



*Together We
Make A Difference*



*Charles S. Kettles
Michigan Chapter 310*



Early Spring Work: Memorial Maintenance – Memorial Maintenance coordinator Al Merritt reported that 17 volunteers reported for work May 29th, working to spread red bark nuggets, to move shrubs, and overall to maintain the Memorial grounds. Volunteers came with rakes, wheelbarrows, and readiness to work, plus great camaraderie. A big Thank You to everyone and, Job Well done!!!



President's Message

by Dave Draper

May will be the start of our busy season. We will have our Watch Fire, Memorial Day Program, and a possible parade. We will also be remembering VE Day on the 8th, Armed Forces Day on the 19th, and Memorial Day on the 28th.

Our Merchandising sales this past month was a little above average as our new Merchandising Team gets settled in. I hope you all will help out by volunteering for setup, takedown, and sales. If you can spend just a couple hours the Team would be most appreciative.

On the 17th of April Brewed Awakenings Café in Saline donated 20% of their day's sales to our Chapter. They chose our Chapter in April as part of their monthly fundraising for non-profits. When Meni and I arrived there were Chapter members as well as members of the Veterans Honor Guard of Washtenaw County. There were also quite a few non-member guests there. Thanks to Al Merritt, Vance McCrumb, George Perrault, and Lloyd Lee for staying there the entire day. On top of the Café's 20%, we also received \$400.00 in donations in our donations box. Thanks to all of you who came out in support of this event, and especially to Kim Kaster, Brewed Awakenings owner, for her generosity. Brewed Awakenings

Café is located at 7025 E Michigan Ave, Saline.

We held our 31st Annual Gary Lillie Recognition Dinner on the 21st of April. We had a great turnout with many VIPs who had RSVP'd. For the first time since I've been in charge of the event, we finally had a podium and microphone. It took Tim Driscoll, though, to find the elusive switch on the wall that turned on the sound system.

The people in the back were finally able to hear everything. Anyway, the food was great again



this year. We voted to cater the food again this year. Angel Food Catering was our choice to be our caterer. We had penne pasta with Italian marinara meatballs, focaccia rolls, and a garden salad. Ann Dempsey-Pereira purchased two cakes for dessert. One was a combination chocolate and yellow cake, and the other was a carrot cake (to die for!!). As I said earlier, we had many special guests. One was an Army Special Ops Veteran Sgt Seth Diegel and his wife Sasha. Seth was deployed to five combat areas during his tour of duty. Miss Michigan, Heather Kendrick also joined us and also helped us with calling out the raffle ticket numbers. Miss Washtenaw County, Patricia Sholtis, was very pleasant and spoke with many of the attendees and posed for pictures, as did Heather. Our all time favorite Ypsilanti Township Supervisor, Brenda Stumbo, made her appearance too. It is always

a great night when she is able to join us for these events. Chief of Volunteer Services at the VA Medical Center, Beverly Conaster, was also there. Beverly has been an active participant at our events that we hold at the VA. She is always there to give guidance and help wherever needed. We had Kim Kaster and her husband Mike join us, as referenced earlier in this article, Kim owns the Brewed Awakenings Café. And our friends for many years, Mike and Shada Eadie joined us. As many of you know, Mike and Shada were responsible for preparing the food in previous years for this event. Surprisingly to me, we had quite a few items for our raffle, both for the AVVA and the VVA. Thanks to all those who donated items and to Roy Hall for all the yard sales he attended to acquire many of the items. The AVVA is giving all their proceeds to Fisher House Michigan. As I understand it, AVVA was able to finish making their goal of \$3000 on that night.

Congratulations to Kathy Driscoll and her members. We had many



winner for the raffle, and Sandy Martinez won our 50/50 drawing. Our award winners were Berry Bourne for the John Thompson "Member of the Year", George Perrault for the Jerry Sims "Always There" award, and Jon Luker for the "Doc" Martinez President's award. It was a poignant moment when Sandy surprised me by escorting

Jon to the podium. You got to love her.

There are a lot of people to thank who helped make this event a success. Thanks to all those who sat on the Dinner Committee to help make the event the success that it was. Thanks also to all those who came out to help set up,



and later clean up. Thanks to Roy Hall and Kathy Driscoll for putting together their respective raffles. Also, to Al Merritt and Tim Clarke for selling the tickets at the front door. To Jane and John Kinzinger for providing the Bose sound box to play the POW/MIA ceremony and later for the background music. To my wife, Meni, for being the photographer for the evening. And to Steve Hitte for helping the AVVA reach their \$3000 goal with a sizeable donation.

