

The Voice of 436

November 2018



Major Louis. F. Guillermin Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 436



Next meeting:

Nov. 14th, 7:30 p.m.
@ VFW Post 845
4601 West Lincoln Hwy.
Downingtown, PA 19335
610 269-8818

<http://www.vva436.org>

Bad weather cancellations:
email notices will be sent
or call Post 845 for updates

Chapter officers 2018-2019

President: Frank Houck
1st V.P.: Dave McTavish
2nd V.P.: Barry Amole
Secretary: Michael DiPuppo
Treasurer: Jim Doedderlein
Directors: Robert Gallagher
Chris Pitt
Sandy Lopacki
Vince DiLodovico
Bud McCullough
Rick Weimer

Our October 10th meeting was called to order at 1935 hours by President Frank Houck, with 29 members and guests in attendance. Frank led the Pledge of Allegiance, which was followed by a moment of silence for our POW-MIAs. Chaplain Joe Crescenzo gave the invocation. Secretary Mike DiPuppo called the roll; ten Officers and Directors were present.

Jed Burns introduced the evening's speaker, Col. John S. Roach, US Army (Ret.). Col. Roach enlisted in the Army in 1966, and in 1967 graduated from OCS as an Infantry 2nd Lieutenant. Deployed to Viet Nam, he served with the 101st Airborne as a Platoon Leader and later as Rifle Company Commander. After Viet Nam his subsequent postings included Fort Benning, Fort Lewis and Fort Bragg and then to US Embassies in El Salvador and later Colombia. During his career he was able to complete his BA degree (Sociology) and his MA degree (Educational Administration).

In 1984 he was sent as one of the first long term Military Trainers in El Salvador. There, he developed a major security upgrade of their national electric generation and distribution systems. Serving from 1984-86 as a Military Trainer in El Salvador, Central America, and working in Spanish, his work at national

emphasized counter-insurgency efforts, developing a self defense program for isolated rural villages, revamping the local military's training programs and working to help transform their military's Human Rights culture to effect a more humane and effective organization particularly as it interacted with both the civilian population and their own subordinate ranks. He gives much of the credit for the success of that training and the defeat of the insurgency to the Salvadorans, themselves, as well as to our training personnel.

Assigned In the late '90s as Defense Attache' to the US Embassy in Bogota, Columbia, he played a key role in organizing the Embassy staff to exploit, on short notice, the largest capture of narco-trafficking documents to that point in Colombia's history.

At Fort Lewis he was Commander of the 2nd Bn, 1st SFG (Abn), and at Fort Bragg (1993-95) Col. Roach capped his career as Commander of the 7th Special Forces Group (Abn), providing trainers/advisors for the Andean region of South America. Post retirement, he has spent more than 15 years working overseas for various US Embassies in the Near East and Latin America.

Following the Q and A period, he was given both the Chapter 436 challenge coin and a copy of the Micheal Crescenzo MoH coin.

Upcoming Meetings

Regular membership meetings are held the 2nd Wednesdays of each month, exclusive of July and August.

Our next regular meeting is scheduled for November 14th at the usual time and place.

Scheduled speaker for the November meeting is Ms Deb Woolson, Freedoms Foundation of Valley Forge, re the plans and funding needs for the Medal of Honor Grave.

Website: <http://www.vva436.org> Please use this excellent resource often so we can keep it going. Send your constructive comments to Webmaster Phil Prinzi. He puts great effort into the site on our behalf, so be sure to let him know how much you appreciate his efforts on this.

Membership: ** Jim Doedderlein noted that we are down to 138 Active members and 9 Associate members as a result of the passing of Anthony Perry and Mike Malesky (RIP).

** Embarrassingly, we didn't hear about Anthony's passing for several months, **so we ask all members to make it a point to advise their families and next-of-kin to notify the Chapter ASAP of any major event such as serious illness or death of a member.**

** Lastly, Jim advised that Bud McCullough's phone at Maris Grove is (610) 358-3141.

Agent Orange: Bob Stone said the BWNVV Bill is still stalled in the House for review. Also, he noted the irony in the notice that the VA is now reviewing the impact of Mustard Gas exposures on WW II veterans! He also emphasized, forcefully, the importance, when presenting a problem to the VA, of having a knowledgeable advocate go with you to assist you, e.g., a certified VSO from the DAV, American Legion, or the VVA District.

Membership form

Regular membership in VVA is open to any Veteran who served **anywhere** during the Vietnam War era.

Mail to PO Box 189
Phoenixville, PA 19460

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zipcode _____

Email: _____ Born: ____/____/____

- Dues: \$20.00/year (regular and associate memberships). **VVA Life Membership: \$100**
- I served in the US military, for other than training purposes, between 8/5/64 and 5/7/75
- I served in the US military in Vietnam between 2/21/61 and 8/5/64.
- DD214 enclosed (Applications without DD214s will be processed as associate memberships)
- I wish to join the Associates of the VVA. (No military service needed) (No age limits)
- AVVA Life Membership.** Cost based on age

Administrative:

** Motions to approve the Treasurers Report (Bassetti, Gallagher) and the SGOOC Report (McTavish, Duncan) were approved subject to audit.

