

Mike Voth Memorial Chapter 5

Vietnam Veterans of America P. O. Box 832 Eau Claire, WI 54702 Jan/Feb 2018 Newsletter

Meetings held 1st Wednesday of every month @ 7pm VFW Post #7232, 2900 W. Folsom St., Eau Claire, WI



Editor – Julie McBee

Volume 4 Issue 1&2

UPCOMING EVENTS

02/03/18 Dennis Werlein Funeral, Mondovi
02/07/18 Chapter Meeting @ 7 pm @ Post 7232
******** AVVA Meeting @ 6:30 pm @ Post 7232
02/24/18 Friends of The Highground Dinner, Neillsville
03/07/18 Chapter Meeting @ 7 pm @ Post 7232
******** AVVA Meeting @2 6:30 pm @ Post 7232
03/17/18 VVA State Council Meeting, Waupaca
03/24/18 Vietnam Veterans Day @ Eagles Club, Lake Hallie
03/25/18 Vietnam Veterans Day @ Ladysmith
4/12-14/18 Purple Heart Recipients, Branson, MO

Chapter web site: <u>www.mikevothmemorialvva5.org</u> E Chapter email: <u>www.mikevothmemorialvva5@gmail.com</u> Facebook: <u>www.facebook.com/mikevothmemorialvva5</u>

COMMITTEES

Veterans Assistance: John Dorsey 715-835-5055 Finance: Joe Heil 715-839-7089 Outdoor Recreation: Bill Anderson 715-530-3481 EC City Veterans Memorial Park: Dan Ziegler 715-559-5158 Govt. Affairs: Bob Laguban 651-285-8518 Membership: Joe Heil 715-839-7089 Public Affairs: Joe Graff 715-579-0912 Minority Affairs: Dave Zien 715-829-9436 Women Veterans: Julie McBee 715-202-0181 POW/MIA/Highground: Joe Graff 715-579-0912 Service Officer: Peter Breed 715-642-1246 Fundraising Chair: Larry Wrycza & Co-Chair: Julie McBee Scholarship: J. Graff, J. Heil, J. McBee AVVA Chapter Representative: Julie McBee 715-202-0181 Historical: Julie McBee 715-202-0181 Vets in the Classroom: Rory Schutte 715-563-1583 Color Guard: Rick Talford 715-647-2091

CHAPTER CONTACTS

President Mike Korger 715-726-3918 VP Larry Wrycza 715-402-0106 Treasurer Joe Heil 715-839-7089 Secretary James 'Mac' McBee 715-202-0180 Chaplain

BOARD of DIRECTORS

Joe Graff 715-579-0912 Ken Lestrud 715-235-9432 Ralph Ottum 715-223-6260 Rory Schutte 715-563-1583 Ernie Werlein 715-926-4222

Founding principle, Vietnam Veterans of America "Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another."



God Bless All Veterans

Chapter Moto: Honor the DEAD and fight like Hell for the LIVING!





"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

To be given slow and deliberate, not a speed test!

Greetings;

A belated Happy New Year to ever4yone! A lot happened this past year and what will this new year bring? What can we accomplish and who all can we help?

We had a successful Christmas party at the Veterans Home in Chippewa Falls that we cosponsored with the DAV on Friday, December 8th. There were a number of us there and we seemed to have had a lot of good interaction with the veterans.

We had plenty of us show up at the Pizza Ranch on Wednesday, January 24th to bus tables as a fundraiser for us. I had to leave for a meeting so Ii don't know if we did as well financially as the first time we did it. (Editor's note: yes we did! We'll receive \$150 from Pizza Ranch as our 10% of the night's proceeds and we made \$265 in tips—not too shabby if I say so myself!)

A group of us made it to the Rose Bowl Lanes in Marshfield for a bowling tournament on Sunday, January 28th. It is an annual fundraiser sponsored by The Highground. All 24 lanes were filled and there were plenty of raffles, door prizes, silent auction items, Chinese auction items and fun. Joe Graff helped run some of the raffles as he has done in previous years.

If anyone would like to help with setting up the annual Vietnam Veterans Day for the spring, please contact Joe Heil. It will be on Saturday, March 24th at the Eagles Club in Lake Hallie and on Sunday, March 25th in Ladysmith. We will <u>need</u> help with a color guard at both locations.

I haven't gotten much accomplished for the possible bus trip to the "Wall" in Washington, D.C. yet. I'm hoping to line up some sponsors so it won't cost us so much. It looks like a three night trip; one on the way there, one while we are out there, and one on the way back. Hope-fully the first week of April right after Easter and still during cherry blossom time would be the dates.

