



Vietnam Veterans of America
Colorado State Council

Colorado State Council Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: October 12, 2024, Scheduled Start Time: 1:00 PM

Meeting Facility: Public library in Castle Pines, Colorado, 360 Village Square Ln
Meeting Location: Library Conference Room

Meeting called to order by President Dave Lyons, 1:03 PM

Invocation: Joe Plant

Pledge of Allegiance: President David Lyons (lead)

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

Roll Call of Officers and Chapter Delegates Present: David Lyons (President), Thomas Dowell (First Vice President), Milt Omoto (Second Vice President), David Ramey (Treasurer), Doug Nunes (Secretary), (Voting Delegates): Trini Rael, 1071; John Vargas, 1106

Absences: Larry Peterson (Voting Delegate for 1075)

Introduction of New Members/Visitors/Guests:

Antonio Read, (President, Colorado State Council's newest Chapter 1153, San Luis, CO). Jim Ramirez, Chapter 1075 (Visitor) and Dick Southern (Region 9 and National Membership Chair). All officers and guests gave a brief background of their Service in Vietnam; as an introduction for Antonio.

Declaration of Principles: Thomas Dowell (read)

Questions on Prior Meeting Minutes. No questions were received, the minutes were filed on the Council website.

Reading of Correspondence: David Lyons, pointed out to Dick Southern that the Council had received a letter from the National President stating the Council had not submitted the Election Report and the Annual Financial Report for 24-26, when in-fact those reports had been submitted on time. Dick shared that with so many Chapters and the heavy workload of the Membership Office, errors happen. If an e-mail request for a report is received and it had been sent in, to just resent it as a matter of business and not dwell on actual compliance, just to catch up and respond to the current request. **All Reports should be sent by e-mail, to: reports@vva.org**

Region 9 Report – Dick Southern

Region 9 has a new Chapter in Albuquerque, don't know the Chapter number yet. They have 7-8 new members and most did not send in the DD214 plus there are 17-18 transfers, and it take time to get all the paperwork. Chapters should not have any DD214s on file. That record is kept at national.

Dick pointed out that the DD215, is a form to request any awards or metal you earned in the service and they will send you a whole new set of each metal; this is especially helpful for a widow after the passing of her Veterans, this is a good service. It may take four to six weeks to receive the items.

Treasurer's Report and HGD Report: David Ramey

Household Good (HDP) checks have not been sent for 6 months. (June to October), and the accumulated amounts were distributed to each chapter. Dave will work with Chapter 1153 in getting the bank and account info so future distributions can be made of HDP monies. Dave advised that he had not distributed HDP funds for 6 months (June -October) but has now sent an equal amount to each Chapter, after retaining 25% for the State Council. Dick pointed out that the Household Goods annual report must be submitted and all funds used or the funds must be refunded.

Dick Southern shared that for future income from Household Goods, the amount changes every April. He went on to share that the annual Life Member Rebate, will be likely run out or be reduced going forward, just do to total new memberships dropping. This money is invested and from year to year, income will fluctuate. Last year only half the Rebate was paid. National is trying to reduce costs and deposit those savings into the Rebate account so that there will be more money accumulating in that account.

Dick advised VVA is at 92,125 members, 10,969 in Region 9, who will share in those funds so the rebate will be spread thinner. So, HDP is a contract in perpetuity and continues without having to renegotiate, but if that contract is lost (the vendor going out of business or some other big change and they walk away, then the VVA is DONE. The is what keeps the organization working.

Dick stated that if he was to guess the Reunion in 2025 may focus a small move toward the ending VVA and the bigger move being in 2027, he restated that HDP was at the heart of the matter. VVA will have a 50-year anniversary in 2028. Age and health will continue to get to us. Donations continue to be high and the HDP program employs 300 people national wide. Saying we are going to end in x-years tells these employees, job security is not so good. We also need to report of HDP expenses annually to justify the program as well. **Dick restated all reports go to "reports@vva.org.**

Expenses Against the Council: David Ramey. None.

Reading of Correspondence: See correspondence above.

Member Sickness and Distress

Chapter 1106: David Lyons reported: Chapter Member Patty Eline, had passed away from an aggressive brain tumor.

Chapter 1075: Marcus Barrd is in the 3rd month of rehab. Jerry Lollar, 84 is experiencing problems the past two to three months. Larry Mckenzie, 82 was just hospitalized with COVID. William Minyrd was working at his home and lost 3 fingers with a skill saw. Eugene Orner is continuing recovery. Paul Korten Havvn is in Hospice care since April. Terry Mikessell also has Parkinson's and being diabetic and is legally blind. Our Chapter has a Buddy Program, that is how we know who is ill.

Chapter 1071: None report.

Chapter Activity Reports

Chapter 1071 Trini reported that the Chapter is planning for the Poppy Drive November 9, at 6 locations. The Chapter has been drawing from the membership for speakers the past few months. We recognize POW/MIA Colorado Veterans from Vietnam at the end of each meeting as we retire the POW/MIA Empty Chair. There are 25 Veterans from Colorado in this group. Owen Oliver lead a group

of Vets to Soldierstone in September, in reportedly good weather. This was the most colorful trip in several years.

