

Vietnam Veterans of America

Darwin J. Thomas Memorial Chapter 201

CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

Monday, May 18, 2015

Harry's Hof Brau Restaurant
390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose, CA 95129

I. The meeting was called to order by Vice President Robert Kadlec at 7:10 PM at Harry's Hof Brau Restaurant. Sergeant-At-Arms Chuck Barber led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chaplain Randy Richmond provided the invocation and called for a moment of silence in respect for our POWs, MIAs, KIAs and our Brothers and Sisters with health issues or are in dire straights.

II. Roll Call of Chapter Officers:

President - David Sanders (Excused)
Vice President - Robert Kadlec
Secretary/Treasurer - Barbara Johnston
1-year Board Member - Dennis Foggie
2-year Board Member - Walter Dillard (Absent)
3-year Board Member - Randy Richmond

III. Introduction of Guests:

Wives of Chapter members attending the meeting were introduced.

IV. Reading of Minutes:

Minutes of the April meeting mailed to the membership were approved without change.

V. Correspondence:

- Letter from the National Office -- Request support for National Toxic Exposure Research Act legislation (HR-1769 & S-901).
- Letter from the National Office -- List of 114 Congressional Members.
- Letter from the National Office -- Agenda list of Congressional legislation.
- Check from the National Office for \$495.00 for Chapter Life Memberships.

VI. Financial Report:

Asset = \$1,491.28
Expenses = \$ 00
Balance = \$1,491.28

VII. Officer Reports:

President: David Sanders made the following Chapter Officer appointments:

- Chapter Order #1 -- Chaplain Randall Richmond.
- Chapter Order #2 -- Sergeant-At-Arms Charles Barber.
- Chapter Order #3 -- Chapter Veteran Service Officer and VA Veteran Services representative (VSO/VAVS) Michael Berliner.
- Chapter Order #4 -- Chapter VA Veteran Services representative Gerald Arnold.

Secretary: Barbara Johnston reported that the Chapter Financial Report for National has been prepared and will be submitted. Additionally, Barbara requested the Chapter approve reimbursement of \$261.00 for delegate attendance at the April CSC meeting in Fresno and Certified mail to the CSC for \$14.80 and \$14.00 for National for submission of member DD-214s. William Lewis so moved and Randy Richmond seconded. **Motion passed.**

Board of Directors: The Chapter Board of Directors met on 7 April 2015 and approved a draft Chapter budget to be submitted to the membership at the 18 May 2015 meeting for their review. The Chapter membership is to vote on the budget at the 15 June 2015 meeting.

VIII. CSC Report: Bob Johnston attended the 24-26 April 2015 California State Council (CSC) Conference in Fresno as the Chapter Delegate. Barbara Johnston and Bob Kadlec attended as Chapter Alternates. The following issues were addressed and information disseminated:

- VVA National VSO, Karen Olszewski gave an informative presentation on procedures for filing VA claims.
- Veterans Benefits Fund -- \$36,000 has been donated to State programs. The Wounded Warrior Program may be admirable, however, it is hurting non-profit fundraising.
- Membership Affairs -- Need to better define the mission of the VVA: How do we help today's new veterans? Not just Vietnam Veterans. Suggestions include scholarships for veterans and their families and philanthropic support to veterans in need.

Suggested that Chapters recommend individuals interested in becoming Life Members to hold off on applying until August 2015 when National will be running a promotion charging \$100 for Life Membership regardless of age.

- Central District Breakout Session -- Question Raised on how long Chapters must retain their records. Other than for historical purposes, apparently the IRS requires at least 5-years. Concern was raised about where Chapter, and VVA, assets go when a Chapter is shut down or abandoned. NOT RESOLVED:

- HGDP -- The Household Goods Distribution Program (HGDP) 2016 budget was discussed. Chapter 201 will be receiving \$385 per month between April 2015 and March 2016. The Chapter must be represented at all CSC meeting or lose it's funding and must "distribute" monies received for specific exempt or charitable purposes only. Reports to be submitted twice a year.
- California Region 8 & 9 Pre-Convention Conference will be held in Reno, NV on 27 June 2015. Issues include introduction of National Officer Candidates, proposed VVA Constitution amendments and proposed resolutions for the VVA 17th National convention to be held in Springfield, IL between 21 & 25 July 2015.

IX. Unfinished Business:

The Chapter will participate in the United Veterans Council (UVC) Ceremony at the Oak Hill Memorial Park Veterans Section on Monday, 25 May 2015. The Chapter will post its colors and place the Vietnam Wreath. Following the UVC ceremony, the Chapter will conduct a Memorial Day Service at the Field of Honor, including a POW/MIA Service. Volunteers to support both ceremonies are needed and should sign up with President Dave Sanders at the Veterans Section by 10:00AM.

X. New Business:

- VVA request for Chapter donations of \$2,000 to \$3,000 to support the Gold Star Mothers Family Monument (at Arlington National Cemetery) fundraiser was "tabled" until the June meeting.
- Chapter VSO Michael Berliner advised that there will be a FREE legal advice clinic covering VA benefits and discharge upgrades on the third Wednesday of the month between 12:00 noon and 2:30PM at the Palo Alto VA Hospital (Building 101, room A2109).
- Bob Johnston will be the Chapter Delegate to both the CSC Region 8/9 Conference in Reno, NV and the National VVA Convention in Springfield, IL. His cost for the Reno conference is for the registration only. His expenses for the National Convention include transportation, registration, and hotel room.
 - Motion was made to reimburse Bob Johnston \$45 to cover the cost of the Reno, NV conference registration -- **Passed**.
 - Motion was made by Dennis Foggie (Bill Lewis Second) to allocate funding, not to exceed \$1,500, to cover Bob Johnston expenses to attend the National VVA Convention in Springfield, IL. Amendment to the motion was made by Gerald Arnold (Randy Richmond Second) to submit the request to the Chapter BOD for approval -- **Passed**. An Amendment to the amendment to require the full BOD membership (all six), not just the two thirds required by the Chapter Constitution (Bylaws), consider the request was rejected.

XI. AVVA Report: Cang Kim Dong, Vice President of AVVA Chapter 201, sent greetings from the Chapter 201 Associates.

XII. Good of the Order:

- American Legion District 13 Annual Flag Retirement Ceremony will be held at the Oak Hill Memorial Park Veterans Section on 13 June at 11:00 AM. Bring your old flags to be retired.
- List of the top 12 Veteran Bills for 2015 to come before the State Legislature, prepared by Pete Conaty & Associates for the CSC, was distributed. The CSC is either a sponsor or a supporter of the bills.
- Next scheduled VVA Chapter 201 meeting will be held on Monday June 15, 2015 at 7:00 PM at the Sunnyvale Moose Lodge. Coffee and a dessert (cupcakes) will be provided.

XI. Closing Ceremony

- Chaplain Randy Richmond provided the closing benediction and Sergeant-At-Arms Chuck Barber retired the Colors.
- Meeting was adjourned at 8:40PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara Johnston

Barbara Johnston, Secretary
Darwin J. Thomas Chapter 201
Vietnam Veterans of America