There is some very sad news to report. Our VVA Chapter 5 immediate past President, Dennis Werlein, has passed away while in hospice at his home. Dennis has been a very active member of our Chapter and was one of the early organizers and promoters of the VVA. Hopefully everyone will get contacted or see what the funeral arrangements are in time to attend them.

Be sure to attend our next regular meeting and hear from the Director of Klein Hall (for homeless vets) in Chippewa Falls. We will find out how we can help them. I hope to see all of you at our next regular meeting at 7:00 pm (AVVA meeting at 6:30 pm) on Wednesday, February 7th at VFW Post 7232 on Folsom Street on the west side of Eau Claire.

Mike Korger President, VVA Chapter 5



Dennis D. Werlein May 12, 1945 – January 27, 2018



VVA Meeting of 12/06/2017

Call to order was made by President Mike Korger with the Pledge of Allegiance and Opening Prayer led by Sgt at Arms Joe Graff with a special moment of silence for Dennis Werlein. There were no new members, guests or guest speaker present.

Secretary's Report: Mac McBee present, motion made by Joe Graff to accept the Secretary's Report as mailed and e-mailed, motion seconded by Ralph Ottum; motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Joe Heil provided banking information that shows the Chapter is in good financial standing going into 2018. Donations made to Klein Hall, Feed My People and the Vets Home Christmas Party were part of recent expenses. Joe also recommended that the Chapter give a donation to the Eau Claire Veterans Tribute Trail in the amount of \$5,000, making the donation as a two-part expenditure for January of 2018 and 2019 in the amount of \$2,500 each respectively. The motion to approve this was made by Dave Mayenchein and seconded by Joe Graff; motion carried. Another donation request for Trinity Equestrian Center was made by Ralph Ottum and seconded by Al Weix, in the amount of \$250; motion carried. Lastly, the \$750 Nursing Scholarship at CVTC will be paid in the month of December. The motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was made by Ralph Ottum, seconded by Rory Schutte and motion carried.

President's Report: Mike Korger spoke of the co-sponsored Christmas Party at the Veterans Home in Chippewa Falls. He asked for Chapter members who would be willing to be on the bowling team in Marshfield on January 28, 2018; this event is a Highground fundraiser. A motion was made for the Chapter to pay the \$50 entry fee was made by Joe Graff, seconded by Mac McBee and motion carried. Mike then asked for interest in traveling by bus to Washington, D.C. This trip would be to see the Vietnam Veterans Wall and other possibilities. This is just beginning phase of possibly going.

Vice President's Report: Larry Wrycza not present.

AVVA Report: Julia McBee informed membership that AVVA member, Rick Talford, will be filing his Letter of Intent in January 2018 to run for Wisconsin State Representative. We will host another fundraiser at Pizza Ranch in January and will need a good turn-out of AVVA members to make it a successful evening. Gift bags for the homeless veterans will be taken to Klein Hall next week by AVVA members; the bags contain socks, hats, gloves, Christmas cards, along with postage for them to send out cards to their family/friends and a few other goodies. We will also be donating two and a half cases of chicken, along with some other food items.

National VVA Convention: Next National Convention will be in Spokane, WA in 2019.

State VVA Meeting: Joe Heil reported on the December State Council meeting:

• There is a new VVA Chapter forming in Hayward, WI as one in Marinette that still needs another ten members in order to form.

- The State Council's financial report issues were briefly discussed.
- There were reminders about upcoming Chapter/State Elections in the spring.
- There are three scholarships available from the State totaling \$1,500.
- There are weekly meetings in Wausau and Wisconsin Rapids that are open for any veteran to join.
- The Veterans Assistance Program has food and clothing as part of their needs listespecially neck ties requested for King (probably Chippewa too!)
- The Denver VA has issues with lost/misplaced records with regards to Agent Orange use in Thailand. They simply "cannot find" these records. If you believe your AO status may be affected, contact your CVSO.
- There is a new computer server in use that is felt to be more secure for users in their communications with the State Council.
- Budget talks regarding the change from VA to Tri-Care and the changes to Tri-Care in 2018 were discussed.
- A "Memorandum of Understanding" regarding the Household Good Program is being sent to all Wisconsin VVA Chapters. The State Council is asking that ALL Chapters sign a consent letter for the State to collect and use these funds for VVA Projects and Programs related to VVA members and families. A motion to sign this consent letter from Chapter 5 to the State Council was made by Joe Heil/Rory Schutte and seconded by Ralph Ottum; motion carried.
- Upcoming State Council meetings for 2018 will be: March 17th in Waupaca, June 16th in Neillsville, September 22nd in Waupaca, Annual Christmas Party November 30th in Waupaca and December 1st in Waupaca.

