

# The Listening Post

"NEVER AGAIN WILL ONE GENERATION OF VETERANS ABANDON ANOTHER"



## Vietnam Veterans Of America Toledo Chapter 35 Meeting Notes For Sunday June 11, 2017

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by President Bob Stewart, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, invocation by the Chaplain (Gene Shurtz) and a moment of silence for POW's and MIA's.

**Guest present:** Doug Dammon

Doug belongs to an organization for Veterans, "Beyond the Foxhole – No Vet Left Behind", and would like to stage a poker run to raise funds for the Chapter sometime in September. The poker run could finish at a bar in Oregon, Ohio. Entertainment could be provided by professional groups with hope that they would charge half of their standard fee. The funds from the poker run would be used to help all vets in need.

**Secretary's report given**

**Treasurer's report given**

**1<sup>st</sup> VP report:** Copies of handouts on getting new members

**2<sup>nd</sup> VP report:** Ralph reminded the Chapter how important the Legacy Project is and to please fill out the form and return it to Bonnie Skirvin. "Not Written for Your Peers – Written for Your Loved Ones".

**Chaplain Report:** Tom Boose on the mend after being taken to Ann Arbor VA Hospital by Gene Shurtz.

BSC pushing for membership, contact every recruit/non-member.

Beginning November 11, 2017, all veterans can use military commissary on line. Free breakfast first Wednesday of every month at Darlington Nursing and Rehab for veterans. July 1 – 7 free admission for veterans at the Columbus Zoo

Treasurer, Gene Shurtz, requested that \$10,000 be taken from Chapter 35 funds and reinvested at a higher interest rate. Gene to look into this with various financial advisers and see which company can provide the safest and highest rate of return.

Chapter picnic to be held the third Sunday in August (20<sup>th</sup>) due to the National Convention being held in New Orleans just prior to our regular monthly meeting

Chapter to provide meat, drinks, plastic wear, pot-luck by Chapter members

Bonnie Skirvin still asking members for bios

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Clyde W. Appleby Secretary CWA:caa

## August Meeting Moved To Third Sunday And Outside Picnic



As we did last year in August, we plan to have our meeting/picnic outside under the shelter. In the event there's bad weather, we will move inside to enjoy the food that everyone is bringing. Our President Robert Stewart is checking to see what we can get for main course at reduced cost. Anyway the chapter is buying the meat. Vice President Ralph Wineland has a sign-up sheet to mark down what you intend to bring.

### 2017-2018 Officers

Robert Stewart / President

Phillip Hotz / V. President

Ralph Wineland / 2nd V. President

Clyde Appleby / Secretary

Gene Shurtz / Treasurer

### Board Members

Edward Hart / till 2020

John Slaughterbeck / till 2018

Al Meadows / till 2019

Ron Sherman / till 2019

AVVA/Jan Baker

Office 419.242.4293

Chaplain 419.242.4293

## Electronic Newsletter

Not only would you help Chapter 35 cut expenses and save money, you would get more pages with stories of Vietnam and more if you converted to paperless newsletter in your e-mail. If you would like a paper copy to save then you could just print it. You can save to your computer for future reading, forward to prospective members, your family members and friends. This newsletter has 6 pages, some have had up to 12 with chapter news and stories. If you would like to help us out and receive your newsletter electronically, please contact Al Meadows (Editor) by e-mail at [alm108wal@aol.com](mailto:alm108wal@aol.com) or call at 419-666-4924

### Meeting

Sunday July 9, 2017 at 7 p.m.

LAKE TOWNSHIP BUILDING

Corner, St. Rt. 795 and Cummings Rd.

Lake Township, Wood County

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

## The Brott Family And Friends Are At It Again

Please attend and support them as they are supporting us.



3rd Annual  
**DAVE BROTT**  
*Memorial Bike Run*

**Saturday, August 12, 2017**

<p>\$20.00 per bike \$10.00 additional passenger</p> <p>50/50 Drawings Live Music</p> <p>Call Al Hosmer 419-409-0291 with any questions</p>	8:30 - 9:45 am Registration (day of event)
	10:00 am First bike leads from BroadWing Tattoos & Body Piercing 125 N. Main, Bowling Green, Ohio
	4:30 pm Finish at Sunset Bistro 1220 W. Wooster, Bowling Green, Ohio

30% of all sales of food & drink will go to benefit Vietnam Veterans of America

*All proceeds go to Vietnam Veterans of America*

## Free Breakfast For Veterans At Darlington

First Wednesday of every month. 2735 Darlington Rd. at Douglas. Last month's breakfast pictured below.



