

Vietnam Veterans of America
Darwin J. Thomas Memorial Chapter 201

CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

Monday, October 19, 2015

Holder's Country Inn
998 South DeAnza Blvd, San Jose, CA 95129

Attendees:

Gene Fanucchi	(USA)
Warren Finch	(USA)
Dennis Foggie	(USAF)
Michael Frangadakis	(USA)
John Hassenplug	(USN)
Clyde Horn	(Guest) (USA)
Barbara Johnston	(USA)
Robert Johnston	(USA)
Robert Kadlec	(USAF)
William D. (Bill) Lewis	(USA)
Donald MacDougall	(USA)
James W. McMann	(USA)
James Medeiros	(USA)
Francis McVey	(USN)
Randall Richmond	(USA)
David Sanders	(USAF)
Dennis Whittaker	(USA)
Oleta Willhite	(Guest)
Reuben Willhite	(USMC)
Cang Kim Dong	(AVVA)

I. The meeting was called to order by President David Sanders at 7:02 PM (1902 hours) at the Holder's Country Inn. President Sanders led the Pledge of Allegiance and 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
Vice President - Robert Kadlec
Secretary/Treasurer - Barbara Johnston
1-year Board Member - Dennis Foggie
2-year Board Member - Gerald Arnold (Excused)
3-year Board Member - Randy Richmond

III. Guests:

Clyde Horn (USA) {New Member}
Oleta Willhite {Guest}

IV. Reading of Minutes:

Minutes of the September 23rd meeting were forwarded electronically to the membership. Motion to approve by John Hassenplug and Second by Randall Richmond. The minutes were approved.

V. Correspondence:

- Anonymous donation of \$50.00 received.
- Bill Collier (Captain, USMC) has published a new book titled "The adventures of a Helicopter Pilot, Flying the H-34 in Vietnam for the United States Marine Corps." The book can be ordered on Amazon at: <http://www.amazon.com/The-Adventures-Helicopter-Pilot-helicopter/dp/1500936138> for \$20.00.
- E-mail forwarded by Mike Shaw, from his new home in Thailand, from David Sanchez requested information about his father Dave Sanchez from San Jose, CA. He served in Vietnam and would like to find information so he can better be able to communicate with his father about his past service.

VI. Financial Report:

- Treasurer reported that an Income & Expense report for the period ending August 31, 2015 was completed. There was one discrepancy of \$1.13 which is currently being resolved.
- During the June 15, 2015 Chapter meeting, the membership approved a donation of \$100.00 to the Gold Star Mothers Family Monument (at Arlington National Cemetery) fundraiser. This donation has not been sent because of the lack of a mailing address. Additionally, there is apparent confusion/misunderstanding in this project. The VVA request apparently is the desire that local Chapters conduct fund raising for this project to raise about \$2,000.00 each for construction of the monument instead of merely sending a Chapter donation. This issue will need to be resolved.
- Copy of the Financial Report was distributed:

September 23rd Balance:	=	<u>\$2,044.76</u>
Plus Income	=	<u>\$ 885.00</u>
<u>Sub-Total</u>	=	<u>\$2,929.76</u>
Minus Expenses	=	<u>\$ 785.00</u>
<u>Balance</u>	=	<u>\$2,144.76</u>

Motion to approve by James W. McMann and Second by Randall Richmond.

- Three members will be required to perform an Audit of the Chapter books/finances. Chapter Board of Directors members Dennis Foggie (Lead), Gerald Arnold and Randall Richmond will perform the Audit.

VII. Officer Reports:

President:

- Gerald Arnold was appointed (Chapter Order #7) Veteran Services Officer (VSO) replacing Mike Berliner who resigned from the Chapter.
- Michael Frangadakis was appointed (Chapter Order #8) Chapter Sergeant at Arms replacing Chuck Barber who has moved to Modesto, California.

- The Monterey Bay Rock Cod Fishing Trip Took place on Saturday, October 3rd. Marina American Legion Post provided a spaghetti dinner feed the night before for those who arrived on Friday. After the fishing trip, the Seaside American Legion Post held a BBQ banquet at which awards were presented to fishing participants. The Monterey Presidio Army Housing Office provided accommodations to Disabled Veterans for the fishing trip.
- The San Jose Veterans Center will receive a new flagpole for its new location (440 N 1st St, San Jose, CA 95112). There will be a ceremonial Flag Raising on Saturday, November 7th from 11AM to 1:30PM. All veteran organizations, and the UVC, are encouraged to support this event with their attendance at this ceremony.
- Special thanks to Ruben and Oleta Willhite for the donation of Holiday Cards that can be used at Palo Alto and Menlo Park VA Hospitals during visitations.
- A thank you will be sent to the Sunnyvale Moose lodge for their quarterly donation of \$100.00 to the Chapter to support veterans.