VA/Benefits: Pete Breed not present.

Membership: 147 as of October 2017

Minority Report: Still need a person to take over this; Dave Zien stated he would be willing to work on this for the Chapter. Dave spoke of the recent 'National magazine' that wrote an article about Native American veterans. The article mentioned "a place in Wisconsin" (Highground but without ever mentioning "Highground" or "Neillsville".) There was discussion and suggestions to write to the magazine and give them direct information on The Highground.

OLD BUSINESS

Veterans Home: Rory Schutte spoke of the recent elections held; Harry Bauer has becoming the President with Ralph Bellore, has become the Vice President. He spoke of the upcoming Christmas Party and the positive Veterans Day Program that was held where Dave Zien was honored. He then informed everyone of the Pearl Harbor Day event being held the following day.

Highground: Joe Graff provided information on the 2018 schedule. Flag replacement costs are \$225 and he asked if the Chapter would be interested in donating towards a few flags. A motion to approve two flags to be purchased, one immediately and one for Vietnam Veterans Day 2018, was made by Mac McBee, seconded by Joe Graff; motion carried. It was further discussed of doing this every ear for Vietnam Veterans Day, there were no motions made on this at this time. Find more information at <u>www.thehighground.org</u>.

Logo/Clothing: Joe Heil did not have a report, but Julia McBee did request a Board of Direcctors meeting to be held soon for more discussion on the color guard jackets; a meeting was set for December 13th. Joe will be ordering orange and black poppies for upcoming needs, 1000 of each will be ordered.

Eau Claire Veterans Council: More information about the Tribute Trail can be found at <u>www.ecveteransfoundation.com</u>.

Fundraising: Julia McBee spoke of the Pizza Ranch fundraising possibilities once each quarter, an easy way to raise some money without a lot of effort that requires only 4-5 hours of time to bus tables and talk up our Chapter and the things we do in the community to receive 10% of the restaurants total proceeds that night, along with all tips given. She also asked for a Fundraising Meeting to be held to determine 2018's annual fundraiser. At this time returning to Post 7232 is preferred with keeping the menu simple—burgers, brats and hog dogs. Dates will be checked with Deb for the fall, we're looking for September. She also requested permission to donate to Klein Hall the two and a half cases of left over (frozen) chicken from our recent fundraiser; motion for this was made by Joe Heil, seconded by Joe Graff and carried.

Communications: A "Thank You" letter was received from Feed My People for the donation received, as well as one from Wisconsin Adventures on Wheels for the donation they received from our Chapter. Also received was a letter from Kathleen Vinehout in regards to the AB436 Bill and the follow-up web-site to keep track on the progress; <u>www.legis.wisconsin.gov</u> is where you can follow this bill. Newsletter deadline will December 23, 2017. Remember our Chapter's Website/E-Mail: <u>www.mikevothmemorialvva5.org</u> / <u>mikevothmemorialvva5@gmail.com</u> and don't forget you can find National info at <u>www.VVA.org</u> and State info at <u>www.VVAWI.org.</u>

NEW BUSINESS

Elections: April of 2018

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Dave Zien spoke on a few areas he was hoping the Chapter would take an interest in; Wisconsin Adventure on Wheels has up to 2500 Christmas trees available to sell in Eau Claire (free will donation) if there is anyone able to help with cutting them down, transporting and setting up near the Dairy Queen on Menomonie Street. Wisconsin Blue Books are out. They do not have any information on veterans in them and it would be nice for a letter to be sent to them asking for veterans to have input or be included on an advisory committee to help created a new Blue Book that would include veteran/military/police/fire/EMT information. A motion was made to create a letter to the State of Wisconsin by Dave Zien, seconded by Joe Graff; motion carried. Dave then asked if the members of the Chapter would be interested in a Veterans Advisory Committee to make a proposal of a portion of the Jade Mining Sales be given to the Veterans Assistance Program. A motion was made to create the committee by Dave Zien, seconded by Dave Mayenchein, motion carried.

Attendance Drawing was won by J. Severson, who was not present. The 50/50 was won by Rory Schutte for \$10.