On Sunday, April 29 many of our Chapter members joined Al Merritt at our Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Ypsilanti to clean up and rejuvenate the grounds. There was about a dozen volunteers who helped spread out new mulch



around the trees and bushes. They also moved three bushes. The area where

the bushes were removed will

eventually have an extended sidewalk to continue from the existing one to the street when the Ypsilanti Township installs a cut-in for parking spots along the roadway in front of the Memorial. It's looking sharp out there.

This will be my last Newsletter article/ President's Message as I am hanging up my Presidential hat. I will still be active with our Chapter, but I will also be becoming more active with other organizations that interest me. I hope to be spending more time with our grandchildren. I can't tell you what a great honor, privilege, and learning experience these past two years have been. Your support has truly been appreciated. I hope you will continue that support for our new President, Jon Luker, along with the rest of the Officers and Board Members. Please remember that our Chapter is not just one person. It takes all of us to keep it going and be as active as it currently is. God bless and may we all survive our "Golden Years."

Dave Draper

President
Air Force C-130 Loadmaste

From the Editor's Desk

With gusts of wind up to 50 MPH, I am glad I am not out sailing somewhere. But spring is here, and with spring, come new Officers and Directors. I would like to welcome the incoming administrators and thank those who end their service.

I also would like to thank those who have contributed to this Dispatch issue. You will have noticed that there is a change in style, as I had promised. The



learning curve with the new software is sharp but a lot of fun. In this issue, the special features are about the Recognition Dinner and the work at the Memorial. Pres. Dave Draper's last article as president features both events, plus the winners of this year's awards. Congratulations to the winners, Berry, Jon, and Chief Perrault! Please see Dave's report for complete details.

— Paulo-Juarez Pereira, Dispatch Editor

May 2018 Chaplain's Corner

By Rev. Gordon Moore

The exaltation of Christ by God is a wonder to contemplate and meditate as it puts Him into perspective as to our role in God's plan. Therefore, hear the Father's words regarding His Son found in Hebrews chapter one.

God, who at various times and various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word

The Cost of War

By Scott Brooks-Miller

of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, today I have begotten You"? And again, "I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son"? But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: "Let all the angels of God worship Him." And of the angels He says: "Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire." But to the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions."

And; "You Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail." But to which of the angels has He ever said: "Sit at My right hand, til I make Your enemies Your footstool"? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?

Christ is exalted above all creation and it is to Him we owe allegiance and respect for all He went through to obtain salvation. To Him be the glory and honor forever. Amen!

Let us reflect and give praise.

Gordon

The cost of war is an often used phrase given to an analysis as to how much a war costs its citizens who pay for any given conflict. It doesn't, however, take into account the short- and long-term effects of the many other factors that must be taken into account, some decades after a war is over. These costs include continuing medical and mental healthcare through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, along with associated financial care for disability for Post Traumatic Stress, Traumatic Brain Injury, and health care associated with dioxin poisoning.

Then there is the incalculable costs associated with caregivers and their families. How do you assess the cost of a family taking care of a loved one who is unable to care of him or herself? The flash of anger, screaming, tension of bad dreams and lost sleep, the inability to work or hold a job, and so on. It is not unusual for combat veterans to have had multiple marriages.

The most contemporary example could be the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in the post 9/11 world. Dollar-wise they have cost the Department of Defense and the America taxpayer well over one trillion dollars in just military spending. But that doesn't take into account the human suffering of citizens of those nations who have lost loved ones, their destroyed homes, and any quality of life they might have had prior to the beginning of hostilities.

A more tangible reminder, which we are often wrestling with now, is the returning disabled veteran and his or her physical or psychological wounds. How do you put a cost to lives inflicted with repeated tours

of duty, combat, death, mayhem, PTSD, divorces, and children without their fathers or mothers, either through death, suicide, or separation?

Now, more forty years after the end of the Vietnam War, it is interesting and a challenge to try and establish a cost for those efforts to stop the dominoes from falling across Southeast Asia. So much about that war is still largely unfamiliar with the American populace. A larger question looms over this type of analysis as to what constituted involvement in Vietnam. Who were the participants and how did they interact in this new type of undeclared war?

Most Americans are unfamiliar with the complexity of the war and its funding. We know that between 1959 and 1975 the war cost over 738 billions dollars at a cost of 58,236 Americans lives. This included, according to the US. Department of Defense, 55,661 killed in the Republic of South Vietnam, 1,120 in North Vietnam, 728 in Laos, 523 in Cambodia, 178 in Thailand and 10 in China.

