

The Listening Post



Chapter 35 Election

History repeated itself in last April's chapter elections.

Dick Wilson was elected to President for a second term, this last occurred in 2007, re-electing a president.

Have you ever thought of running for office?

Now is the time to think about stepping up to serve our chapter.

If you know a member that would make a good officer for our chapter, nominate them at the March 9th meeting.

Self-nominations will be accepted and is encouraged.

Election voting will be during our April 13th meeting.

Every available member should attend both meetings for nominations and voting, this for the good of our chapter.

Electronic Newsletter

The electronic newsletter is going very well.

We now have over 40 members that get their newsletter by e-mail.

Not only do they get it faster, *they sometimes get an expanded version*, more pages and it is in color! It is easy for you to get the same. Contact me, Al Meadows at the chapter meetings or e-mail request to

alm108wal@aol.com

March Meeting

Sunday, Mar. 9, 2014 at 7 p.m.

LAKE TOWNSHIP BUILDING
Corner, St. Rt. 795 & Cummings Rd.
Lake Township, Wood County

"Coffee and fellowship at 6:30 p.m."



VA Health Care Enrollment

Veterans who are not enrolled in the VA Health Care System should do so ASAP. You can apply at anytime by visiting www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll, call 1-877-222VETS (8387) or visiting their local VA health care facility. New VA I.D pictured above.

Notes from February Meeting

Officers in attendance were, President, Dick Wilson, 2nd Vice President, George Hart, Treasure Gene Shurtz and Dick Nolte sat in for Secretary Jess Cogle in his absence.

The minutes were read by Gene Shurtz and membership approved. The treasurer report was given by Gene Shurtz and approved by membership in attendance.

More fund raiser ideas were submitted. Member Danny Skirvin and his wife Associate Member Bonnie along with the help of George Hart, proposed a car show on a Sunday in September, sponsored by VVA Chapter 35. Danny and Bonnie have a show car and belong to a car club. They stated, they have members of their club that will help host the show.

Member Ed Hart suggested we hold silent auctions at the end of each meeting using items (new or good condition used) donated by members and/or outside sponsors.

Member Dick Nolte suggested an

2013-14 Officers

Dick Wilson / Pres.

Larry King / V. Pres.

George Hart / 2nd V.P

Jess Cogle / Secretary

Gene Shurtz /Treasurer

Board Members

Ed Willmarth/till 2014

Bob Stewart / till 2015

Dick Nolte / till 2016

Ralph Wineland/till 2016

Office (419)-242-4293

eat in and/or carry out chicken dinner. He knows a place that will do the prep for the chicken and we could add the sides to the meal.

Whatever the chapter decides to do, with the fund raiser suggestions we are getting, we need help from members to make them happen. If you would like to, and can help, with any or all the suggested, or have an idea your self, contact any officer at the meeting or send e-mail with subject line "Fund Raiser" to Al Meadows at alm108wal@aol.com it will get to the right person for that fund raiser function.

Chapter President, Dick Wilson suggested that the chapter have a social gathering/ camp outing at an area he is caretaker of, in Oregon, Oh. If you would be interested in attending, contact Dick. No date has been set yet. Also from Dick Wilson, a request that the chapter loan one of our electric wheel chairs to an elderly lady, in her 80's , in a nursing home and can not use the supplied manual chairs. The chapter voted and past the motion for her to use our chair.

Vietnam Veterans asked to share photos and stories

SALEM TOWNSHIP

From Port Clinton News Herald

Last year was the first official observance of Vietnam Veterans Day in the state.

This year is the first time organizers have had the time to properly prepare for the event, and local veterans of the Vietnam era are asked to help with the Vietnam Era Veterans Homecoming.

The observance is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 29 at the Ottawa County Fairgrounds. Ernie Hopkins, a local Vietnam veteran, is asking others to share their photos of their time in the military. Those photos can be scanned and quickly returned to the owners, and the scanned images will be shown during the events. "It would be personal photographs that were taken during the Vietnam era — to bring and share with others," Hopkins said.

"It's a tribute to our veterans, and I think we need to recognize and honor them," Burriss said. "Some of those Vietnam veterans, when they came back, I don't think they got a proper welcome. It's our way of helping them recognize their comrades.

"When you realize what they sacrificed for their country, it's something want to help them with — just to help them," Burriss said.

Hopkins is happy to work alongside the Ottawa County Veterans Services Commission to organize the March event, which will feature guest speakers including David W. Taylor, the author of "Our War: The History and Sacrifices of an Infantry Battalion in the Vietnam War, 1968-1971."

"We will be having a historical military display. We will be having the POW-MIA Memorial Traveling Wall for Ohio," Hopkins said. The wall, which will be brought by Rolling Thunder Chapter 5 Ohio, shows the names of the 137 Ohio military personnel who were lost during the war. "What we're doing is just taking that day and honoring it for as many local Vietnam Era veterans as we can,"

Hopkins said. "We're getting a lot of positive feedback. Those Vietnam veterans that I've spoken to are pretty excited." The event is not just for those who served in Vietnam.

