a tour of Vietnam and Cambodia this summer, and invited anyone in our group who wishes to do so to consider traveling with him and his students (arrangements are possible, and you would have to contact him soon to do so). In addition, he wants to write a book about Vietnam Veterans in Downingtown and West Chester, and could devote a section to our VVA Chapter 436.

Gene McInerney, Development Associate for the Helicopter Museum, also spoke, stating that his objective is to forge relationships with Veterans Service Organizations. He wants to hold events for those groups and indicated that our Chapter can help create the seeds for those efforts. Their website is <http://www.americanhelicopter.museum>. He can be contacted at cell #484-467-1416, or email @ gmcinerney@americanhelicopter.museum.

Upcoming Meetings

Regular membership meetings are held the 2nd Wednesdays of each month, exclusive of July and August, at VFW Post 845 in Downingtown.

Our next regular membership meeting is scheduled for February 13th, 7:30 PM.

Website: <http://www.vva436.org> Visit the site regularly to stay abreast of events, announcements, minutes, and any other official postings. Provide constructive feedback to Webmaster Phil Prinzi, and if you have any items worth posting, please be sure to route them through Ken Schweitzer.

Newsletter: As always, our thanks to all those without whose help we wouldn't have a newsletter: Mike DiPuppo, John Morris, and Jim Doedderlein. And again, if you have items which would be of interest/importance between regular meetings, please forward them as early as possible either to John Morris at www.vva436@gmail.com, or to Doc Maher at jmahermndmph@yahoo.com

Membership: Membership Chair Jim Doedderlein announced that we have 138 Members and 10 Associate Members. As we have mentioned a number of times before, please go out of your way to chat-up any VN Veterans you happen to run into and try to recruit them as members or, at least, invite them to the meetings

Agent Orange: Frank Houck advised the members to visit the website and review the attachments to the Minutes of 12/12/18 for an update of the lack of progress on HR 229, the Blue Water Navy Veterans Act, and HR 5671, the Burn Pits Accountability Act. See Page 2 for late breaking development.

Membership form

Regular membership in VVA is open to any Veteran who served **anywhere** during the Vietnam War era.

Mail to PO Box 189
Phoenixville, PA 19460

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zipcode _____

Email: _____ Born: _____ / _____ / _____

- VVA Life Membership: \$50 (this is a new and reduced price)**
- I served in the US military, for other than training purposes, between 8/5/64 and 5/7/75
- I served in the US military in Vietnam between 2/21/61 and 8/5/64.
- DD214 enclosed (Applications without DD214s will be processed as associate memberships)
- I wish to join the Associates of the VVA. (No military service needed) (No age limits)
- AVVA Life Membership. Price based on age**

Guests & Visitors: In addition to the several representatives of the two hosting agencies, we had three guests honor us with their presence: (1.) Al Costanzi, an Iraq War veteran and President of a veterans group. He had been deployed several times and returned with problems. He credits a Vietnam Veteran with restoring him and helping him return to a normal life. (2.) Dennis Brown, a long time member, who said that the promise of food brought him back to the meeting. We sure hope that he will now continue to attend the meetings. (3.) Daniel Kaczur, Commander US Coast Guard Reserve (Ret.), Army veteran (MAC-V in VN, armor officer and aviation in Europe. All three were wished a hearty "Welcome Home!" and we hope to see them at future meetings as well.

Incoming Correspondence: President Houck reported that, in addition to some routine letters and requests from a number of agencies, including the Rolling Thunder Newsletter, we also received Thank You notes for our financial contributions from: (a) Nancy Schmidt, a VA Nurse, thanked us for our participation in the CVAMC veterans luncheon, and gave us a personal contribution; (b) The Helicopter Museum; (c) The Medal of Honor Grove; (d) the West Grove Fire Company, and (e) The Southeast Veterans Center.

Education/Scholarship Committee: Chairman Jed Burns stated they aim to kick off this season's program in March and would like ideas and suggestions from the members for topics for the applicants' essay competition component.