There were also numerous American civilians killed in these countries, either assigned to the CIA, Agency for Internal Development, relief organizations, missionaries such as the Catholic Church, Quakers, the American Red Cross, and over 68 members of the press who lost their lives covering the war including: Dicky Chapelle, a female reporter who covered the Battle of Okinawa for National Geographic; Bernard Fall, author of "Road Without Joy;" and Sean Flynn, son of actor Eroll Flynn.

Our allies were diverse, and their contributions, great. Over 312,853 South Korean troops served in Vietnam, with 5,099 killed in action

(KIA), 11,232 wounded (WIA) and 4 missing (MIA).

Their presence in Vietnam was well known for its ferocity and several instances of war crimes. Through a treaty between Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, (ANZUS), Australia furnished 7,672 military personnel with 426 KIA, 2,940 WIA and 6 MIA. New Zealand sent 3,000 troops, suffering 55 KIA and 212 WIA. Though secretly engaged, Taiwan lost 35 KIA and an unspecified number of wounded, including 17 pilots ferrying in supplies. Thailand committed over 30,000 troops suffering 351 KIA and 1,358 WIA.

Ironically, while an estimated 16,000 US draft age males fled to Canada between 1967 through 1973 and some 5,500 deserters fled north across the border over 30,000 Canadian males volunteered for the US military service. Of those, an estimated 134 were killed in action while serving the United States in Vietnam.

In addition to above referenced figures the greatest number of casualties in the allied coalition to fight communism were the South Vietnamese. Between the years of 1959 and 1975 the Army of the Republic of South Vietnam (ARVN) lost over 260,000 in combat and an even greater number wounded, with precise numbers unavailable. Civilian casualties exceeded over 400,000 killed in military hostilities and a wounded casualty far greater. Medical aid outside metropolitan areas was almost non-existent unless furnished by allied forces such as Civic Action Platoons staffed by active duty American personal or Special Forces medics. An injury was more likely to become a fatality through infection or ineptness of care. To say that the Vietnamese civilian population suffered during the war

is a gross understatement.

But what about the enemy, those Vietnamese from the North or members of the National Liberation Front (Viet Cong VC)? There is no estimated cost of what the war cost the North, though much of it was underwritten by Russia and China in terms of arms, munition, advisers and other military assistance and humanitarian aid. Cross border supply from China was common as was shipments from the Soviet Union by ship. The Soviet Union lost 16 KIA during the war and China 1,446. N Korean missile battery staff lost several dozen though exact numbers are not known.

Casualties to the North Vietnamese are the most cruel of all. Over 849,000 members of the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and 251,000 members of the NLF, or Viet Cong, were Killed in Action. Those are of reported losses, many more were not recorded as they died in combat or American bombings along the Ho Chi Minh trail in Laos and Cambodia, or along the borders in South Vietnam. There was no process for recording these losses.

In addition to military losses it is estimated that over 550,000 civilians were killed as a result of the war. Many of those as a result of bombing, starvation and wounds.

In all of these figures there is no way to measure the impact the war had on the human psyche. How do you calculate the loss of a loved one, your home, your livelihood? Is the loss of a son any different in the United States as it is in Quang Tri province in South Vietnam, or in Haiphong in the north?

And what about now? Over 270,000 American veterans suffer from varying degrees of PTSD. That is

approximately 15% or those who served in Vietnam. It is a daily struggle with intrusive thoughts, sleeplessness, isolation, fear of crowds and strangers and loss of affection. This is only the American side. Veterans also struggle with Agent Orange (Dioxin poisoning from defoliation) complications including a range of cancers and type II diabetes and other diseases associated with being poisoned.

But what about our former allies, how have they fared? It is highly ironic that New Zealand, home to a Dow Chemical facility in New Plymouth, New Zealand that manufactured Agent Orange that was used in SE Asia. It's the Vietnam Veteran population that suffers most from the negative effects of dioxin poisoning. All of our former allies whose veterans served in Vietnam suffer from the long-term effects dioxin poisoning.

There is also an adverse effect on the populations in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia that range from unexploded ordinance and Agent Orange and whose symptoms are well known, that range from birth defects, cancers and early and often times, violent death. Only recently have there been efforts to clean up the dioxin and explosive hot spots around Vietnam with money allocated by the US and Non-governmental agencies, like the Halo Foundation, which seek out and disarm unexploded ordinance.

