

The Voice of 436

June 2018



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



Next meeting:

June 13th, 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 2018-2019

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

The May 9th meeting was called to order by 1st V.P. Dave McTavish at 1935 hours, with 25 members, including 10 Officers and Directors in attendance. Dave led the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for our POW-MIAs followed. Chaplain Joe Crescenz gave the invocation and Secretary Mike DiPuppo called the roll.

Jed Burns introduced the evening's guest speaker, Christine M. Beady, Executive Director for the Chapel of the Four Chaplains Memorial Foundation, which is located at 1201 Constitution Ave., The Navy Yard Bldg. 649, in Philadelphia. The Foundation is one of the oldest charitable organizations supporting veterans, but for some years was short of funds and close to shutting down. Ms Beady took the helm 6 years ago and, through enhanced donations and cost-cutting measures, the Foundation recently crossed over into the black financially.

Ms Beady gave a short history and background of the program. The Chapel was named in honor of the four Army Chaplains of different faiths who were aboard the liner Dorchester which had been converted to a troop carrier. Some 30 miles off Greenland the ship, with over 900 souls aboard, was torpedoed on 2/3/43 by the German submarine U-223, and began to sink. Being short of life jackets, the 4 Chaplains gave up their own life jackets

so others might live, then linked arms and prayed as the ship sank. 2018 is the 75th anniversary of that that tragic event, in which only 230 survived.

The organization sponsors four Annual Aware levels and programs for extraordinary service: (1.) the Legion of Honor Certificate (both Barry Amole and Ken Schweitzer were honored with this); (2.) Humanitarian Certificate and Junior League of Honor Certificates; (3.) Bronze Medallion; 4.) the Gold Medallion is their highest honor.

In addition, they sponsor national scholarships for students in grades 6 - 12, awards for work done by special needs students through essays, photos and U-Tube, and an Emergency Chaplains Corps who are trained to be of assistance and can be deployed anywhere they are needed. They are not an official VSO, but a large portion of their work and programs is focused on assisting veterans, both directly and indirectly. Their outreach programs continue to grow in the areas of veteran homelessness, joblessness, substance abuse, suicide and PTSD. They will present 5 medallions to the Crescenz family to honor MoH recipient Michael Crescenz whose MoH coin she received from Chaplain Crescenz. Jed and Dave also presented her with the VVA challenge coin. Lastly, she invited us to visit their facility, sign up for their newsletters, and attend their Sept. open house.

Upcoming Meetings

There will be no regular membership meetings in July or August. The regular membership meetings will be resumed in September, starting as usual, with the second Wednesdays of the month, at 7:30 PM, at VFW Post 845, Downingtown.

The June 2018 meeting will be held as usual. The scheduled guest speaker is Dr. Christopher M. Fiorentino, Ph.D.,

Website:

<http://www.vva436.org> Visit the site often and provide your feedback to Webmaster Phil Prinzi. We want to keep this as a valuable resource for our total membership so please use it frequently. Also, any items you would like to be posted must be routed through Ken Schweitzer first.

Newsletter: As always, we have to thank John Morris and Jim Doedderlein for all their work in getting these newsletters printed and circulated in a timely manner. We aim to finish them by the beginning of the following month to be available to the members well in advance of the next meeting. Please send any items for possible inclusion to www.vva436@gmail.com or to jmahermdmph@yahoo.com.

Membership: ** Jim Doedderlein reported that one member, Michael Arabia, passed away earlier. However, we acquired one new member last month, so the count remains at 144 regular members and 12 Associate members.

** In a special event, Lee Beyer was honored by Chester County MCL Detachment 286 as their 2018 Marine of the Year at their annual banquet. He was "toasted and roasted" by his fellow running buddies, with Doug Forsythe and Kay Kroll presiding over the festivities. Congratulations, Lee.

Agent Orange: ** No report from Bob Stone. ** However, there is one internet report that the VA is starting a special research project, using paired cohorts of VA docs and AO-exposed VA patients looking at 12 genes to

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 based on age

Administrative Reports: ** Motion (Amole, Maher) to skip the reading of the Minutes of the April meeting, and approve them as distributed and posted, was approved unanimously. ** In addition, Motion (Bassetti, Gallagher) to approve the Treasurer's Report, as well as a Motion (Bassetti, Doedderlein) to approve the SGC Report, both as provided and posted, and subject as always to audit, were unanimously approved.

New Members/Guests: ** Jerry Wilspan, who served in the Delta region with the US Army in '70-'72 was introduced and wished a "Welcome Home!". ** Also, an honored current member, Dave Wilson, was in attendance after a long absence. "Welcome Home, Jerry!"