"This is a welcome home for the Vietnam era veterans," Hopkins said. "If you were in the service during the Vietnam War, and you served in Germany or Kentucky, that makes you a Vietnam-era veteran."

Jeni Biehler is a veterans service officer in training with the Ottawa County Veterans Service Commission.

She said along with the memorial wall, the veterans will be able to see military vehicles courtesy of the Firelands Military Vehicle Group. "They are going to have some of their vehicles there. We are looking at vehicles specific to the Vietnam era only — that's what we're going to have there," Biehler said. Hopkins said the rewards of the observance are mainly emotional.

"I actually am a Vietnam veteran. It makes me feel good because, when I came home, there weren't any parades. There weren't any 'Welcome Homes.' There wasn't any of what you do today, when they meet you with the fire trucks and the police department and take you to your home," Hopkins said.

"We went away. We did our job. We came back and we were just thrown back into society like we were never gone for two years," Burriss said. "There are a lot of Vietnam veterans today that don't even claim to be Vietnam veterans. Somebody you pass on the street — you might not realize is a Vietnam veteran.

"When you talk to some of these veterans today, they say, 'I don't have anything to say. I don't want to talk about it.' Our biggest goal is to say, 'Welcome home. A job well done. Hold your head up high. Don't be ashamed,'" Burriss said.

For information on sharing photographs, call at 419-341-2922

Member Spotlight Monthly

by Al Meadows



My name is Al Meadows, a life member of VVA chapter 35 and Editor of The Listening Post. I am married to chapter 35 associate member Lil Meadows, 44 yrs in May, we have 2 children and 5 grandchildren.

Flash back 1968, the picture above was taken in 1968. I served in the U.S. Army from Sept. 1966 until May 1969. Served in Vietnam 1967, until 1969, 1 year as advisor with ROK Tiger Division in Binh Dinh province west of Qui Nhon. From there I went to IFFV HQ in Nha Trang for about 3 months. My last year in Vietnam and the military was with the ROK White Horse Division in Ninh Hoa province northwest of Nha Trang.

In May 1969 when my CO said I could leave Vietnam and get out of the Army early, I turned in my weapons, got on a aircraft headed home and left all possessions behind.

**April Meeting
Sunday, April 13, 2014**

**Meeting at 7:00 p.m.
Coffee & Fellowship at 6:30pm**

**LAKE TOWNSHIP BUILDING
St. Rt. 795 & Cummings Rd.**

Lake Township, Wood County

Personality Disorder Discharges Argued In Court

Vietnam Veterans of America has filed a lawsuit responding to Department of Defense's wrongful discharge of nearly 26,000 veterans.

The Department of Defense (DoD) has violated the law by failing to release records showing that it has wrongfully discharged nearly 26,000 service members on the basis of so-called "Personality Disorder." This Personality Disorder designation has prevented disabled veterans from receiving the disability compensation and other benefits they have earned. Vietnam Veterans of America and its counsel, the Veterans Legal Services Clinic of the Jerome N. Frank Legal Services Organization at Yale Law School, hope that the records they obtain through this lawsuit will convince Congress to mandate a systemic review of these discharges and compel DoD to repair the harm it has caused.

Mary O'Leary *New Haven Register*

Vietnam War Re-enactors Honor Veterans With Portrayal

Despite controversy, re-created conflict gets warm reception

Revolutionary and Civil War reenactments are a familiar sight—but now, one of the most controversial wars in US history is in reruns, the AP reports. Houston, Mississippi, and Pennsylvania have all hosted Vietnam war reenactments.

"We do it to honor these guys and to tell them, 'You weren't forgotten,' to tell them it wasn't always negative," says one involved.

At first, a lead organizer was worried about the reaction from veterans. But "what they're doing here is absolutely great," says one who fought in Vietnam as a sergeant.

"I think for a long time with Vietnam, we tried to push that out of our history, that it didn't happen, so I think this is a good thing."

Josh Elmer *Buzz Saw*

Coins Left on Tombstones



While visiting some cemeteries you may notice that headstones marking certain graves have coins on them, left by previous visitors to the grave.

These coins have distinct meanings when left on the headstones of those who gave their life while serving in America's military, and these meanings vary depending on the denomination of coin.

A coin left on a headstone or at the grave site is meant as a message to the deceased soldier's family that someone else has visited the grave to pay respect. Leaving a penny at the grave means simply that you visited.

A nickel indicates that you and the deceased trained at boot camp together, while a dime means you served with him in some capacity. By leaving a quarter at the grave, you are telling the family that you were with the soldier when he was killed.

According to tradition, the money left at graves in national cemeteries and state veterans cemeteries is eventually collected, and the funds are put toward maintaining the cemetery or paying burial costs for indigent veterans.

In the US, this practice became common during the Vietnam war, due to the political divide in the country over the war; leaving a coin was seen as a more practical way to communicate that you had visited the grave than contacting the soldier's family, which could devolve into an uncomfortable argument over politics relating to the war.