Hundreds of deaths are reported annually from cancers associated with chemical poisoning from defoliation. Though Vietnamese have sued for compensation in U.S. courts, they have had their legal actions dismissed. Similar lawsuits filed in France are still pending. It is an ugly reminder of how wars do not end on a specific date or place. So in the final count the cost of

war is not easily determined. Now, over four decades since the end of hostilities in Vietnam, the suffering and grieving goes on both here, on the former battlefields and with our former allies.

Now another generation of Americans, its allies and those indigenous people whose countries we fight in have already begun their slow and painful tabulation of the "Cost of War."

Thoughts From the Rotunda

From Notes by George Perrault

[Note from the Editor: I asked Chief Perrault to share some of his thoughts at the Rotunda, including some interesting facts. I am summarizing the Chief's insights.]



Just three days ago, I had the occasion to speak about my experiences in the Rotunda. To sum it up, I would like

to share my two most memorable experiences, while I was at the Rotunda,

When they brought President John F. Kennedy's body into the White House, it was approximately 4:40 am on November 23, 1963. I was the third in line at the entrance and was able clearly to see the president's blood on Jackie's pink suit. I knew I was witnessing a memorable moment in our country's history. I felt privileged to be in that spot at that moment.

I recall also another very special memory of that time. It happened when I was on the first watch at the



Rotunda. At a certain moment, Jackie and Caroline entered the Rotunda

and approached the President's casket; next, they knelt at the casket. That took place right in front me, while I was on the first watch. It was special.

Over the years, I have often had a chance to speak about those experiences. As I have looked back at those experiences, I have learned more about the Rotunda.

I found out, for example, that Lying in State applies to government officials and military officers; in contrast, Lying in Honor, applies to private citizens.

The first person to receive a funeral ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda was Henry Clay (July 1, 1852). The last person was Billy Graham, who lay in honor on March 1, 2018.

Another interesting fact is that, barely five months after the ceremonies honoring Pres. John F. Kennedy, the country once again celebrated another person lying in state. That was General of the Army Douglas MacArthur.

AVVA Newsletter April 2018

By Kathy Dirscoll

If you are on Facebook, you can join the AVVA Michigan closed group. Just send a Friend Request to Marilyn Lash and she will accept you as a member of the AVVA Michigan closed group. This is how our AVVA Michigan State Association communicates between the bi-monthly meetings.

AVVA Members were busy volunteering and supporting AVVA and VVA projects in April.

Members supported VVA 310 Merchandise Sales at VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System.

Next VVA 310 VA Merchandising sales is Tuesday, May 8th, VVA 310 needs our help! Please consider volunteering one or two hours assisting VVA 310 merchandise team!

Keep up to date with our chapter: All AVVA and VVA 310 events are posted on our chapter's webpage, www.vva310.org in the VVA News Flash section on the right column. on the homepage.

AVVA Michigan State Association News

I attended the AVVA Michigan Association meeting in Holly, MI.

Nominations for Michigan Association for 2018 – 2020

President: Kathy Driscoll Chapter 310

Vice President: Penny Meinhardt Chapter 1083

Secretary: Bobbie Heindenrich Chapter 1083

Treasurer: Cecilia Essenmacher At Large Delegate

The nominations close on May 5th. Election will be Sunday, June 10th at 10:30 am at Doubletree Hotel in Dearborn, MI.

AVVA Michigan Association Challenge Coins are \$10 donation. Please contact Kathy Driscoll at 734-355-4897 or dkathyr16@gmail.com. This fundraiser will benefit AVVA Michigan Association.

AVVA Michigan State Convention is June 8, 9, 10 at Doubletree Hotel in Dearborn, MI. More information at our May 10th meeting.

Fundraising Report Fisher House Michigan

We surpassed our goal to raise \$3,000 for Fisher House Michigan. We received a \$300 donation from the Sarah Caswell Angell

DAR Chapter, Ann Arbor for Fisher House Michigan. Our Basket Raffle raised \$215 and Shirley and Steve Hitte donated \$200 to bring us over the top to \$3,037.50. Our donation is being matched by Erwin Prieskorn American Legion Post 46, Ann Arbor. We are blessed to be able to participate in their \$100,000 Matching Challenge in donations to FHM in May and June 2018. Thank you Post 46!

Our new Fiscal Year began on March 1st. We need to have a Fundraising Committee. Please bring your fundraising ideas to our May 10th meeting.

