

The Voice of 436

March 2018



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



Next meeting:

March 14, 7:30 p.m.

@ VFW Post 845

4601 West Lincoln Hwy.

Downingtown, PA 19335

610 269-8818

<http://www.vva436.org>

Bad weather cancellations:

email notices will be sent or call Post 845 for updates

Chapter officers 2017-2018

President: Frank Houck
1st V.P.: Dave McTavish
2nd V.P.: Barry Amole
Treasurer: Jim Doedderlein
Directors: Robert Gallagher
Chris Pitt
John Morris
Phil Prinzi
Bud McCullough
Rick Weimar

The February 14th meeting of VVA Chapter 436 was called to order by President Frank Houck at 1930 hours with 27 members, including 10 Officers and Directors, present. President Houck led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and followed with a moment of silence for our POW-MIAs. Chaplain Joe Crescenz gave the invocation. On proper motion (Amole, McCullough) the reading of Secretary Mike DiPuppo's minutes from the previous meeting was omitted and they were approved as submitted and posted on the website. Motions to approve and post Jim Doedderlein's Treasurer's Report (Bassetti, Schweitzer) and Barry Amole's SGOC Report (Bassetti, Schweitzer) were approved unanimously subject, as always, to audit.

President Houck then introduced the evening's guest speaker, Lt. Col. Mike Perry, US Army (Ret.), the Executive Director of The Army Heritage Center Foundation, 950 Soldiers Drive, Carlisle, PA. The US Army Heritage and Education Center (USAHEC) is "the premier research and archival facility dedicated to 'Telling the Army Story, one Soldier at a time.'" It collects pertinent memorabilia and information relevant to military history in order to tell the story of the uniformed services across America so future

generations will know their stories. They preserve letters, photos, official documents, important mementos and other equipment with a story behind them, and information is gathered from from multiple sources.

Visit www.USAHEC.org

Their goal is to make available contemporary and historical materials related to strategic leadership and US Army heritage, to inform research, educate an international audience, and honor Soldiers, past and present, by preserving, building, enhancing, promoting these historical materials and educating the public about the history of America's armed forces. He noted that their resources were used by Ken Burns who spent much research time there, including getting many of their Civil War photos to use in his documentaries. The Colonel encouraged the members to visit the Center, which hosted 235,000 visitors last year, and to be sure to bring their cameras. Entry is free. The Center wants to add more "Ambassadors of Oral History," and would provide the training and equipment needed. They also establish Veterans' Cafes in nursing homes so that veterans can relate to others and tell their stories.

Following the Q and A period, Chaplain Crescenz presented him with one of the Cpl. Michael Crescenz MoH challenge coins.

Upcoming Meetings

Membership meetings are held the 2nd Wednesdays of the month, exclusive of July and August. Next regular meeting will be held March 14th, the usual time and place. Scheduled speaker: Ms. Sarah Koeller, Medical Countermeasures Planner, CCHD's BT/Pandemic Preparedness programs

Website: <http://www.vva436.org> President Houck asks that we visit the site often to keep up with the news and other material which Webmaster Phil Prinzi works so hard at maintaining for your information. Without readers/users we could lose this unique resource which is especially important to those of us who don't use other types of "social media." So visit the site and, if you have suggestions for improvement, provide your feedback to Phil. However, if you have something you'd like posted on the site, be sure to route that through Ken Schweitzer.

Newsletter: Once again, thanks to everyone who sends us material for consideration for inclusion in these newsletters. And a special note of appreciation to John Morris and Jim Doedderlein, without whose help these issues could not get formatted, printed, and sent out in a timely fashion.

Membership: Membership Chair Jim D. reported that we have 144 regular members and 12 Associate members. We can always use new members so if you meet any unaffiliated 'Nam vets, please tout them into joining, visiting the website, and coming to our meetings.

Agent Orange ** More than a year after being ordered to test for traces of AO in Guam, no actual sampling or testing has yet begun although the EPA and DoD allegedly have developed a plan to do so.

** A study by Japan's Kanazawa University tested breast-fed children in a known dioxin "hotspot". They found levels of the gender determining hormone DHEA to be 3 times that in children from non-dioxin areas.

** Closer to home, when Hurricane Harvey flooded parts of Texas last Fall, it damaged the cap on the San Jacinto paper mill Superfund waste site near Houston. An EPA sample taken at one site downriver showed dioxin levels more than 2000 times the legal limit.

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: ____/____/____

- Dues: \$20.00/year (regular and associate memberships). **VVA Life Membership: \$100**
- 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** Cost is based on applicant's age.

