



**Vietnam Veterans of America  
Colorado State Council**

## Colorado State Council Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: March 11, 2023 Scheduled Start Time: 1:00 PM  
Meeting Facility: Public library in Castle Pines, Colorado, 360 Village Square Ln.

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Meeting Location: Library Conference Room

Meeting called to order by President Tony Nickerson at 12:47 PM

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Tony Nickerson (lead)

**Invocation:** Joe Plant

**Moment of Silence (for those who gave the ultimate sacrifice and for those still POW/MIA):** Tony Nickerson

**Roll Call of Officers and Chapter Delegates Present:** Tony Nickerson (President), Stan Paprocki (Immediate Past President), David Lyons (First Vice President), Thomas Dowell (Second Vice President), David Ramey (Treasurer), Milt Omoto (Secretary), Leonard Smith (Voting Delegate 1071), Larry Peterson (Voting Delegate 1075), Joe Plant (Voting Delegate 1106).

**Absences:** None

**New Members/Guests:** Dick Southern (Region 9 Director), Trinidad (Trini) Rael (VP Chapter 1071); Doug Nunes (Director, Speakers Bureau Chapter 1071), Lee White (Past President Chapter 1106)

**Declaration of Principles:** David Lyons (read)

**Special Presentation: Vietnam War Commemoration Pin, Flag and Presidential Proclamation Daughters of the American Revolution**

Lynn Baldvins and Neva Rath from the Zebulon Pike Chapter NSDAR and Patricia Harden Borah from the Kinnikinnik Chapter NSDAR, both located in Colorado Springs, presented the Colorado State Council with the Vietnam War Commemoration Pin (to those who had not yet received it), the Commemoration flag, and Presidential Proclamation. President Tony Nickerson received these on behalf of the Council.

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**Questions on Prior Meeting Minutes.** The October, 2022, State Council meeting minutes were emailed to each Council member. An edited version is also posted to the Council website.

- There were no questions regarding the minutes and no corrections
- The October 8, 2022 State Council meeting minutes were accepted as submitted

### Region 9 Report: Dick Southern

- The National Convention is August 8 to 12, 2023 in Orlando, FL
- The National Board of Directors decided that National Conventions will continue to be scheduled for the years 2023, 2025 and 2027; beyond that time, it is questionable whether a Convention is realistic for members
- The organization is gaining new members but also losing new members through death; there is a slight net gain
- The Board of Directors will review the organization's strategic plan in light of this is a "Last Man Standing" organization
- Chapter financial reports are due to National in July; one copy to National and one copy to the State Council Treasurer
- Chapter election reports are due to National in July; one copy to National and one copy to the State Council Secretary; Chapters must submit even if this is not an election year
- The next Conference of State Council Presidents meeting and Board of Directors meeting is April 20 to 22 in Silver Spring, MD; the Board will discuss the VVA National Budget and HGDP program; an attempt to discuss and vote on the Budget online electronically was rejected by Board members who requested a face-to-face discussion and vote; this will be at the April BOD meeting
- All VVA Regions received the exact same amount for their FY2023 budget, including a maximum of \$3K total for travel
- The Region 8 and 9 pre-convention conference is being planned; the Sparks NV location was rejected due to a significant increase in hotel costs (from a prior \$89/night to \$142/night); the conference is generally held on Wednesday with Tuesday and Thursday as travel days; an RFP is being developed to find a new location and venue
- The VVA Life Membership account has about \$1.6MM total; it still costs \$27/new member processing costs; so, \$23 goes into the account for each new member
- National will send out a report of membership totals for State Councils and Chapters to determine the number of delegates allowed at the Convention
- Dick encouraged contacting at-large members to transfer into a Chapter; transfer forms are available on the National website; be sure to prepare a welcome letter
- Dick also encouraged Chapters to promote and educate members to leave a legacy by allocating a portion of their estate to the Chapter; National has information on this process; this is a source of funds for National; education is the key to success for this approach
- AVVA has available a PDF fillable version of the Paper Safe to document all important information about the veteran, spouse and family; for example, a surviving spouse can receive \$1,600/month tax free as part of the VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) program, for life

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- National now has 84,478 members; new Chapters were formed in Tennessee and Florida; a Chapter was lost in Minnesota; the average membership per Chapter is 114; managing an active and current membership roster takes continuing effort on the part of Chapters and National; many deceased members still appear on the active member roster

### **Treasurer's Report and HGDP Report: David Ramey**

- Treasurer Dave reported on the February budget; the Council had income from the HGDP program, and expenses for disbursement of HGDP funds to each Chapter; in addition, funds were transferred to the Council as the last disbursement of Dreiling Estate funds
- The Treasurer's report was approved by the Council (see Motions)
- The annual HGDP report to National was completed by Dave, ending FY2022; including a reported total