WCCV

I attended the April 16th meeting at the Chelsea American Legion Post 31 on Cavanaugh Lake..

Chapter Elections

Kathy Driscoll was elected for Chapter Representative for a two year term.

Save the Date!

May 19th 0900 am Vietnam Memorial Flower bed planting. More information at our May 10th meeting.

Next meeting is Thursday, May 10th.

Kathy Driscoll

Chapter Representative, AVVA Chapter 310

AVVA Michigan State Association Vice President

dkathyr16@gmail.com

734-355-4897

New Officers and Board Members

At our April meeting, the members of VVA310 elected new officers and Board members for 2018-2019. They are as follows:

President: Jon Luker

Vice President: Al Merritt

Secretary: Paulo-Juarez Pereira

Treasurer: Berry Bourne

For other positions, please refer to www.vva310.org.

MINUTES – VVA310

*Vietnam Veterans of America
Charles S. Kettles Chapter 310 –
General Membership Meeting –*

8 April 2018 –

by Paulo-Juarez Pereira, Secretary

Call to Order by President David Draper at 1200 hours.

Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence for POW/MIA's, their families, and those serving in hazardous places around the world.

Roll Call: A quorum was established. Welcome Home Everyone!

Meeting was suspended for final round of nominations for next year's officers and directors. Meeting reconvened.

Motion by Dave Draper and seconded by Larry St. Antoine was made to approve the March meeting minutes that were emailed to members and inserted on VVA310's website. Approved.

President's Report: See complete report in this newsletter.

Treasurer's Report: Jon Luker stated that line item for Doc Martinez Memorial Fund has been merged into Support the Troops as per instructions of Sandy Martinez. April financial activity was slow but on target.

AVVA Report: Kathy Driscoll announced that the next Quartermania will be held on May 7th. Further details in AVVA's report listed in this newsletter.

Food Pantry: Don Miller stated that he helped a veteran in need with

\$104 for groceries.

Merchandise Report: Larry St. Antoine stated that things are going smoothly at the VA, with help for setup. He requested permission to move the merchandise trailer to his residence area. A question was raised about trailer insurance, and the matter will be reconsidered at another Chapter meeting.

Washtenaw County Council of Veterans Report: Jon Luker explained that one of the purposes of the County Council is for veterans to present a united front on issues for government agencies. The County Council coordinates activities with several organizations. Thus, they provide advertising and mailing to coordinate picnics, fundraisings, community outreach activities, and other Veteran services. They meet once a month for 1.5 hours. VVA310 members need to provide three delegates to the meeting, one of whom votes for the group. Dinner next year will be held at WCC.

Memorial Maintenance Report: Al Merritt stated that two more volunteers are still needed for the cutting team, making up a total of five teams. LED lights are being installed along the road. There was an electrical short. The memorial lights will be out for up to two weeks while the short is being repaired. Information was received about a \$100,000 grant, which is too early for our parking needs but will consider for next year, for a storage setup. Al Merritt reminded members that Brewed Awakenings Café (7025 E. Michigan Ave., Saline, MI) once a month offers a donation to a group of their choice. So, on April 17th they will donate to VVA310 20% of their proceeds for all food served on that day. Please stop by that day at Brewed

Awakenings Café,

Website Report: Vance McCrumb reported that the website is up and running with no major issues.

Membership Report: Vance McCrumb stated that the Chapter has 207 members.

Newsletter: Paulo-Juarez Pereira thanked contributors to the newsletter. An anonymous donor was found for April, upgrading new memberships to life member. A photo session is being organized with a volunteer photographer from Washtenaw Community College. Vance McCrumb is organizing the event. John Kinzinger requested a strict deadline of "first of the month" for all content for the Dispatch Newsletter. Paulo will send out a deadline reminder.

VAAHS Report: Motion by John Kinzinger and seconded by Tom Mullins was made to donate \$3,500 to Warriors and Caregivers United (WACU) from VAAHS funds. Approved.

John Kinzinger stated that a WACU friend is sponsoring a motorcycle ride fundraiser ending at VFW Post 423 with a cookout on May 19th. The cost is \$10 per person. Open to the public. On June 16th there will be a Washtenaw County First Responders Appreciation Day, sponsored by VFW Post 423 and Ann Arbor Legion Post 46. All county First Responders are invited along with their families. This will be an eight-hour event with plentiful food and live music. Volunteers are needed.

Old Business: Motion by Vance McCrumb and seconded by Ken Rogge was made to purchase 200 three-inch patches for \$280.00 and 50 nine-inch patches for \$1,100.00—purchase to be made by the Merchandise Department. Approved.

