

The Voice of 436

October 2018

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



Next meeting:
Oct. 10th, 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
Secretary: Michael DiPuppo
Treasurer: Jim Doedderlein
Directors: Robert Gallagher
Chris Pitt
Sandy Lopacki
Vince DiLodovico
Bud McCullough
Rick Weimer

Following the summer hiatus, the September 12th meeting of VVA Chapter 436 was held as usual at the VFW Post 845 facility, Downingtown, PA, with 32 members and visitors in attendance. The session was called to order at 1935 hours by President Frank Houck, who led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, followed by a moment of silence in memory of our nation's POW-MIAs. Chaplain Joe Crescenzo gave the invocation, and Secretary Mike DiPuppo called the roll of Officers and Directors.

Jed Burns introduced the evening's principal guest speaker, Ms Carla Sivek who has been Medical Director at the Coatesville VA Medical Center since 2016. She was accompanied by Kirk Fernitz, who is the Director of Community, Congressional & Public Affairs and Combat Veterans Coordinator at the CVAMC. Ms Sivek has a degree in Health and Social Work from the University of Pittsburgh and was formerly Director of VISN 4 (Veterans Integrated Services Network) which includes PA, Wilmington and south Jersey. She noted that the VA Centers in Springfield and Spring City are operated by the VA in Coatesville. In addition to the fact that surgical specialists (Cardiology, Orthopedics and Gynecology) are now coming to see patients at the CVAMC, several major construction projects are underway there, including construction on a primary care building.

The Springfield outpatient clinic will move to Newtown Square, and they are looking for new space for the Spring City operation. These changes will provide new clinics and more efficient space management and availability, and should be a major benefit to patients and their families. VA's quality of care is as good as, or better than, any other health care program. Emphasizing "Do no harm!", safety and quality are primary concerns.

At her request, Jed Burns described his showcase project located in CVAMC's Bldg # 3, 2nd floor. He is looking for additional memorabilia to display there.

Mr. Fernitz followed with several announcements and updates, including:

- * Robert Wilkie is the new Secretary of the VA;
- * the VA's primary goal is to provide excellent customer service to veterans, employees and the community;
- * greater emphasis on suicide prevention coordination and training;
- * VA is moving toward recovery, whole health and wellness, not just treating sickness;
- * we can sign up for monthly information on Veterans benefits at 800-827-1000;
- * they are implementing a system to notify Veterans of their appointments by text and other means.
- * President Houck presented the speakers with our new challenge coins.

Upcoming Meetings

Regular membership meetings are held the 2nd Wednesdays of the month, exclusive of July and August.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for October 10th at the usual time and place; scheduled speaker is Jim Roach, Col., US Army (Ret.), about his experiences in Latin America.

Speaker for the November 14th meeting will be announced subsequently.

Website: <http://www.VVA436.org> This is a valuable resource containing all sorts of information about events, photos and video clips as worked up and posted by Webmaster Phil Prinzi. We recommend you visit it often to keep up with current events, and that you provide your feedback to Phil. We do ask that if you have any items for posting that you run them past Ken Schweitzer first.

Newsletter: This is a collaborative effort among Mike DiPuppo, John Morris, Jim Doedderlein, and Doc Maher. We do try to generate the issues by end of each month so if you have items for the issue please send them to John Morris at www.vva436@gmail.com or to Doc Maher at jmahermdmph@yahoo.com

Membership: Jim Doedderlein reported that we have 144 regular members and 10 associates. He is working on updating the list for the associates to establish and encourage more active participation by/ with them. In addition, Jim said that Bud McCullough has had some medical setbacks and was at Wellington House skilled nursing facility. **Update:** Bud has now been moved to Maris Grove, 107 Marshall Landing, Glen Mills

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:

** Secretary DiPuppo noted that two sets of Minutes were submitted: (a) the regular monthly minutes from 6/13/18, now posted on the website; and (b) the results of the annual audit of the General Fund managed by Jim Doedderlein, and the annual audit of the SGOC fund managed by Barry Amole, both of which are also posted for the members' scrutiny.

** Motion (Maher, Bassetti) to accept these reports as submitted and posted was unanimously approved.

** President Houck reminded everyone that the VVA Newsletter and Magazine have up-to-date information to share with the members, and encouraged everyone to read them to stay current.