VIII. Board Of Directors Report:

Nothing to report.

IX. California State Council (CSC) Report:

The next CSC Conference will be held in Fresno between 23 and 25 October. President Dave Sanders will be the Chapter Delegate in attendance.

X. United Veterans Council (UVC) Delegates Report

- UVC President Fran McVey reported that there will not be any display of the individual military service logos/emblems during this year's Veterans' Day Parade. This is the result of the Department of Defense enforcement of the regulation requiring a license for the use of these logos/emblems. Without approval, use of the logos/emblems will result in a \$5,000.00 fine for each "illegal" use.
- The City of San Jose approved the flying of the POW/MIA flag at City Hall 365-days a year, now, it is the turn of Santa Clara County to also fly the flag. The UVC has submitted a request to the County and Chapter member Michael Frangadakis, current President of the Santa Clara County Veterans Commission, advised that the Commission is reviewing the request and will forward their recommendation to the County Board of Supervisors for approval.
- The UVC still needs volunteers to help with the Veterans' Day Parade. Because of the increased size of this year's parade (about twice that of last year), use of an additional lot north on Autumn Street will be required for staging. Since UVC President Fran McVey needs to support activities in the Staging Area, UVC Vice President (and Chapter 201 member) Warren Finch will represent the UVC on the Reviewing Stand. A special joint City and County Press/News Conference is planned to be held at the Reviewing Stand at 10:30am, prior to the opening ceremony.
- The UVC will also be holding a "Honor on the Row" event at Santana Row between 2:00PM and 6:00PM following the Parade. There will be a number of historic military vehicles (approximately 20) on the Row and the public is encouraged to have their photo taken with the vehicles. Additionally, there will be several "booths" set up for veteran and military organizations to distributing information and conduct recruiting for their organizations.

- Chapter 201 is scheduled to participate in the UVC Flag Lowering Ceremony on October 25. President Sanders will be attending the CSC Conference in Fresno, therefore, Vice President Kadlec will “officiate” for the Chapter. All are encourage to attend this ceremony and three members will be required for the lowering and folding of the flag. We will also need participation of the AVVA Color Guard.

XI. Committee Reports:

Membership Committee (Robert Johnston, Sr.):	The Chapter currently has 77 members. 63 Life members, 11 Individual member and 3 Incarcerated.
POW/MIA Committee (Robert Johnston, Sr.):	Nothing to report.
Agent Orange Committee (David Sanders, Sr.):	The October 15, 2015 issue of the Stars & Stripes newspaper reported that the House and Senate veterans affairs committees quietly allowed a provision of the Agent Orange Act of 1991 to expire on 1 October. Committee staff and the VA agree that the change has not impacted the VA’s authority to decide to expand the list of diseases presumed connected to wartime herbicide exposure. But veteran advocates, and at least one lawmaker, suggest the change is intended to dampen VA cost risks and perhaps ease political pressure on the Secretary and Congress facing a potential tsunami of disability claims. http://www.stripes.com/news/us/agent-orange-law-changes-as-new-cost-fears-surface-1.373413
Constitution/Bylaws (Robert Kadlec):	Nothing to report.
Community Services Committee (David Sanders, Sr.):	Nothing to report.
Government Affairs Committee (David Sanders, Sr.):	Nothing to report.
Employment Training & Business Opportunities (ETaBO) (Randall Richmond):	Nothing to report.
Finance & Fund Raising Committee (Randall Richmond):	Chapter Fund Raiser at Moffett Field Commissary is tentatively planned for 12/13 December 2015. Detail to be addressed at the November meeting.
Public Affairs Committee(Vacant):	Nothing to report.
Veterans benefits Committee (Vacant):	Nothing to report.
San Jose Veterans Center Committee (David Sanders, Sr.):	Nothing to report.
Veterans Incarcerated Committee (David Sanders, Sr.):	Nothing to report.
Women Veterans Committee (Barbara Johnston):	Nothing to report.

XII. Unfinished Business:

- Past Chapter President Bob Johnston, Sr. has delivered several boxes of Chapter material to President Sanders. The material includes a flight suit which might have belonged to Darwin Thomas.