New Business: No new business.

Good of the Chapter: None.

Next Chapter Breakfast: will be Friday, 11 May 2018, at 0900 hours at Holiday's Restaurant, 2080 W. Stadium Blvd., Ann Arbor, MI 48103.

Closing prayer was given by John Kinzinger. President Draper led the group in a salute to the flag to close the meeting at 1315 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

Paulo-Juarez Pereira

Secretary

Current Events

By Ann Dempsey-Pereira

-- 08 May: Merchandise sales at VAMC.

-- 08 May: VE Day

-- 10 May: Chapter Meetings:

--- 1800 hours: VVA310 Board meeting; AVVA meeting.

--- 1900 hours: VVA310 General Membership meeting.

-- Ongoing to 15 May: World War II Exhibit, Yankee Air Museum, 1100 hours.

-- 19 May: Armed Forces Day.

-- 28 May: Memorial Day, 1300 hours at the Memorial, Ypailanti..

-- 31 May -- 02 June: Milan Fair, Milan, MI.

For further information, please refer to <http://www.vva310.org/>.

Jocosity

By Ken Rogge

The prospective father-in-law asked, "Young man, can you support a family?"

The surprised groom-to-be replied, "Well, no! I was planning to support your daughter. The rest of you will have to fend for yourselves."

Spotlight on Associate Ann Dempsey-Pereira

As long as I remember, my life as a child was filled with parades and stories about the war. As I grew up, for me there was only one war, the war my dad had been in. I learned later that my dad had been a Marine in the Pacific Theater of Operations. I also learned a new term: "jungle rot." My dad occasionally would suffer from it.

We did not speak much about the war in my family, but my mother had been a Army nurse also. In celebrations, it was a family ritual for us to get dressed up and go watch the parade, as my dad proudly marched, still wearing his Marine uniform.

When the Vietnam War came, I saw classmates of mine being drafted and shipped overseas. Some of them did not return. But growing up in Dixon, Illinois, I never really got involved with any anti-war activities. For me, it was simple: When the country called, we responded and did our military duty.

So, I was not surprised when my elder son came home one day and said he was thinking of enlisting in the Navy. I was happy to hear that and encouraged him. Being overly bright, my son was often bored at school. So, four years in the Navy did him a world of good. Plus, once he was discharged, he used his GI bill to go back to school and get a business degree.

Over the years, I took great interest in the war. Especially, I took an interest in Winston Churchill and read a few of his books. Also, a movie came out about military actions in the Pacific Theater of World War II. One movie dealt directly with operations where my father was stationed. As I watched that movie, I thought to myself,

“One of those soldiers could have been my father.”

When Paulo and I moved to Michigan from California in 2009, one day we came to the Washtenaw County Vietnam Memorial for a celebration. Until that time, neither of us had found a way to get involved with Veterans, but it was a good thing we did. Up to that time I didn't know much about what Veterans Organizations did, but we both understood that these organizations play an important role in the community. For many, military duty continues in a different form. First, in uniform; and later, as a Veteran.

Dispatch Patrons

By Jon Luker

Chapter/Dispatch Patrons - Please check your dates to see if you are current

*Name listed on the Washtenaw County Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

The members, associates, and supporters have made contributions to support our VVA310 Chapter by offsetting the cost of printing and postage. The month and year specify the date when the subscription expires. Please consider a donation “In Memory of.” Please contact Jon Luker for further information.

Our Chapter retains \$9.00 of your yearly \$20.00 dues, and it costs about \$12.00 a year for printing and postage. So, your Dispatch Patron support is appreciated. If you would like to donate, please make a check payable to VVA 310 for any amount—Memo line: Dispatch Patron. You can conveniently use our Paypal facility at vva310.org. We will credit one month for every \$1.50 donated.

Please mail your check to: VVA 310, P.O. Box 3221, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3221. Again, thank you for your continued support!