Latest Medicare Scam Alert: Seniors are getting phone calls from scammers claiming to be from Medicare, and saying that because the government plans to issue new Medicare cards they will need an interim/temporary card during the transition period. The caller(s) then say they need your bank and credit card information, plus a (variable) amount of money to cover the processing and mailing costs. This is a scam!!! Medicare never calls; they only send mail correspondence. Do not fall for this one!!!

National Vietnam Veterans Day is set for March 29th. President Trump signed the Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act (which, by the way, was co-sponsored by PA's Sen. Pat Toomey) on March 28, 2017, making the day a national commemorative holiday to honor and give appropriate credit to those men and women who served this country in that war, and adding the date to the list of days authorizing the flying of the flag.

Incoming Correspondence: Three letters of appreciation for the Chapter's earlier donations were received: one for our \$1000 gift to the West Chester VN Memorial scholarship fund; one from St. Joseph's University for the \$500 donation to their veterans services programs, and another from the Philadelphia VN Veterans Memorial Fund for our \$1500 donation to their POW-MIA Monument campaign.

Education/Scholarship Committee: Chairman Jed Burns reported that the Committee had met and will provide the results to Webmaster Phil Prinzi for posting on the website. This year's topic was "If the USA goes to war, what do you think about re-instituting the draft?"

Honor Guard:

** President Houck accepted the invitation to march in both the Kennett Square Memorial Day Parade and the Malvern Parade on the following weekend.

** The group will again present the colors at the Flyers - Columbus hockey game scheduled for March 15th. He has 9 men in uniform willing to help. The bus transport has been arranged; departure from the VFW Post parking lot will be 1600 hours. Anyone still needing tickets should contact/see Frank ASAP.

VA/Veterans Affairs: ** VVA's State Council (PASC) has distributed VVA's guidance re the VA's RAMP (Rapid Appeals Modernization Program, which went into effect this February) in its 2/23rd PASC Newsletter, a copy of which is posted with the meeting minutes for your reference. Vets will receive an "Opt-In" letter asking if they wish to opt-in to this optional pilot program, but if you do opt in, that decision becomes irreversible. VVA's Veterans Benefits Program (VBP) advises AGAINST opting in at this time, and advises you should ask your certified VSO or contact the VPB with any questions you have specific to your claim. Contact VPB at (202) 530-9180, or (301) 335-2183.

[Blue print = email addresses](#) • [Red print = website hot links](#)

www.vva436.org: for updates & meetings minutes.

President's Report:

(1.) Frank Houck made a strong pitch for members to increase the usage of the website so we can keep it open and viable and not have to turn to the social media for our information.

(2.) Our deposit was received by the coin manufacturers and the design submitted will now go into the art work development phase. The Chapter will have two chances to review the results before they begin striking the coins, which will take another 15 days. Meanwhile, a Motion (Schweitzer, Maher) was approved for the President to use the debit card to purchase 20 of the current coins for interim use.

(3.) Following some discussion, and getting volunteers for these functions, Frank appointed Ken Schweitzer to be the SPOC for coordinating suggested postings to the Webmaster, Jed Burns to be the Speaker coordinator, and Doc Maher to present medical items of interest at the monthly meetings.

Special Issue: Motion (Weimar, Bassetti) to approve the retroactive insertion of an addendum to the 9/13/17 meeting minutes (to document the omitted earlier approval for VVA 436 to pay the costs involved in supporting our Honor Guard as they participate in the opening ceremonies before the 3/15/18 Flyers-Columbus game) was unanimously approved. Specifically, these costs include the costs of the 40 game tickets and the cost of the chartered bus transportation to and from the stadium.

Old Business:

** The memorial brick for the DelCo VN Memorial, Rte 3, is ordered and will be installed in the Spring.

** The Chapter's Annual Dinner will be at Limoncello's Restaurant, Chester Springs, April 7th, 1200- 1600 hours. Motion (Schweitzer, Bassetti) for the Chapter to pay the cost for each attending member and their one guest was approved unanimously. The cost of additional tickets will be charged to the individual requesting them.

Annual Election Reminder: Because of the time of year and the upcoming annual dinner meeting, the annual election of Officers and Delegates will be held at our March meeting so those elected can be officially installed at the April 7th dinner meeting.

New Business:

** A Motion (Amole, McFadden) to donate \$1000 to the Gold Star Mothers' Golf Tournament was approved, as was a separate Motion (Amole, Weimar) to purchase service flags for the Phoenixville High School ROTC, at a cost of \$371.

** The members donated \$72 to our General Fund for operational activities.

** Motion to adjourn (multiple sponsors and seconds) was approved at 2145.



Major L. F. Guillermin Memorial Chapter 436

PO Box 189
Phoenixville, PA 19460

Email: vva436@gmail.com

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

Stamp

Mailing label here