** See our website for the Crabfest and Car Show pictures.

Fiscal: Motions to accept the Treasurer's Report (Gallagher, McTavish) and the SGOC Report (Schweitzer, Duncan) as submitted and posted, and subject as always to audit, were both approved unanimously. Barry explained that he had investigated the benefit to the Chapter of transferring funds from the low-interest Citadel FCU savings account into CDs, thus increasing the revenue there from \$8.00 to \$76.00.

** A meeting of the Chapter Advisory Panel is scheduled to discuss future Chapter donations (contact Ken).

Incoming Communications:

** The following letters of appreciation for our donations were received: the Gold Star Mothers National Monument Foundation, for our donation in February; the Military Order of the Purple Heart for our donation in June; and the Pennsylvania Wing Civil Air Patrol, also in June.

** A note from Mrs. Robert Reina thanking us for sending our new challenge coin to her husband who had not been able to attend meetings and who recently passed away due to complications from AO; she will present the coin to their grandson in his memory.

** Two issues of the Rolling Thunder Times (July and August) were received. To learn more about all their events, rides, and charities, visit www.rollingthunder1.com. Especially note their 8th National Wreaths Across America event on December 15th.

More About Avoiding Scams:

** Visit <http://www.va.gov/identitytheft>; note they also have a *VA I.D. Theft hotline* at 1-855-538-5492.

** Because there are so many scams out there, affecting different aspects of individual citizens' personal finances, the DOJ website has a Financial Exploitation Page, with an Elder Abuse Resource Roadmap to guide you to the right agency for your particular situation.

VA/Veterans Affairs:

** A Veterans Health & Wellness Open House will be held 9/20th, 1000-1400 hours, Bldg. 5, CVAMC;

** The CVAMC's Yoga for Veterans ongoing program is held Bldg. 58, Room 201; call ext. 6845 to reserve a space.

** September is both suicide Prevention month and

Blue print = email addresses **Red print = website hot links**
www.vva436.org: for updates & meetings minutes.

Emergency Preparedness month; check the VA and/or the CVAMC websites for further information.

** Info received via the State VVA about potential eligibility to wear individual and unit citation decorations for service in a combat Area of Operation (*Note: in this case AO does not mean Agent Orange*). The records are very difficult to gather. If you served in such an area with PCS orders, it should be on your DD-214; if only under TDY orders there it will not be on your 214, and you can start by searching for "DA Pam 672-3, Unit Citation & Campaign Participation Credit Register". Other possible useful links will be posted on the website.

** VA has a pamphlet available with contact info re those exposed to toxic water contaminants at Camp Lejeune.

For more info call 1-800-827-1000 or visit <https://explore.va.gov/disability-compensation>.

** Jeff White recommended individual members ask their legislators for copies of PA Laws Relating to Veterans.

More About The Wall: Continuing last month's facts about the VN Veterans Memorial Wall, we learn :

** Items left at the Wall are collected every day. Over 400,000 items have been left there in remembrance, and they are stored at a National Park Service facility.

View some at www.vvmf.org/items.

** The names of 8 women, all nurses (7 Army, 1 Air Force), are inscribed on the Wall.

** The Three Servicemen statue, Flagpole, Women's Memorial, and *In Memory* Plaque, all make up the official Vietnam Veterans Memorial in addition to The Wall."

** The Three Servicemen statue and Flagpole were added in 1984; the VN Women's memorial in 1993.

** The In Memory Plaque was dedicated in 2004 to honor those who served in Viet Nam and later died as a result of their service.

** There are many Wall replicas which travel the country to bring healing to thousands, but only one (The Wall That Heals) is associated with the Wall in D.C.

Of Interest/Good of the Chapter:

** Motion (Schweitzer, Amole) to finance the catered CVAMC Veterans Week luncheon, Bldg 138, on 11/7/18, was approved unanimously, as was the Motion (Amole, Massaro) to donate \$250 to the Pottstown Veterans Community Day.

** The West Chester Veterans day parade will be Sunday, 11/4th.

** See Chris Pitt for tickets (\$5.00 each) for the Boscov's Friends Helping Friends event.

** The County will be spraying in the WC area for West Nile Virus mosquitoes.

** The PASC meeting is scheduled for State College on November 3-4.

** Discussions re future Flyers game trips, and the SF Golf Outing were tabled.

** A veterans recognition event will be held on Nov. 9th at King Hall, Malvern, and will include Breakfast at 0715 and a Flag Raising at 1100 hours. Ralph Galatti is the scheduled speaker.



Major L. F. Guillermin Memorial Chapter 436

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Address label here