2018 VVA/AVVA Chapter Meeting Dates will be as follows: January 3rd, February 7th, March 7th, April 4th, May 2nd, June 6th, July 11th, August 1st, September 5th, October 3rd, November 7th and December 5th.

Closing Prayer offered by Joe Graff. Meeting adjourned at 9 pm, there were 20 members in attendance. Next meeting will be on January 3rd, 2018 at VFW Post 7232.

VVA Meeting of 1/3/2018

Call to Order was made by President Mike Korger followed with the Pledge of Allegiance and Opening Prayer by Sgt. At Arms Joe Graff followed with a Moment of Silence for our veteran brothers and asked specifically for prayer for Dennis Werlein who is now at home on Hospice.

Secretary's Report: Report suspended due to computer issues; motion to accept by Joe Heil, seconded by Ralph Ottum, motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Joe Heil gave an accounting on the Chapter's financials, all accounts are in good order and balance with bank statements. Recent expenditures: band for the Veterans Home Christmas Party - \$75, Highground flag - \$250, MVM Webpage (Cal Briggs) - \$100, Nursing Scholarship (CVTC) - \$787, Trinity Equestrian - \$250, newsletters - \$40, State Council meeting and VVA flag - \$83; upcoming expenses will be \$1,000 (High School Scholarships), \$1,000 (Highground Legacy Stone), \$2,500 (Veterans Tribute Trail) Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was made by Rory Schutte and seconded by Pat Moore; motion carried.

President's Report: Mike Korger provided information by reading his written report for the newsletter. He spoke of the December 8th Christmas Party, the upcoming January 28th Highground fundraiser at Rose Bowl in Marshfield, discussed the Vietnam Veterans Day events in March at the Eagles Club in Lake Hallie on the 24th and in Ladysmith on the 25th. He's still working on the Washington, D.C. bus trip and will have more information soon.

Vice President's Report: Larry Wrycza not present.

AVVA Report: Rick Talford spoke on behalf of the AVVA and gave information regarding the January 24th fundraiser at Pizza Ranch, The AVVA Agent Orange program and election requirements for the upcoming Chapter/State elections.

National VVA Convention: Convention will be held in Spokane, WA in 2019.

State Council Meeting: Next meeting will be March 17th in Waupaca. There is a Regional Meeting being planned, no dates have been scheduled at this time. More information when available—the meeting will be in Iowa, that much is known.

Minority Report: Dave Zien is appointed as Chairman.

Membership: Remains at 147 members.

OLD BUSINESS

Veterans Home: Rory Schutte spoke of a Care Program that is in Bill 2193. He also spoke of a golf outing coming this spring for the vets. There will be a program on February 1st from 3-4:30 celebrating the Veterans Home 5 Year Anniversary, invitation only event.

Highground: Joe Graff provided more information on the Rose Bowl event in Marshfield on January 28th. He then spoke of the recent article in the VFW Magazine that reported the DPAA had identified 201 remains in 2017, up from 164 in 2016, according to the POW/MIA Committee.

Record Number of Remains ID'd



Members of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) excavate a wet unit in the Xiangkhouang Province, Lao People's Democratic Republic on March 30, 2016. DPAA set a new record in fiscal year 2017 by identifying 201 remains of U.S. troops. Located at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, DPAA's job is to provide the fullest possible accounting of U.S. missing military personnel around the world. DOD PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JOCELYN FORD. USAF/RELEASED

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The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) made 201 individual identifications of remains of U.S. troops in fiscal year 2017, according to Kelly McKeague, agency director.

This sets an agency record, as fiscal year 2016 saw 164 remains identified.

"These numbers are an unprecedented achievement in the accounting mission's history," McKeague told the *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*. "This is without question a testament to the teamwork and tenacity of the entire DPAA team."

McKeague added that DPAA fields more than 600 military and civilian personnel around the world, and is "committed to researching, investigating, recovering and identifying U.S. service members and civilians who made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation."

Located at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, DPAA's facility also boasts an \$85 million identification laboratory. More than 400 personnel are based in Hawaii. **Logo/Clothing:** There continues to be discussion on a jacket for the Chapter. At issue is whether the membership is looking for a "club" jacket for any and all members to purchase, VVA and AVVA alike, or a more tailored looking jacket for the Color/Honor Guard members. We are looking to have a jacket that those members who are regularly involved with color/honor guard duties could wear that would represent our VVA Chapter well. The members need to decide which type of jacket they want so we can move forward with finalizing a jacket choice and get the ball rolling.....this had been something Dennis Werlein had wanted to see done and it would have been nice for him to have seen this last "task" realized. Efforts to have a Board of Directors meeting prior to our February meeting won't be possible as not enough officers will be present—a date for a BOD meeting will be on the February agenda to move forward with this issue.....if you have ideas, comments, etc., be at the February meeting or contact Julie who will bring forth your comments on your behalf. If you don't show or have your input voiced, please don't complain after the fact....your opinion is important!