** Motion to approve two minor corrections to the September 12th meeting Minutes, as explained by Secretary DiPuppo, was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Visitors/Guests:

** Long time member, Jim Hoey, who served as a submarine sailor in the waters off Vietnam and now lives in Florida. While here for a family event, he joined us and was given a hearty "Welcome Home!"

** Also attending was VVA PA District 4 Director, Gary Letterhouse,, a US Navy VN Veteran from Chapter 131; he is a VVA CSO and VSO, a mental health responder, and can assist veterans with benefits services, seminars, homeless veterans outreach and education. For his contact information, visit the Minutes on the website.

Incoming Correspondence:

** The October issue of Rolling Thunder Times was received, along with a request for support of their National Wreaths Across America Day event (12/15/18). Motion (Schweitzer, Burns) to donate to this event for wreaths at a veterans cemetery in NJ, was approved unanimously.

** VVA Chapter 466, Graterford Prison, sent an invitation to their 36th Annual Veterans Day Service on Nov. 10th.

** A certificate of appreciation from the Veterans at Memorial Park Project for our recent donation.

** A donation from Debbie Carr in memory of her husband, Cdr. Steve Carr, USN, who passed away on 9/11/17. Bob Gallagher had sent her one of our new Challenge Coins.

** Peggy Maleski sent a thank you note for the Challenge Coin we sent for Rev. Dr. Mike Maleski, also deceased.

VA/Veterans Affairs:

** The West Chester Veterans Day parade will be held Sunday, Nov. 4th. We are invited to VFW Post 106 after the parade for refreshments, and / or to the American Legion Post 134.

** The VAMC Parade will start at 0900 on Nov. 9th.

** Ken Rhoades, VA representative from the state, is looking for a deputy to assist him only on a quarterly basis.

** Ken noted that the Medical Center luncheon has been changed to Nov. 7th; setup at 1100, serving at noon; Staff will do the actual serving.

** SEVC's Fall Festival, at Tilghman Hall, will be Oct. 20th.

** SEVC Bingo Night will be Nov. 27th, 1830- 2100; contact Ken to help.

** The Helicopter Museum is seeking suggestions to get more veterans groups to interact and relate their experiences with the museum; check with Bob Gallagher.

Color Guard:

** Several events are scheduled for November; Frank will send details to the CG members.

** The CVAMC parade will be held on Nov. 9th; muster

Blue print = email addresses Red print = website hot links
www.vva436.org: for updates & meetings minutes.

at Bldg 138.

** We will do the Flag raising ceremony on the 5th, but will not be able to participate in the Flag Folding ceremony at Bldg 138 on Nov. 9th since they are already participating in a parade that morning. Our group will not be able to participate in the Flag Folding ceremony at Bldg 138 on Nov. 5th since they are already participating in a parade that morning.

** Frank discussed some of the pros and cons for another attempt this winter at a trip to a Flyers hockey game to present the colors. He asked for the members' opinions and suggestions and will discuss this again at the next meeting.

Doc's Corner:

** Eglin AFB, opened the Air Force's first Invisible Wounds Treatment Center in Florida, with a team of 18 specialties under the one roof, replicating the program of the National Intrepid Centers of Excellence begun at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center which has created 7 such centers at military bases around the nation since 2010, and 2 more in planning stages. For information, call them at 1-301-319-3600, or visit <https://www.eglin.af.mil>

** PA's DMVA announced they have 6 Veterans Extended Care facilities in PA, including the SEVC, Delaware Valley Veterans Home, Scranton, etc., which are currently accepting applications for admission; call 1-717-861-8906 for details.

** The VA is making Rx refills simpler for veterans who are traveling. Phase one of their "OneVAPharmacy" system is said to be available across the VA at all VAMCs. Check out VA's VAntage Point Blog or Google the topic.

More About The Wall:

** The Wall hosts an average of 4.5 million visitors every year.

** While the VN Veterans Memorial Foundation finances the addition of names to the Wall, it is the DoD which makes the actual difficult decisions whether to certify newly recovered MIA remains and add that name to the Wall.

** The VVMF holds a "reading of the names" of those inscribed on the Wall every 5 years (the first reading in 1982 took 3 full days).

** Wall washings occur every Saturday between April and November.

Of Interest/Good of the Chapter:

** Purchase additional new VVA 436 Challenge Coins from Bob Gallagher, at \$5.00 each.

** Flu shots are available at the VA, Walgreen's, and other sites at no additional cost when you use your Medicare or insurance cards. If over age 65 you might need a booster shot. Shingles shots are also available. Check with your doctor for guidance on these issues.

** A strong recommendation was made to register and get a VA card to qualify for essential VA benefits you might need in the future.

** Jed Burns announced the Memorabilia Cabinet in Bldg 3, 2nd floor, CVAMC, is completed; they are seeking items of interest to display.

** A suggested Mission BBQ lunch event for December is being considered. Check with Jed.

** The members made a donation to to General Fund.

** Meeting adjourned at 2115 hours.



Major L. F. Guillermin Memorial Chapter 436

PO Box 189
Phoenixville, PA 19460

Email: vva436@gmail.com

website: <http://www.vva436.org>

Address label here