Lakewood hosted a Metro Veterans Fair at the Lakewood Elks on October 3. Service organizations and vendors from the area were present, the Chapter had a table and helped organize and fund the event. There were 75 tables participating.

Chapter 1075 (Tom Dowell). We are at 201 members. We had one member transfer to Chapter 1153, Howard Richards, who was appointed by Governor Polis to the Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs. He is a tribal member. Jimmy Ramirez has set up a table at the Colorado Springs VA Clinic, he has from 7-10 members show up to talk to Vets who visit the clinic. Since January he has recruited 38 members. This is very positive VVA exposure. We are trying to raise money for a second Bell. We also now have a song about the Honor bell, by Ronnie Davis. Two members attended the Leadership conference. In Reno.

We attended the July 4th Parade, which we do every year at the Monument, we had 80,000 spectators this year and 97 floats and marching bands. We also participated in a Retirement Appreciation Day at Ft. Carson with 350 attendees, we recruited 3 members and donated \$1000 to the HONOR BELL. Our Vice president, Jimmy was again handpicked by the President of UCCS to officiate at a Tree Blessing at UCCS for Native Americans. He did a good job. Also, Jimmy got us a new location for our meeting at the Westside Global Methodist Church, 701 N 20th St, Colorado Springs. We will be passing out our scholarship packages to El Pasco County High School Students. Our speaker this month is Michael Sumida, retired Air Force Colonel, who will talk about how Vietnam Veterans brought back respect and honor to the military. The Chapter participated in 16 Honor Bell Services at Pikes Peak National Cemetery.

Chapter 1106 (Milton Omoto, Chapter Vice President) Again, Patty Eline passed away August 17, she was interred at Ft. Logan. John Vargas has arranged for a memorial plaque for her at the Highland Ranch Veterans Memorial. We plan to have a ceremony once we receive the plaque. The Chapter is doing a clothing drive for the Daniels Veterans Center in Patty's honor.

The Chapter participated in the Highland Ranch Fourth of July Parade, with the Central Colorado Corvette Club and those that can't walk rode in the Corvettes.

The Chapter summer picnic was held the second Saturday in August. We awarded Jan Weber of the Quits of Valor, with an appreciation plaque for her dedication and work providing Quits to Veterans. Our Chapter has received almost 200 quilts. We did a bus trip to the Pueblo Aircraft Museum.

The Chapter has a table at the VA Hospital in Aurora, to explain the household goods program and membership in VVA; the Chapter recruited 2 new members from there.

The Chapter was considering donating a new bench to the new PTSD Unit at the VA Hospital. This turned out to be an unrealistic goal. The design was not practical. We decide not to donate the bench.

We plan to have a Poppy drive Veterans Day weekend at 3 King Soopers. In December we plan to have our end of year Holiday Lunch. The VA has a Remembering Our Veterans video program and one of our remarkable Veterans, 95 years old Martha Baker is a member of our Chapter. Click on the link to view: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-MrfyuEFCQ>

The Cherry Creek School District recently had their military Veteran's Day community celebration, this was an excellent program. The school has adopted our Chapter. They had a Student Veteran Football game between two schools, they had lunch and had a Chinook Helicopter land in the parking lot. And honored one of our members Rich Eisenberg, with his face on the Jumbo Tron.

Chapter 1153 Antonio Read introduced himself and his Chapter which is continuing to organize. Antonio is a horse guy and shared his ability to train horses. He discussed possibly going to Soldierstone on horseback.

Chapter 1153 has 15 members, but still have some document problems, ID cards and will work it out. They also have 5 transfers we are working on. Chapter 1153 meets at the American Legion Post 142, on 4th Street, off Main St in San Luis. We meet the second Saturday of every month, at 9:00-11:00 AM. David Lyons explained that the Council and Chapters communicate via email. Antonio is on the Denver Council of DAV and a DC. He is also the Quartermaster for the VFW, Chapter 6101 and a member of the San Luis American Legion. Antonio also related that he is "Old School" still learning computers and texting.

Unfinished Business. There is no unfinished business

New Business.

- Doug and David related their experience at the National Leadership Conference in Reno, in August. Lots of new things to learn about reports and Household Goods, the Conference was long but very organized so you could pick subjects to focus on. The importance of Roberts Rules in organizing and conducting meeting is very important. Other members shared experiences and overall a good learning experience.
- We discussed including Chapter 1153 in distribution of Household good money.
- We discussed problems in getting monthly State Roster, after the meeting David was able to resolve it by having the Roster sent to him and he plan to send it out to the Chapter Presidents.
- We discussed briefly forming 501c (3) tax exempt non-profit Foundations for each Chapter, but the discussion died for lack of immediate need. Once VVA winds down and goes away then the Foundations would allow continued solicitations of donations, to keep the Chapters operation

Motions No Motions were proposed.

Good of the Order: There was a brief discussion of the State Council logo and Chapter 1153s creation of a logo. There were no specifics discussed.

Closing Ceremony

A closing prayer was provided by Joe Plant

The Next Colorado State Council Meeting: March 8, 2025 @ 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 2:24 PM by President David Lyons.

This Colorado State Council Meeting Minutes submitted by: Doug Nunes, State Council Secretary.