### **Expenses Against the Council: David Ramey**

- Sparks Tax Services, for Form 990 completion
- The next Veterans Community Living Center donation will go to the Rifle Veterans Community Living Center as part of the Council's quarterly support to Colorado Living Centers
- Today's Council lunch

### **Reading of Communications: Milt Omoto**

- Letter to Ms. Madison of the Veterans Community Center in Rifle was read by President Tony Nickerson

### **Member Sickness and Distress**

Chapter 1071: Trini reported on the passing of member Robert Wyatt;

Chapter 1075: Please pray for Manny Pedraza, Larry Mackenzie and James Kobelt for healing and comfort

Chapter 1106: Please pray for Chaplain Garry Turks who has Parkinsons; also, Richard Lewis who is recovering from a severe car accident.

### **Chapter Activity Reports**

#### Chapter 1071 (Trini Rael)

- The Chapter's Board has a new location for their meetings
- The Quilts of Honor presented eight quilts to members at a recent meeting
- Chapter membership now total 221 regular members and 42 AVVA members for a total of 263
- The Chapter's Honors Burial program was featured in a recent issue of *The VVA Veteran* magazine

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- Poppy drives are planned for Memorial Day weekend; this is a great money maker for the Chapter
- The Chapter participated in Wreaths Across America at Crown Hill Cemetery
- Students in a woodworking class at a local school made cremation boxes and donated them to the Chapter for Honors Burials
- A local Keller Williams Real Estate office made breakfast for the Chapter's Board (next to Owen Oliver's office, who is closing his practice and retiring)
- The Chapter plans to award \$18,000 in scholarships this year; the due date for submission is April 30<sup>th</sup>; the Scholarship Committee will select the winners and determine award amounts, which can range from \$2,000 to \$5,000
- Two Chapter members went on the Honor Flight
- Stan received a letter from Colorado Senator Bennet thanking him for his service to veterans
- The Chapter's Speaker's Bureau has 58 members participating; they have 23 high schools that they visit; seven schools are scheduled for April/May; Doug Nunes leads the Speaker's Bureau
- The Chapter donated two books on the Vietnam War to a local high school; one of the books is "The Odyssey of Echo Company, The 1968 Tet Offensive and the Epic Battle to Survive the Vietnam War", by Colorado resident Stan Parker. Stan will be speaking at a Chapter 1071 meeting.

### Chapter 1075 (Tom Dowell)

- Tom provided an update on their visits last year to Alamosa to establish a new VVA Chapter there
- The El Paso County Standdown, held October 18<sup>th</sup>, was a success with 93 veterans served; all veterans are vetted as veterans
- The Chapter participated in the Veterans Day parade
- Tom reported that from June through December, the Chapter is active recruiting new members by paying for their Life Membership; they have 10 new members as a result of this program
- The Chapter held its annual Christmas lunch in December
- The Chapter is working with Fort Carson to place a memorial plaque and time capsule in recognition of Vietnam War veterans
- The Zebulon Chapter of DAR presented Vietnam War Commemoration pins to members; 36 members attended
- The Chapter will participate in a National Vietnam War Recognition Day event at Pikes Peak National Cemetery on March 29<sup>th</sup>
- The Chapter has Challenge coins that cost \$6/each and sells them for \$10
- They have six new members this month
- Scholarship applications are due March 31; they give a 60-day grace period

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### Chapter 1106 (David Lyons)