Some Vietnam veterans would leave coins as a "down payment" to buy their fallen comrades a beer or

play a hand of cards when they would finally be reunited.

The tradition of leaving coins on the headstones of military men and women can be traced to as far back as the Roman Empire.

Erin 107.9



Membership Drive Underway For Chapter 35, Right Now

It is plain and simple folks, we need members, Vietnam Veterans, Vietnam Era veterans and associates, talk to everyone.

Membership is open to Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. military (for other than training purposes) between February 28, 1961, and May 7, 1975 (in-country Vietnam) or between August 5, 1964 and May 7, 1975, for Vietnam-era veterans.

Associate Membership is for anyone that is not a Veteran, or a Veteran that did not serve during the above dates.

Dues are \$9 for new members thru the end of 2014.

Member Spotlight Monthly

We want to feature you in the newsletter. Just need pictures, while in service and a recent along with a short story in your own words about your service history, time in Vietnam, unit served with and year or years in country, any special awards, ect.

Send it to Al Meadows
e-mail- alm108wal@aol.com

VA Links Five More Medical Conditions To TBI

Connected traumatic brain injuries (TBI). What this means is veterans who have those illnesses as well as TBI will have an easier time getting additional disability benefits. The VA based its decision on a report by the National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine that found "sufficient evidence" to link moderate to severe TBI with five secondary conditions: Parkinson's disease; certain types of dementia; depression; unprovoked seizures; and certain diseases of the hypothalamus and pituitary glands. These secondary illnesses will be considered service-connected from the Keene Sentinel on Jan 6: The Department of Veterans Affairs has added five illnesses to service-connected and won't require medical opinions to establish whether there is correlation to TBI. There's a time period for three of the five illnesses, however.

Parkinson's disease or unprovoked seizures don't have a time frame: Dementia, if it manifests within 15 years with moderate or severe TBI. Depression, if it manifests within three years with moderate or severe TBI, or within 12 months with mild TBI. Diseases of hormone deficiency from hypothalamo-pituitary changes, if they manifest within 12 months of moderate or severe TBI.

Even if you don't meet the guidelines for severity of TBI or length of time between TBI and the onset of the secondary illness, file your claim anyway. To see the whole final determination (the comment section is informative) go online to www.regulations.gov and type this in the search box: VA-2012-VBA-0029-0212

Keene Sentinel VA Web Weekly



VA Allots \$600 Million More To Veterans Program.

Veterans Affairs officials will spend \$600 million to continue the Supportive Services for Veteran Families program, community grants they say are key in ending homelessness among veterans.

The new pledge commits \$300 million each in fiscal 2014 and fiscal 2015 for the grants, which are designed to provide a safety net for low-income veterans struggling with permanent housing.

VA awarded \$300 million in grants last summer as part of the program. Officials said the money helped more than 39,000 veterans and 23,000 of their family members.

Advocates have said the direct support to outside nonprofits and the program's "housing first" model have been key in helping homeless veterans. Many of the aid recipients are veterans who are not yet homeless, but could end up on the streets without intervention.

The department has set a public goal of ending veterans homelessness by the end of 2015. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development annual point-in-time count released in November, the number of homeless veterans across the country dropped to 57,849 in January 2013, down about 20,000 from four years earlier.

Department officials said the success of the SSVF program made continuing it an obvious choice, but officials wanted to publicly commit the fiscal 2015 money as well to provide continuity and planning for the larger homeless effort. In a statement, VA Secretary Eric Shinseki said partnerships with community groups are key in helping all veterans.

"We are making good progress towards our goal to end veterans' homelessness," he said, "but we still have work to do."

Source, VA Weekly

Vietnam Vet Returns Arm Bones to Amputee

DR. SAM AXELRAD HAD KEPT THEM AS MEMENTO

An American doctor arrived in Vietnam recently carrying an unlikely piece of luggage: the bones of an arm he amputated in 1966.

Dr. Sam Axelrad brought the skeletal keepsake home to Texas as a reminder that when a badly injured North Vietnamese soldier was brought to him, he did the right thing and fixed him up. The bones sat in a closet for decades, and when the Houston urologist finally pulled them out two years ago, he wondered about their true owner, Nguyen Quang Hung. Today, the men were reunited at Hung's home in central Vietnam, where Axelrad returned Hung's bones to him.

The men met each other's children, and grandchildren, and joked about which of them had been better looking back when war had made them enemies. Hung was stunned that someone had kept his bones for so long, but happy that when the time comes, they will be buried with him. "I'm very glad to see [Axelrad] again and have that part of my body back after nearly half a century," Hung says. He was shot during an ambush by American troops, fled and hid for three days, but was eventually captured and brought to Axelrad for the amputation. "He probably thought we were going to put him in some prisoner-of-war camp," Axelrad says. "Surely he was totally surprised when we just took care of him."

From Associated Press.

**Chapter Elections
For Officers and
a Board Member.
April Meeting.
Please plan on attending.
We Need YOU !**