Incoming Correspondence: ** We received a thank you letter from VVA Chapter 565 for our recent donation to help them with the landscaping project at the Veterans' Memorial in Pottstown. ** We also received a letter of gratitude from the SEVC for our continued assistance with their Bingo programs, thanks especially to the efforts of Ken Schweitzer.

Education/Scholarship Committee: Jed Burns reported we have chosen this year's two winners and the checks will be issued to them next week. He hopes to have them attend our June meeting prior to the summer hiatus. Dave McTavish expressed the group's appreciation to Jed and his Committee members for their efforts in this important program.

Honor Guard: ** As outlined in the previous meeting, the Honor Guard will parade in Kennett Square on Memorial Day and in Malvern on June 2nd. They are still planning to march in the Dogwood Festival in Phoenixville on Armed Forces Day, May 19th, but Frank had still not heard from the Phoenixville VFW as to the sequence of events.

VA/Veterans Affairs: ** Ken noted that the SEVC has postponed the May Bingo night to June 26th instead. Volunteers should arrive by 1830 hours. ** The West Chester Veteran's Council will sponsor the WC Memorial Service Day at Marshall Park, Saturday, May 20th; services will be held at the Old Courthouse at 1300 and again at 1400. ** The 28th annual WWII weekend, "A Gathering of Warriors," is scheduled for June 1-3 at the Mid-Atlantic Air Museum in Reading; visit www.maamorg.org or phone 610-372-7333 for details. ** The proposed FFY 2019 Omnibus Spending Bill would, if approved, contain over \$700 million for veterans programs. ** PA has announced benefits available to amputee and paralyzed PA veterans, including a \$ 150/month pension. Apply through the County's Veterans Affairs Office. ** A federal court has ruled that vets with service-related pain, even without a clear medical diagnosis, can receive VA disability benefits.

Doc's Corner: ** Doc noted that Frank had suggested he participate in the 4/27th monthly Director's VSO conference call. Much of the material discussed "was above my pay grade", but a few items were of interest,

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

e.g., \$685 million available for State Veterans Homes, (\$2.5 million to the 3 in PA); Veterans ID cards will start printing and mailing in April; and 2000 pairs of VA docs and patients will be paired in research into 12 genes which could be transmissible. ** In May, Acting VA Secretary Wilkie announced the Choice Program would run out of funding and have to cease new activities. However, the House Committee on Veterans Affairs recently voted several pro-veteran bills out of Committee to the full House, including the VA MISSION Act which would include further funding for it, along with streamlining VA's community care programs, the BWNVNVAct and other VVA legislative priorities. ** Many veterans advocacy groups have joined forces to ask the courts to overturn a 2017 decision which supported the VA's stonewalling of the BWNVNV's AO claims. Supporters list several questions which an AO-exposed sailor needs to document to support their claims. ** Medical journal reports indicate associations between both PTSD and severe combat wounds, and hypertension. ** Fake Facebook pages are targeting VN veterans, including fake VVA websites and others from Bulgaria and Russia spreading fake news.

Old Business: ** Jack McFadden reported on the success of the annual Liam Nevins Trap Shoot. They have raised 3/4ths of their goal of \$10,000 so far. ** Dennis Fenstermacher reported on the letter of thanks from the Nomad Sportsmen's Club for our recent donation to help sponsor two Vietnam Veterans and two Wounded Warriors at their recent Quail Hunt / trap-shoot event. ** Doc Maher had ordered the minimum number (10) of the VVA's 40th anniversary coins and all but one have been bought up already.

New Business: ** Motion (Burns, Morris) to make a donation to the Chapel of the Four Chaplains Memorial Foundation was passed unanimously. ** Barry Amole presented the Chapter's 990 Report for review and approval prior to submission. Motion to accept the report (Wengel, Schweitzer) was approved unanimously.

Of Interest/Good of the Chapter: ** The CVAMC Car Show is scheduled for June 2nd in Lot E, 1000-1400 hours. ** The annual SEVC Car Show will be held August 14th from 1000 -1500 hours. ** Ralph Bassetti advised that VFW Post 845 is auctioning off the M1 Garand rifle for the benefit of our veterans; tickets cost \$10.00 each. ** Barry Amole has the tickets for the annual trip to the Reading Phillis game on August 24th. ** VVA national has a photo contest to select VVA pictures for their 2019 calendar. Details online or with our posted minutes. ** Missionary Flights International purchased some old DC-3s fitted with turboprops to fly emergency relief aid to needful places such as Puerto Rico, using all unpaid volunteers. Motion (Amole, DiLudovico) to make a donation to assist the organization was approved unanimously. ** Mike reports that Frank is already working on setting up this year's Crab Fest; details to follow. ** The members present made a donation to the Chapter's General Fund.



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