- The Chapter regularly features speakers from the VA Eastern Colorado Health Care; recently we had a presentation on re-habilitative sports and allied activities and a presentation on visual impairment programs that are available to veterans
- The Chapter conducted a memorial service at its last membership meeting in recognition of two members who recently passed
- The Chapter will conduct their Memorial Day weekend Poppy Drive again this year; they also conduct an annual Veterans Day weekend Poppy Drive
- The Chapter has established an annual “Fallen Heroes Sock Drive” to collect new socks for donation to various organizations that serve veterans in need; this is in memory of Chapter members who have passed
- Books were recently donated to the Daniels Veterans Center, part of Volunteers of America, in Denver
- Chapter members volunteer at the Cherry Creek School District’s (CCSD) Innovation Campus; this education facility provided hands on training and skills development through a variety of programs such as carpentry, auto mechanics, electrical, plumbing and culinary
- The Chapter held their Holiday Lunch in December; over 90 attended, including guests that were honored at the event
- The Chapter has a new Secretary
- The Chapter plans to award six \$6,000 scholarships to graduating High School seniors
- The Chapter established a Memorial Committee to assist members to plan their legacy; a binder was developed and available to members that include “The Paper Safe” and the “VA Planning Your Legacy” booklets
- The Forgotten Heroes Campaign continued to award medals in a formal presentation ceremony to Chapter members; the ceremonies are held at the American Legion Post 1 facility
- The Chapter had four At-Large members transfer into the Chapter; the Chapter’s Membership Committee continues to contact At-Large members and invite them to attend meeting via Zoom or in person
- The Chapter has 189 regular members and 45 AVVA members
- The Chapter is working with Quilts of Valor to select the next ten members who will receive quilts
- Chapter monthly meetings average 70-80 members
- The Chapter is planning a field trip to the WWII Aviation Museum in Colorado Springs in May
- The Chapter’s Veterans Emergency Assistance Program assisted 97 veterans during FY2022
- The Chapter’s Color Guard presented Colors at the VA Eastern Colorado Health Care Chapel for a memorial celebration on February 23<sup>rd</sup> in remembrance of all veterans who passed during the last year; the Color Guard will also present Colors at the Honor Bell’s WELCOME HOME CELEBRATION, Saturday, March 25, 2023
- CCSD puts on an annual military and veterans’ appreciation day; the event is generally held in the Fall and provides free food for veterans and family members; there are displays of

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military hardware; the event continues with a high school football game in the evening; veterans are encouraged to attend this event.

### Unfinished Business

- None. Note that President Tony Nickerson raised an unfinished business topic, that of reimbursement of expenses for a meeting in Alamosa for the purpose of starting a new VVA Chapter; however, per Roberts Rules of Order, Section 41 Unfinished Business (5), this topic was not discussed at any previous meeting, is not unfinished business, and has therefore been moved under New Business

### New Business

- President Tony Nickerson raised the issue of reimbursement for expenses for his trip to Alamosa, the purpose of which was to gain enough interest to start a new VVA Chapter in the San Luis Valley area; there were questions about the process used to request funds, and the use of electronic media for approval voting and email exchanges; Milt read the chronological order of email exchanges, the voting on-line and the final vote results, which was 7 to 8 voting approval of the expenses; in order to end the discussion, a motion was made to approve the expenditure by the Council (see Motion 2, below)
- A thank you letter to James Dreiling signed by Council officers will be sent to him
- Council member attendance to be paid by the Council at this year's Convention; this discussion is moved to the June meeting; Dick Southern encouraged delegates to attend
- Joe Plant stated that State Council members should be allowed to sit with their Chapter delegates unlike in the past; Tony will raise this issue at the next Council of State Council President's meeting

### Motions

**Motion 1.** Motion to accept the February 2023 Treasurer's report was made by Dave Lyons and second by Stan Paprocki; the Treasurer's report was accepted by the Council.

**Motion 2.** Motion to approve the expenditure for President Tony Nickerson to travel to Alamos and meet with veterans interested in starting a VVA Chapter there, including mileage, expenses and per diem made by Milt Omoto and second by Larry Peterson; the motion passed, and the reimbursement approved.

**Motion 3.** Dave Reamy put fourth a motion for the Council to donate to the Honor Bell; the motion was second by Joe Plant; the Council passed the motion and approved the donation.

### Good of the Order

- Larry Peterson expressed his appreciation to Chapters and the Council for their support for the Honor Bell Foundation; the organization needs additional Bell Guards; the Foundation has reorganized to establish two Chapters, one for Fort Logan and one for the Pikes Peak

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Cemetery; donations are being accepted for the second bell; \$320,000 is required; the next planning committee meeting is March 21<sup>st</sup>; the Honor Bell will be at Pikes Peak Cemetery for the March 29<sup>th</sup> Vietnam War National Observance Day

- Tony provided copies of information that may be of interest to Chapter members
- Dave Reamy stated that the Wall That Heals is requesting donations at \$2/mile as the Wall travels; discussion on this topic was postponed to the June meeting.

**Closing Ceremony**

A closing prayer was provided by Joe Plant.

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**The Next Colorado State Council Meeting: June 10, 2023 @ 1300-hour, Castle Pines Library; note that we have the Conference Room only for two hours (1:00PM to 3:00PM)**

The meeting was adjourned by declaration with no objections at 2:58 PM by President Tony Nickerson.

This Colorado State Council Meeting minutes submitted by: Milt Omoto, State Council Secretary.

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*Published 03/15/2023*

*Circulation Notice: These minutes may contain sensitive and/or personal information; therefore, please use discretion when sharing this information with non-VVA members. This is the web version of the minutes posted on the Council's website.*