## AVVA Life Member Passes



Alice May Goldsmith

On June 28, 2017, Alice May Goldsmith embarked on her final journey. She now rests with her beloved husband, Edward. Also preceding her in immortality is her father, Matt; mother, Evelyn; brother, Charles and sister, Viola. Left behind to cherish her memory are her sons, Ray (Pat) Johnston, Terry (Sheri) Johnston, Joseph (Mary) Goldsmith; daughter, Donna (Wayne) Boyd; twin brother, Allen; grandchildren, Tyler (Keo) Johnston, Mike (Heather) Goldsmith, Christy (Calvin) Walker, Beverly Hickling, Bobby Price, Brian (Chrissy) Goldsmith and 11 great grandchildren bid her goodbye.

Alice was a remarkable woman, respected and loved in her community. A GM retiree, she was proud of her accomplishments. She was able to build her own computer well into her 70's. Alice was a life Associate member of the Vietnam Veterans of America chapter 35, as all four of her sons served in Vietnam. She was actively involved in her church, Our Savior Lutheran and volunteered her time at Flower Hospital. Visitation will be held from 1:00pm to 6:00pm Wednesday, July 5th at Ansberg-West Funeral Home, 3000 Sylvania Avenue, where services will commence at 6:00pm. Memorial contributions may be made to Our Savior Lutheran Church. Condolences for Alice's family may be expressed online at [www.ansberg-west.com](http://www.ansberg-west.com)

Alice's Son Raymond Johnston is also a Life member of Vietnam Veterans of America chapter 35. He has held officer positions of President and also Treasurer in the past.

### Meeting

Sunday August 20, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.  
LAKE TOWNSHIP BUILDING  
St. Rt. 795 & Cummings Rd.  
Lake Township, Wood County  
Fellowship at 6:30pm

## Shulkin Promises ‘Major Changes’ At Veterans Affairs



*Veterans Affairs' Under Secretary of Health David Shulkin attends an event at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.,*

*CARLOS BONGIOANNI/STARS AND STRIPES*

WASHINGTON — Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin says major changes were coming to the agency, saying President Donald Trump expects it.

“We’re going to be looking for some major changes, to really reevaluate how we do things,” Shulkin said during a live, online question-and-answer podcast with veterans. “If you look at the president’s 10-point plan, he’s not looking for minor changes. The reason why I feel I got a 100-0 [confirmation] vote from the Senate is because there’s one thing the country agrees on -- that our vets deserve better than what they’re getting now.”

However, he did not offer veterans specifics about how he would change the department, only calling it a “modernizing of our system.”

Part of the change will include the Veterans Choice Program, which Shulkin said he wanted to “redesign” this year.

The program allows some veterans to receive care in the private sector with the VA paying the bill, but many veterans have criticized it as complex and confusing.

The Veterans Choice Program is set to

expire in August. Shulkin said he’s working with Trump and lawmakers to propose changes to the program, though no details were offered. He’s previously deflected claims of “privatization.”

In Trump’s 10-point plan for VA reform, which was introduced during his campaign, the president said he wanted to allow all veterans the option to seek care in the private sector. Some veterans organizations have voiced concerns and contend paying more for veterans to seek outside care could diminish resources at VA facilities. Scott Blackburn, who was named as Shulkin’s acting deputy secretary, said the VA would “buckle down” and “get more disciplined.” Blackburn previously led former VA Secretary Bob McDonald’s VA transformation initiative, “MyVA.”

“The president wants to do some really big things,” Blackburn said. “We still have a long way to go.” Shulkin, who previously worked as VA undersecretary of health under McDonald, was confirmed Feb. 13 as the new VA secretary. The town hall-style event was the first time that Shulkin spoke publicly to veterans as VA secretary. He said he would do

more online town halls in the future if veterans requested them., Shulkin will address members of Disabled American Veterans at the organization’s winter conference in Arlington, Va. Besides promising major changes, Shulkin on condemned the “berating” of the VA by public officials and the media.

He first mentioned the issue during a VA podcast released and reiterated his feelings during the town hall event in the afternoon.

“I think that it’s time to stop beating us up,” Shulkin said. “I’m disappointed there seems to be an obsession with finding our failings.”

That runs contrary to how Trump has spoken about the VA, which he has called “the most corrupt agency” and “probably the most incompetently run agency” in the government.