New Business

Fundraising: Rick Talford spoke of the upcoming January 24th fundraiser at Pizza Ranch and asked if the Chapter would consider allowing the proceeds from this event to be held by the AVVA so that the group has funds to work with, besides providing a donation to Klein Hall. After some discussion, a motion was made by Ralph Ottum, seconded by Joe Heil, that the Pizza Ranch proceeds would be split between the VVA and AVVA; motion carried. Joe Graff then made a motion, which was seconded by Ralph Ottum, that the AVVA members receive \$500 from the Chapter's annual fall fundraiser every year; this motion also carried.

Elections: VVA and AVVA requirements for Chapter Elections were explained. All positions will be open and voted on at our April 4th meeting; VVA President, VP, Secretary and Treasurer, as well as AVVA Chapter Representative.

Communications: The Chapter received two letters, one from Trinity Equestrian Center thanking the Chapter for its recent donation to their Veterans Wellness Program. The second came from Klein Hall thanking the Chapter for the donations received giving the vets a nice Christmas surprise! (Remember, Mike Hanke, Director of Klein Hall, will be our guest speaker at our February meeting.) Newsletter deadline will January 26, 2018. Remember our Chapter's Website/E-Mail: <u>www.mikevothmemorialvva5.org</u> / <u>mikevothmemorialvva5@gmail.com</u> and don't forget you can find National info at <u>www.VVA.org</u> and State info at <u>www.VVAWI.org</u>.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

There will need to be a Scholarship Committee meeting soon.

Dave Zien spoke of the Christmas tree sales in the amount of \$500, of which the Chapter received \$80. Dave made the motion to donate back the \$80 to WAW's PTSD Program, the motion was seconded by Mike Smith; motion carried. Dave wanted to let everyone know that next year there will be more trees to cut, set-up and sell as a fundraising activity. Then Dave spoke of the Living Legacy Signs at the Dairy Queen on Menomonie Street, Jay Tobin donated Christmas tree lights that were wrapped around the signs and there is discussion of keeping them up year-round. It was also noted by Dave that Dennis Werlein always spoke of getting a sign of recognition to honor the Hmong and it appears that this could happen as two more signs may be placed at Dairy Queen.

Pat Moore requested if a vote could be completed in regards to the wording on the Legacy Stone at Highground as he felt the Chapter should be identified as "West Central Wisconsin" NOT "Eau Claire"; some discussion ensued with the Chapter 5 remaining identified as from Eau Claire, WI.

Rory Schutte spoke of the upcoming Big Rig Show in Chippewa Falls, and noted that their committee would like to have ONE representative from each veteran organization at the opening flag ceremony this summer. Rory also spoke of Dennis Werlein's passion for the Vets in the Classroom program and shared with the Chapter that he has begun going into classrooms and speaking to kids about veterans, the Vietnam War, etc., and as a note to all members; if you have any Vietnam items that you would consider donating to Chapter 5 to be used as educational tools for speaking engagements, please contact Mike Korger or Joe Heil for more information on donating to the Chapter.

Attendance Drawing has not been won for two months, come on out in February to see how lucky you can be! 50/50 Drawing was won by Marilyn Mayenchin in the amount of \$9.

Closing Prayer was offered by Joe Graff and the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm; there were 18 members in attendance. The next meeting will be held at Post 7232 on February 7th.

"No ticker-tape parades greeted the men and women who returned from war. No handshakes, no thank-you's. So they turned to each other and formed **Vietnam Veterans of America** But even as they forged the bonds that would help them survive the peace, they <u>made a vow</u>, **NEVER AGAIN** will one generation of veterans abandon another. Even while they tended to their own, they've also reached out to the veterans of more recent conflicts welcoming them home and shaking hands at airports and parades, yes, but also offering comfort in darker hours. And fighting for them in the halls of State Legislatures, the corridors of Congress and the maze of the VA."

Reprinted in memory of Dennis Werlein, who loved this for he was one of those dedicated veterans who went to Washington, D.C. and was involved in the founding of what would become the Vietnam Veterans of America. "Go rest high on that mountain son, your work on earth is done" and what a job you've done! *Thank You*!

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