- Joaquin Miller Jr. High Veterans Recognition:
 Joaquin Miller Junior High School (6151 Rainbow Drive, San Jose, CA 95129 408-252-3755) will hold an Annual Recognition for Veterans during Veterans' Day week. Each Veteran participating will be assigned to a student to be escorted on to the football field to be recognized and then escorted to an indoor room to answer questions from the students. This is akin to our Speakers Bureau Program.
- Report from the VVA National Convention on July 21 to 25, 2015:
 - Delegate count at the July Convention was 743-delegates. Elected officers for 2015/2016 were: John Rowan - President (reelected); Marsha Four - Vice President (reelected); Bill Meeks - Secretary (reelected); Wayne Reynolds - Treasurer (reelected); Dick Southern - Region 9 Director (reelected). Additionally, Jerry Yamamoto was elected as California Director at large to the Board of Directors.
 - There were 31 Constitutional amendments and two resolutions proposed during the Convention. Changes to the National VVA Constitution that affect the State and/or Chapter:
 - 1) Clarified that the Chapter levels has "Bylaws," not Constitution.
 - 2) Permit the option to elect officers to either a one-year or two-year term.
 - 3) Delete the reference to "Telegraphic Terminals" for media communications.
 - 4) Change title "Nomination Committee" to read "Election Committee."
 - 5) Chapter Secretaries are responsible for the safekeeping of member DD-214 forms, or other forms of proof of military service.

XIII. New Business:

Nothing to report.

XIV. Good of the Order:

- The AVVA will not be holding BBQs at the VA hospitals in Palo Alto and Menlo Park due to a yet resolved requirement for a "health certificate" for food handling. Instead, there will be "Visitations" planned around the Christmas Holiday period. It is proposed that a visitation to the VA Menlo Park Hospital take place over the 19/20 December time period. Long time Chapter member Ken Cook is currently in building 360, Pod D at Menlo Park. Also, long time Chapter member Earl Edwards is in an Assisted Living facility on Bascom Avenue in San Jose.
- The Chapter might want to consider partnering with American Legion District 13 during their Presidents Day event in February 2016.
- Michael Frangadakis reported that the National Guard Veterans Affairs Commission of Santa Clara County currently has seven (7) members and is looking for three (3) new volunteers for the Commission. The Commission provides a voice to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. The Commission has established a Veterans Memorial Foundation with plans to erect a Veterans Memorial in Los Gatos. Fund raising goal is between \$700 thousand and one million dollars annually.
- The State of California Military Reserve is accepting volunteers. Members would support State activities and would not be deployed outside of the State. There is no age limit for membership; however, all volunteers must pass a military physical. Benefits include free education at a State college or university for children of members over the age of 18.

- Dennis Whittaker reported on the Joaquin Miller Jr. High Veterans Recognition Day: Joaquin Miller Junior High School (6151 Rainbow Dr, San Jose, CA 95129 408-252-3755) will hold an Annual Recognition for Veterans during Veterans' Day week. Each Veteran participating will be assigned to a student to be escorted on to the football field to be recognized and then escorted to an indoor room to answer questions from the students. This is akin to our Speakers Bureau Program.
- Bill Lewis Reported on the "California Challenge" Ride 2 Recovery six-day bike ride for recovering California Veterans to be held between 17 and 24 October 2015. The first leg of the ride is from the Palo Alto VA Hospital to Santa Cruz. For more information on the "Ride 2 Recovery," go to: <https://ride2recovery.com/event.php?ID=709>.
- Randall Richmond reported that the Mountain View Surplus on Bascom Avenue in Campbell will be closing by December 2016. Therefore, they are holding discount sales as they draw down the business.
- The documentary film "Of Men and War" will be screening daily at Camera Cinemas (201 S 2nd St.) from November 13th - 19th. The film provides a look into the lives of twelve returned veterans and follows their efforts to recover from PTSD and depicts the refuge found in fellow veterans and support providers. Involvement of VVA members at one or multiple screenings is encouraged by the producers (Alice Films). For more information, contact Hannah Campbell, Outreach Manager, Matson Films: hannah@matsonfilms.com or phone at 213-232-0135.
- The VVA National Headquarters and the California State Council continues to solicit support from VVA membership regarding encouraging your representatives sponsorship of the Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015 -- H.R. 1769 and S.901. The Legislative Action site is at: <http://capwiz.com/vva/home/>.

XV. Closing Ceremony

- The next scheduled VVA Chapter 201 meeting will be held on Monday November 16, 2015 at Holder's Country Inn. Social hour and dinner begins at 6:00 PM with the meeting at 7:00 PM. The Chapter will pay for dessert for those arriving at 6:00 PM.
- Chaplain Randall Richmond provided the closing benediction and Sergeant-At-Arms Michael Frangadakis retired the Colors.
- Meeting was adjourned at 8:38PM (2038 hours).

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara Johnston

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