“The constant berating that the VA is filled with unethical people is really painting a picture that is... a disservice to our veterans, because it breaks down their confidence in the system,” Shulkin said. “I worry there are people who need help but don’t come to us because they hear this narrative.” During Shulkin’s confirmation hearing Feb. 1, Republican and Democratic senators also said they thought there were “good stories” at the VA, and that the agency was being unfairly criticized in some instances.

Shulkin, who is a physician, also said he would continue a practice that he started as undersecretary for health and find time to treat VA patients. He saw patients on physician rounds in the VA’s New York Harbor Healthcare System.

“I think it’s important for me to make sure I stay connected with the services we deliver,” Shulkin said during the podcast. “I get tremendous value from actually being able to take care of vets and hear from them and work with staff.”

[wentling.nikki@stripes.com](mailto:wentling.nikki@stripes.com)

## Seventy Five Years Ago, Code-Breakers Helped Win WWII At Midway



John F. Miniclier, who was a Marine private first class stationed on Sand Island during the Battle of Midway, points to the surveillance tower he was in during the Japanese attack on June 4, 1942. Miniclier was one of two veterans of the battle who attended the 75th anniversary ceremony held at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam June 2, 2017.

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii — On June 4, 1942, Marine Corps Pfc. John F. Miniclier knew the Battle of Midway had begun as Japanese fighters strafed his encampment on Sand Island, one of the islands of the Midway atoll.

He and his fellow Marines had been told a few weeks earlier by Pacific Fleet command to expect an attack by a powerful Japanese armada.

What he didn't know then — and like most Americans did not learn until decades after — was the key role a small group of code-breakers had played in the American victory over that Japanese naval force intent on seizing the Midway Atoll, which lies about 1,000 miles northwest of Honolulu.

The 95-year-old has a different understanding now.

"The code-breakers, I think, are the guys who saved my life," Miniclier said after a ceremony Friday at Pearl Harbor commemorating the 75th anniversary of the pivotal naval battle. It was held on the lawn outside the historic Building I, which housed the code-breakers in the early part of World War II.

The intelligence they produced was key in stymying Japan's takeover of Midway Atoll, an overwhelming invasion that would likely have spelled doom for the Marines defending it. The Battle of Midway, which came just a half year after the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, is widely regarded as the turning point of the war in the Pacific.

In its attempt to seize Midway, the Japanese fleet was caught by surprise by the U.S. Navy and lost almost 300 planes, a cruiser and four aircraft carriers, which had been among the six carriers used in the attack on Pearl Harbor. About 2,500 Japanese died. Battle of Midway

The U.S. had significantly smaller losses: the carrier Yorktown, a destroyer, 145 planes and 300 men.

The 75th commemoration paid particular homage to the code-breakers, whose role in the Battle of Midway was "the most successful intelligence operation in history," Samuel J. Cox, director of the Naval History and Heritage Command, told the audience.

A small coterie of intelligence analysts, linguists and code-breakers had been assembled in the summer of 1941 and began working in the windowless basement of Building I, which they

dubbed the "dungeon." It operated around-the-clock, and a Marine was posted at all times at the single entry. An 8-inch vault-like steel door, which hangs there still, was used to seal the room off.

Under the code name Station Hypo, the unit began intercepting and analyzing Japanese communications, with the anticipation that the U.S. and Japan would eventually be at war. By the eve of the December 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, however, the unit had been unable to break Japan's secret code, known as JN-25.

The intelligence failure demoralized them, Cox said, but by March 1942 they had cracked the code. In a short time the analysts learned that the Japanese were planning a massive invasion in early June of a location referred to only as "AF."

Pacific Navy officials believed an attack would come either in the Aleutian or Midway islands; Washington officials thought the attack might be on the U.S. mainland. Station Hypo concocted a scheme to find out which.

The U.S. sent an uncoded, false radio message saying that Midway's fresh water system had failed, which the Japanese intercepted. Station Hypo soon decoded a Japanese message that "AF" was having water problems.

There was no question then that Midway was the target.

A battle plan was assembled by Pacific Fleet commander Adm. Chester Nimitz and Adm. Raymond Spruance, who would lead the Navy's forces in the critical battle.

"Today, we honor those who broke more than codes, but broke through barriers here at Hypo to enable victory," Adm. Scott Swift, commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet, said at the ceremony.

"And we remember the brave sailors, Marines, and airmen that fought so valiantly 75 years ago, ever grateful for their service and sacrifice."

[Olson.wyatt@stripes.com](mailto:Olson.wyatt@stripes.com)