List of Supporters and Expiration Date:

George F Boone ~ October 2021; Berryman Bourne ~ August 2020; Cynthia Calhoun ~ February 2018; Gary Couture ~ November 2017; Joseph Flint ~ January 2021; James Graham ~ February 2019; Phil and Gena Hecker ~ Feb 2021; Steve and Shirley Hitte ~ Jan 2023; Dorothy & Donald Kepler ~ October 2018; Dick Knight ~ May 2018; Jane and John Kinzinger ~ September 2018; Sandy Martinez ~ September 2021; Dell Mayes ~ April 2018; Al (Fredo) Merritt ~ May 2018; Ron Oliver ~ February 2019; Ann and Paulo-Juarez Pereira ~ August 2018; George Perrault ~ October 2022; Mira & Bob Pierson ~ October 2021; Ken Rogge ~ April 2018; Glenn Sakcriska ~ November 2026; Edith Semark ~ December 2017; Ron and Marina Silverberg ~ March 2019; Tom & Sandi Sorensen ~ October 2017; Chris Wetzler ~ December 2017; Elizabeth Wong ~ June 2018;

Donations “In Memory of”:

Linda Lamey-Leonard, In memory of **Lavern Lamey*** ~ July 2021; Patricia Beechem in memory of her brother, **David S. Palmer** ~ October 2018; Helena Prince, in Memory of deceased member husband **Tom Prince** ~ April 2023; Corrine Gignac, in Memory of Vietnam Veteran Marine **Gary L West** ~ December 2018; Bonnie Woods in memory of her Vietnam Veteran husband, **Gary Woods** ~ December 2018.

Blessings all!

LTC Martha Flowers Cothorn, Ret. USAR: Life Story

Part I

I was born in West Virginia, a coal miners daughter. My family came to Highland Park, Michigan during the GREAT MIGRATION from the South. I graduated from Highland Park High School in 1962. My life long desire was to be a nurse. I was unsuccessful in my attempts to enroll at various hospital schools of nursing in Detroit where only a limited number of African American women were allowed to enroll. My medical doctor informed me that the entry level into nursing was to be changed to the baccalaureate degree. I wrote to the National League for Nursing requesting a list of programs in the US. I applied in 1964 and was accepted at Dillard University in New Orleans, LA, graduating in 1968.

Following my second year at Dillard, a historical black college, I joined the Army Student Nurse program. The Army program covered tuition, medical and paid a stipend for room and board. I held the rank of E3 until six months before graduation, at which time, I took the oath and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant.

Following graduation and state board examines, I was sent to basic training at Ft. Sam Houston. There were 14 Black nurses in my class, four from Dillard University. I went on the buddy system with one of my classmates to Ft. Leonard Wood, MO, my first duty assignment. With our arrival, there were four Black nurses on post in the bachelor officers quarters. I did not experience any overt forms of racism on Post, but we were

encouraged not to go alone into the local town.

Nine months into my first duty station, a promotion to First Lieutenant, I received a letter with lots of numbers, my name and social security number. I took the letter into personnel after carrying it for weeks. We were very busy on our service with increased numbers of trainees with viral infections. The personnel officer informed me those papers, I had stuffed in my purse weeks ago, were MY ORDERS for Vietnam.

A few days on home leave, ticket to San Francisco's Travis Air base and off to Vietnam. There were six women, two Black, and hundreds of men. We flew to Hawaii, where we were grounded due to a cyclone. Six women in a suite with no change of clothes and one bathroom, not good. Our luggage was with our plane. The next morning, we boarded our flight to Vietnam.

Once we landed, a soldier came on board to give some basic information and instructions prior to disembarkation. Two new terms, incoming and out going—and to run to a ditch if we heard "incoming." I did not learn for months the sound I was to hear, but when I did., I knew to take cover. Our first night was spent in a HOT place, with cots and an outdoors shower with lots of bugs and a guard tower nearby. We could see him smoking in the tower. The next day, we attended a meeting and received choices of open assignments. I chose the 67th Evacuation Hospital, as a friend from my last duty station was assigned at that hospital.

Going up country was an unforgettable experience. I was given a ticket, taken to the airport, and told to listen for a flight going

my way. It was not helpful that all I heard was another language. I enlisted the help of a Lieutenant Colonel, who told me when and where to board my flight. I made my way up country with the help of every soldier who would talk to me and assist me with ALL of my baggage. The plane landed in Nha Trang and the pilot informed us that was as far as they were going. It was dark. I was told I had to find a place to stay the night and get a flight the next morning. I said WHERE! They said maybe the hospital will put you up. I was obviously a nurse. I called and someone in a jeep came to rescue me. I was taken to hospital housing, beautiful houses with stone floors and air conditioning. There was a change of shift and nurses returning home, some of whom were friends from Basic. They spent the evening with me, telling me what to expect at my new new assignment.

