

The Voice of 436

November 2017 ✪ Major Louis. F. Guillermin Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 436



Next meeting:

Nov. 8, 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 October meeting of VVA Chapter 436 was called to order by President Frank Houck at 1935 hours, with 19 people, including 2 visitors (veterans who are potential new members), and 10 Officers and Directors, in attendance.

President Houck led the Pledge of Allegiance and the moment of silence for POW-MIAs, and Chaplain Joe Crescenz gave the invocation.

Secretary Mike DiPuppo submitted the September minutes with one correction to reflect the approval of the donation to the Philadelphia POW-MIA Memorial Fund. Motion (Maher, McTavish) to skip the reading and approve the minutes, as amended and posted on the website, was approved.

Treasurer Jim Doedderlein's report was approved on proper motion (Schweitzer, Amole) as was the motion (Morris, Gallagher) to approve and post 2nd VP Barry Amole's SGOC report.

Membership Chair Jim D's report showed 144 members and 12 Associate members, including the newly approved Ross Mowery.

Two visitors, both potential new members, were introduced:

(1.) Joe Selgrade, a Navy Seabee who spent 6 months in Viet Nam (1969) and has been a vocational teacher for 35 years;
(2.) Ed Speer, also a Navy Seabee, served in Vietnam 1969-1970, and has taught vocational education in Delaware for many years. Both were wished a hearty "welcome home!" and asked to provide their information to Membership Chair, Jim D.

Unfortunately, our scheduled speaker for the evening had arrived VFW Post early and was mistakenly mis-directed to someplace in western Chester County, effectively getting him lost in the down-pouring rain and resulting in his missing the meeting. Because we already have speakers scheduled for our November and December meetings, he has been re-scheduled to speak to the Chapter after the New Year.

Note: The next semi-annual conference of the Pennsylvania VVA State Council (PASC) is scheduled for the weekend of October 27-29 at the Ramada State College Hotel & Conference Center. President Houck indicated that he and Barry Amole would be attending the meeting and asked that if any other of our Chapter's delegates were also thinking of attending they would let him know.

Upcoming Meetings

Membership meetings are held the 2nd Wednesdays of the month, exclusive of July and August. Next meeting is November 8, 2017. Scheduled speaker is Lt. Col. Mike Perry (Ret.), Exec. Dir., Army Heritage Center Foundation, on "Preserving Veterans' memories."
December 13th meeting, scheduled speaker: Director, Veterans Services, St. Joseph's University, Ralph Galati, Capt., USAF (Ret.), F-4D Weapons Systems Officer, VN Vet and former POW.

Website: <http://www.vva436.org> Webmaster Phil Prinzi works hard to keep the site interesting and up-to-date. Visit it often and give him your feedback.

Newsletter: Please send items for consideration for use in these newsletters to John Morris (www.vva436@gmail.com) or Doc Maher (jmahermdmph@yahoo.com).

Membership: See Narrative section (above).

Agent Orange: Nearly 90,000 Blue Water Navy veterans, including the Fleet Marines, are asking for your help in urging Congress to pass HB 299 and S. 422, to reinstate their right to the benefits they deserve for being exposed to AO. Their website www.bluewaternavy.org is an excellent source of info and related study reports. The recent "Call-in Day" on Oct.12th was very helpful, and we are told that 304 Representatives and 43 Senators have signed on as co-sponsors, so keep the pressure on!

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)
- 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)
- VVA Life Membership: \$100 AVVA Life Membership Cost is based on applicant's age.

Incoming Correspondence:

** Request for a donation from the Alzheimer's Association was turned down as not being on our 2018 approved list of organizations for Chapter funding.
** Request for funding from the Chapel of the Four Chaplains; they are already on our donations list.
** Invitation from Chapter 466, Graterford Prison veterans to attend their 35th annual celebration on Saturday, 11/18th, at the Graterford Chapel. Visitors must register, have a photo I.D., and comply with their rules.
** The Rolling Thunder newsletter mentioned their 5th annual "Wreaths Across America" event on 12/16th; motion (Schweitzer, Amole) to donate \$200 to help them purchase Christmas wreaths for the graves of veterans at Somerset Memorial Park was approved unanimously.
** A flyer from VFW Post 845 requested donations of items to support Operation Military Christmas; donations to be placed in the receptacle in the Post's main area.

