

Vietnam Veterans of America
Darwin J. Thomas Memorial Chapter 201

CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 23, 2015

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

Attendees:

Gerald Arnold (USN)
John Hassenplug (USN) {Guest}
Barbara Johnston (USA)
Robert Johnston (USA)
Robert Kadlec (USAF)
William Lewis (USA)
Donald MacDougall (USA)
Joann MacDougall {Guest}
Francis McVey (USN)
David Sanders (USAF)
Richard Segovia (USA) {CSC Central District Director}
Jack Wells (USMC)
Reuben Willhite (USMC)
Oleta Willhite {Guest}
Cang Kim Dong (AVVA)

I. The meeting was called to order by President David Sanders at 7:08 PM (1908 hours) at the Holder's Country Inn. President Sanders led the Pledge of Allegiance and 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. The September meeting date was changed to Wednesday, September 23, 2015, as a result of an unexpected, and unplanned, closure of Holder's Country Inn because of PG&E repair work on their lines. This was a one-time date change.

II. Roll Call of Chapter Officers:

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

III. Guests:

Richard Segovia (USA) {CSC Central District Director}
John Hassenplug (USN) {New Member}
Joann MacDougall {Guest}
Oleta Willhite {Guest}

IV. Reading of Minutes:

Minutes of the August 17 meeting were forwarded electronically to the membership. Following correction is made under Good of the Order: “The Monterey Bay Rock Cod Fishing Trip will take place on October 3rd. For those with a ~~60-percent-or-less~~ **40-percent or more** disability are qualified to participate.” Motion to approve by Gerald Arnold and Second by Reuben Willhite. The minutes were approved with the change.

V. Correspondence:

Nothing to report.

VI. Financial Report:

Copies of the Financial Reports for July through September were distributed:

End of July Balance: = \$2,426.48

End of August Balance: = \$1,644.76

September 23rd Balance: = \$2,044.76

Motion to Table the Financial report until the October meeting by Robert Kadlec and Second by Fran McVey.

VII. Officer Reports:

President:

- The City of San Jose held the dedication of the POW/MIA flag raising in front of City Hall on September 18th. Mayor Sam Liccardo, Vice Mayor Rose Herrera, several City Council members, and a large number of Veterans and public were in attendance. Only thing missing was the media. The POW/MIA flag will fly with the National Colors in front of City Hall 365-days a year.
- Mike Berliner has resigned from the Chapter. His wife is experiencing serious health issues. His Chapter positions of Veteran Services Officer (VSO) and UVC Delegate will need to be filled.
- 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.
- 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.
- The AVVA Color Guard needs replacement of its old bolt-action rifles. The Chapter has a contact and is investigating obtaining M1 Garands as a replacement.
- The Chapter needs to plan for a fund raising drive at the Moffett Commissary.

- The next issue of the California VVA Zephyr newsletter will have an article and photo of the POW/MIA Flag Raising Dedication with Chapter Members Dave Sanders and Fran McVey who were instrumental in obtaining the San Jose City Council approval.

Chaplain (President Sanders filling in for Randy Richmond):

- Earl Edwards is still in an Assisted Living facility on Bascom Avenue in San Jose.
- Ken Cook is now in the Menlo Park VA Hospital (building 331).

Veteran Service Officer:

Mike Berliner (VSO) has resigned from the Chapter and a replacement will have to be appointed.

VIII. Board Of Directors Report:

A Board of Directors meeting is tentatively planned for the week of 28 September.

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

- The UVC needs more help from member organizations and delegates to help with the Veterans' Day Parade including handing out 20,000 plus copies of this year's Program to spectators.
- The Grant check from Santa Clara County (for the UVC Parade) was mistakenly mailed to an incorrect address. The check will be reissued and President Dave Sanders will pick it up and deliver it to the UVC.
- With the success of the approval by the City of San Jose to fly the POW/MIA flag 365-days a year in front of City Hall, the UVC will now meet with Santa Clara County Armed Forces & Veteran Commission to fly the POW/MIA flag at the County Building on Hedding Street 365-days a year.
- President Sanders and Fran McVey have been asked by San Jose Vice Mayor Rose Herrera to participate on the San Jose "Veterans Empowering Veterans" Committee to handle homelessness. The City Council is purchasing the old Plaza Hotel in downtown San Jose to make it a shelter for the homeless.
- VVA Chapter-201 is scheduled for Flag Lowering on October 25, 2015.

XI. Committee Reports:

Membership Committee (Robert Johnston, Sr.):	The Chapter currently has 72 members. 57 Life members, 12 Individual member and 3 Incarcerated.
POW/MIA Committee (Robert Johnston, Sr.):	Nothing to report.
Agent Orange Committee (David Sanders, Sr.):	Hepatitis A Status.
Constitution/Bylaws (Robert Kadlec):	Working with Dennis Foggie to prepare changes to the Chapter Bylaws.
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):	Working with Moffett Field Commissary to hold a Chapter Fund Raiser.
Public Affairs Committee(Charles Barber):	Chuck Barber moving to Modesto. Nothing to report.
Veterans benefits Committee (Vacant):	Michael Berliner has resigned from the Chapter. 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:

- UVC Veterans' Day Donation:
The Chapter was able to make a donation of \$503.43 to the UVC from the HGDP funds to support this year's UVC Veterans' Day Parade.
- Joaquin Miller Jr. High Veterans Recognition:
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.