Financial Reports:

** Treasurer Jim Doedderlein's report on the Chapter's finances is posted on the website with the Minutes as Enclosure (1).
** 2nd VP Barry Amole's SGOC report is also posted with the Minutes, as Enclosure (2).
** Motion (Bassetti, McTavish) to approve both reports as circulated and posted, subject to audit, was approved unanimously.

VA/Veterans Affairs:

** Bingo Night at the SEVC will be January 22nd or the last Tuesdays of a given month.
** Jed Burns indicated the interest in the memorabilia display case at the CVAMC has been so great that he may build another one. He is looking for donated items appropriate for the display cases. Contact him if you can help with that.
** Progressive bifocal eyeglasses are now available at the VAMC in Coatesville and Elsmere. It was also noted that orthopedic shoes, if you need them, can be built for you.
** 2019 brings changes, and some expansions, to Veterans benefits, e.g.: a 100% expansion of Space Available travel for disabled veterans; a lot of valuable information like this can be found at the VA website <http://www.va.gov>.
** Chris Pitt reported he will keep us posted on any activities offered at the Chapel of the Four Chaplains.
** Information about the PA DMVA's Veterans Registry can be found at Military.com and/or at the State's website: www.dmva.pa.gov/veteransaffairs

Government Affairs:

** Frank urged everyone to visit the website and review the attachments to our December meeting Minutes for updates on AO, the lack of progress on HR 229, the BWNVV Act, and HR 5673, the Burn Pits Accountability Act.
** **Late breaking developments:** the 1/24 Military Times announced that the Secretary of the Navy has denied over 4400 claims (already totaling over \$963 billion) from Veterans and their families for expenses stemming from exposures to Camp Lejeune's contaminated waters. Saying there was no legal basis to make the payments, the Secretary is referring those plaintiffs to the Congress to try to get legislative relief.
** Military.com carries a Stars & Stripes item saying, ten years after the denial by the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, the Federal District Court of Appeals reversed that decision and concluded that BWNVN Veterans are eligible for benefits to treat illnesses linked to AO exposure.

Color Guard:

** The Honor Guard is committed to participating in this year's Downingtown Memorial Day Parade so we will have to skip the Kennett Square event on the same date.
** Frank is waiting for more details from the DelCo VN Memorial officials before deciding if we would be able to participate in their ceremonies.
** He also noted that the experience of speaking with the grade school children in Exton was so enjoyable that he is considering doing that at more schools.

Old Business: Bob Gallagher reviewed the details and costs (\$231/month) involved for the previously discussed ad proposed to be placed in the free flyer *Seniors* newsletter. Motion (Burns, Houck) to run the ad for three months, beginning February, for a total of \$693, was approved unanimously. Pending the results, we would then decide about future/repeat ads.

Of Interest/Good of the Chapter:

** President Houck emphasized special Thank You's to Mission BBQ and to the American Helicopter Museum, which both are very dedicated to, and supportive of, our military and veterans. Mission BBQ has great food and provided an outstanding meal for our Chapter prior to the meeting.
** *Related Note:* Mission BBQ has sent out a notice of a *free sandwich* (anything else is on you) for any VN Veteran on National VN Veterans Day, March 29th.
** Lastly, Frank offered a very special thanks to one of the hardest workers in support of military causes, Jed Burns, who also set up tonight's great program and meal. Jed will have knee surgery soon, and asked for everyone's prayers for success. All of us wish Jed "Get Well Soon, and a smooth recovery." OORAH!
** Motion (Lopacki, McTavish) to adjourn approved at 2035 hours.

[Blue print = email addresses](#) [Red print = website hot links](#)
www.vva436.org: for updates & meetings minutes.



Major L. F. Guillermin Memorial Chapter 436

PO Box 189
Phoenixville, PA 19460

Email: vva436@gmail.com

website: <http://www.vva436.org>

Address label here