I was returned by hospital Jeep to the airfield to fly out to my first duty station carrying all the information from my comrades and my heavy luggage. I reported to the 67th, was assigned a room with a nurse who was also assigned to medicine service. She informed me she would be my roommate only until her best friends roommate left country. There was one Black nurse, a Major, who said I was her replacement, being the only Black nurse. She was right, as I did take her position as head nurse of medicine and psychiatry. I did not get another roommate until my classmate from Dillard, who was assigned to a closing hospital in Nha Trang and requested to be assigned to the 67th. I was later given the title of Soul Sister Number One by the Black soldiers around the air field and the Vietnamese outside the military

gates.

I was Head Nurse of the Medicine and Psychology units, and we cared for soldiers in the area, merchant marines, and Vietnamese adults and children when we had a low work time. We worked 12 hours on and 12 hours off, six days a week. On our day off, we did MED CAPPs in local villages for cases of Leprosy or Hansen's disease.

Regular visits to the beach, Post Exchange (PX), dinner and dancing at the club, or an occasional chopper ride for a unit Hail and Farewell, a special treat. One night, I had a date for dinner at the club, got up to dance with my date, and 20 plus men "cut in" to dance with me. One misfortune of being one of a few women in country is you are on demand as a partner on the dance floor at the club. Oh, we could wear dresses to our club, not the usual combat boots and fatigues.

We worked very hard and often long hours, even of our own choosing. Yes, we wrote letters, visited the guys on the ward when they were having difficult times, listened and gave support. Or we just supported one another. There were parties, and one I remember well: The doctors had to ask the nurses to the party, and they had to wear shirts and ties, and the nurses had to wear dress and stockings. Try to find stockings in Vietnam! There were visits from various entertainers and sports figures to our hospital and the local club. I have a picture taken with Floyd Little, inducted to the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

END OF PART 1

Anonymous Donor

By Paulo-Juarez Pereira

The generosity of VVA310 Chapter members continues to inspire. We have an Anonymous Donor for the current month of May and are looking for a donor for the month of June.

A donation of \$80 will upgrade a new member to the position of Life Member. To become a donor, just contact any of the officers or the Membership Director, Vance McCrumb.

Another point: In our VVA310 Chapter, we focus on taking care of Veterans. So, if you know of a Veteran who is in need, encourage this person to ask. Our members are resourceful and know what is available from various sources. So, it is Ask / Receive.

VVA Regular Membership Requirements: Might Change?

By John Luker

Membership, according to the VVA Charter, is something the organization can decide for itself without any further Act of Congress.

Currently, Article I, Section 3A of the VVA Constitution says:

“Membership in the Corporation is open to any veteran of the military service of the United States of America, who served on active duty during the dates established by federal law for the Vietnam War.”

“The law,” in this case, is a rule promulgated under a federal statute. Regulation 38 USC 101 (11) defines “period of war” in a way that includes the Vietnam War, but it does not provide any dates.

(USC stands for “United States Code,” which includes the statutes enacted by Congress.) Regulation 38 CFR 3.2(f) then provides the exact dates the VVA goes by. CFR stands for Code of Federal Regulations, sometime referred to as “The Rules.” The rules are usually developed by the Executive Branch, subject to review by Congress. Regulation 38 CFR 3.2(f) sets the start date of the Vietnam War for in-country veterans as 28 February 1961.

Wikipedia sites an autobiography that sets forth the proposition that the Defense Department changed the start date to 1 November 1955. However, the Defense Department does not make the rule, and so the “official” start date has not changed.

There are important people, like Bill Vollano, who had boots on the ground on and after 1 November 1955, who are being denied VVA membership benefits. Thus, I proposed to VVA State Council President John Riling that we change the VVA Constitution to provide specific dates in the Constitution instead of leaving that decision to Congress. Pres. Riling referred the matter to the Constitution Committee, Gary Estermyer. With the I’s dotted and T’s crossed, the issue should be on the ballot for decision at the 2019 VVA Convention.

We have until the State Caucus to find out why the DoD (Department



of Defense) thinks the date should be changed.



Many thanks to the Dispatch Newsletter Team members, who tirelessly strive to put out high-quality content month after month. This Newsletter continues to be an important communication tool for the VVA310 Members and Associates.



A Special Shoutout to New Members

Please make sure you get connected to our various communication channels. Our officers make every effort to establish connection with every new member, but just in case, please make sure your contact information reaches our three major communication channels, namely, the Chapter Secretary (Paulo Pereira), the Webmaster (Vance McCrumb), and John Kinzinger’s extensive network of contacts.

Welcome to VVA310!

If You Wish Contact Us

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Please Forward. Thank You!