XIII. New Business:

- Monterey Bay Rock Cod Fishing Trip:

The fishing trip will take place on October 3rd. Those with a 40-percent or greater disability are qualified to participate. An Application can be found at mbv.org. Gerry Arnold moved to have the Chapter donate \$250.00 to support the trip. Motion Seconded by Donald MacDougall. Approved.

- UVC Veterans' Day Parade:

The Chapter will submit an application to participate in the Veterans' Day Parade again this year. There are several other events taking place at the same time that may conflict with the Parade. Mountain View is holding a Veterans Memorial Dedication at 11:00AM, the City of Santa Clara is holding its annual ceremony at the park on Kiely at 3:00PM and the UVC will hold an "Honor on the Row" event at Santana Row between 2:00PM and 6:00PM.

XIV. Good of the Order:

- The annual 9/11 Service at Oak Hill this year was great. There were a number of high school volunteers who helped out and it was suggested that some of them might be recruited to assist with the Veterans' Day Parade.
- There will be a cruise on the SS Jeremiah O'Brien "Liberty Ship" from San Francisco's Pier 45 on July 16, 2016. The cruise will be from 11:00 in the morning until 4:00 in the afternoon and cost \$100 per person. A discount might be provided to Veterans. It is suggested that the Chapter contact the other Northern California VVA Chapters to coordinate a group to participate in the cruise.
- The AVVA is planning on holding BBQs at the VA hospitals in Palo Alto and Menlo Park. A requirement for a "health certificate" for food handling will be needed. It appears that the BBQ might be delayed until perhaps the December/Christmas/Hanukkah/Kwanza/Festivus time frame.
- The Chapter might want to consider resurrecting the "Darwin's Kids" charitable program.
- Bob Johnston, Sr. reported that he has about \$6,100.00 in VVA products that can be used for fund raising sales. Items include patches, bumper stickers, military unit pins, etc.
- Bill Lewis recommended the book, "Post Traumatic Shame Disorder" by Darrell D. Turner (PHD), that addresses PTSD issues and how the social, political, and cultural conditions during the 1960s experienced by Vietnam Veterans have affected them. The book can be ordered online at <http://www.posttraumaticshamedisorder.com/store.html>. Enter the "coupon Code" VET to receive a 10-percent discount from the cover price.
- A new movie being shown on PBS titled "On two Fronts - Latinos In Vietnam" is recommended. The first showing was on September 22nd on KQED and can be viewed on line at: <http://video.pbs.org/video/2365563511/>. The DVD can be purchased from Amazon for \$29.99 at <http://www.amazon.com/On-Two-Fronts-Latinos-Vietnam/dp/B014VVNUFK>.
- CSC Central District Director Richard Segovia encouraged all to contact their representatives to ask for their backing of H.R. 1769 and S.901, the Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2015. If you go to the VVA web site <http://capwiz.com/vva/home/> and enter your Zip Code, you can send a prepared letter to your Representatives and Senators asking them to join their colleagues to cosponsor the legislation.

- Bob Johnston, Sr. advised that he would draft up a report of his attendance at the National VVA Convention in Springfield, Illinois in July and provide it for distribution to the membership.
- It was noted that National organizations such Wounded Warriors and Paralyzed Veterans, are running “slick” TV productions soliciting donations for disabled Veterans. Problem is that these organizations are making it difficult for Veteran organizations (both local and national) such as the VVA to perform fund raising since these organizations have high visibility and are dominating fund raising. Much of the money they collect goes to administrative expenses and advertising with little going to the veterans. An example is the reported salary of the head of the Wounded Warriors organization who is drawing a salary of about \$413,000 per year.
- Former Chapter member Phil, and wife Vera, Kinsey is a founder of the “Point Man Ministries,” an evangelistic organization for service veterans and their families (www.pmim.org). They were very active in the Chapter’s BBQs at Palo Alto and Menlo Park. They are now living in Ohio where that are running a local ministry “outpost.” Point Man Ministries might be consider as an organization for a future Chapter philanthropic contribution.

XV. Closing Ceremony

- The next scheduled VVA Chapter 201 meeting will be held on Monday October 19, 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.
- Gerald Arnold called for a moment of silence for the departed and President Sanders provided the closing benediction and retired the Colors.
- Meeting was adjourned at 8:34PM (2034 hours).

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara Johnston

Barbara Johnston, Secretary

Darwin J. Thomas Chapter 201

Vietnam Veterans of America