Honor Guard:

** CVAMC parade is scheduled for November 3rd at 0930.
** West Chester Parade will be held Sunday November 12th; muster at 1400 at Henderson High School as before; step-off at 1430, route along Gay Street to High Street and ending at the presentation at the historic Court House for ceremonial events.
** The Honor Guard will also do a 30 minute presentation at the Freedom With Mobility Track Chair event on Nov. 11th (websearch www.stillservingusa.com for details.
** A list of Veterans Week events (11/1st -11/11th) at the CVAMC was circulated; copies available on our website &/or the CVAMC website.

Educational/Scholarship Committee: Jed Burns reported the Committee has made progress, and have a tentative essay topic for the applications, but they want more input, including any alternate suggestions, from the membership before finalizing things. Contact Jed with suggestions.

Community Affairs:

** Chris Pitt noted pre-sales of the \$5.00 discount tickets for 10/17 Boscov's Friends Helping Friends are going well.
** Bingo Nights at the SEVC will start at 1900 on 10/26th and will be held there every 4th Tuesday; contact Ken Schweitzer to volunteer.
** Ken also reported they had a good turnout for the Center's Fall Festival.

Financial Discussion: President Houck discussed issues pertaining to the several requests for hurricane relief donations in light of our revenue projections and the Chapter's previously approved 2018 donation list. We will delay a group donation. He will be attending the upcoming PASC convention in State College and expects they will discuss some kind of combined donation setup, which he will report back on at the November meeting. Meanwhile, members can consider if/how they wish to respond to such requests on an individual basis.

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

VA/Veterans Affairs:

** The MCL's 18th annual BBQ chicken take-out or eat-in event will be held Saturday, 10/14th.
** Philadelphia Liberty Chapter will hold an event on 10/27 at the VN Memorial , Front & Spruce Streets, Phila.
** Dave McTavish reports that in January 2018 the VA will eliminate benefits for 7 previously compensable veterans' medical conditions. They claim to have paid out \$3.7 billion to 716,000 veterans in 2015 for 7 conditions "which military service is unlikely to cause."
** VA Secretary Shulkin is looking to revamp the current disability system which he says "incentivizes disability and is not sustainable;" -- e.g., he said the VA budget is at \$868 billion and it would help if they could switch certain categories (PTSD, MST) to attend wellness programs instead of continuing to generate cash payouts.
** Meantime, it is reported that the VA is working to get private sector input on a proposed "fast track" process for service-connected presumptive illnesses due to AO exposure in the VN War. They expect that 200,000 more veterans will file applications in the next 2 years due to the expected addition of 3 new presumptive AO-related conditions (Parkinson's Disease, Ischemic Heart Disease, and B-cell leukemias). Interestingly, one site we can't vouch for (www.veteransprograms.com/id1070.html) lists 43 AO/herbicide conditions for exposed vets and 17 for their offspring.

Old Business:

** Pres. Houck mentioned one suggested design from Dave McTavish for a new VVA 436 Challenge Coin, using a modified version of the Color Guard's shoulder patch for the front. Ken Schweitzer suggested using the type of plane flown by Major Guillermin for the back. Other pictures cut out from the Medals of America catalog were also submitted.
** Motion (Maher, Morris) to approve the previously proposed 2018 donation list was approved unanimously.
** Motion (Amole, Schweitzer) to donate \$1,000 to the Mobility Track Chair event was approved unanimously.
** Lengthy discussion of a motion (Burns) to set up an endowment fund to provide \$12,000/yr for the WC Eleven scholarships resulted in temporarily agreeing to an alternative motion (Morris, Burns) approved to amend the 2018 Donation list by adding a \$1,000/yr item for that purpose until details of the endowment concept can be further clarified. Jed will draft a letter for such a proposal for future consideration.

Of Interest/Good of the Chapter:

** Free seasonal flu vaccine is now available to eligible veterans at the CVAMC and their community based outpatient clinics in Spring City and Springfield. If you can't make it there, check for a participating Walgreen's pharmacy at www.walgreens.com/pharmacy/immunization/seasonal_flu.jsp.
** The members donated \$26.00 to the General Fund.
Motion to Adjourn (Burns, Morris): was approved at 2035 hours.



Major L. F. Guillermin Memorial Chapter 436

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