



VVA Chapter 528

Plymouth-Canton, MI

1426 Mill St. Plymouth, MI 48170



Ann Arbor VA Hospital Christmas Visit
Dec. 19, 2017 Photo by Norma Demerly

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Welcome Home!

President's Corner

Sherrie and I would like to extend our very best wishes for a healthy and happy New Year. I hope that you gave some thought to what you can do in 2018 to make VVA 528 an even better organization. We are only as strong as our members, and new ideas and suggestions are always welcome. Mark your calendars for Monday, January 8 at 7 pm, our first meeting of 2018.

I would personally like to thank all of you who worked so tirelessly to make our annual Christmas tree sale a success. Great job. Also, the children's Christmas party was again a lot of fun. Thanks to all who helped. The adult Christmas party is now just a memory, but all who attended had a good time. We had a good turnout for the Christmas party for our veterans on December 19 and the shopping at Kohl's. You make my job easier by participating.

On January 7, our Post is hosting a roast beef dinner – open to all – to welcome any and all Iraq and Afghanistan veterans. The menu promises not to disappoint and the desserts are always great. If you know of any Iraqi or Afghanistan vets, please invite them to join us. The Auxiliary is hosting a Soup and Salad event on Saturday, January 13. This is one dinner you do not want to miss. Our Fish Fry Fridays will be starting the first Friday of Lent, February 16. We can always use extra hands. Until next month, stay warm and healthy.



Rick Adis
 3rd Tac Fighter Wing
 Bien Hoa R.V.N.
 1966 - 1967



"Never Again Will One Generation of Veterans Abandoned Another"



Digger's Desk

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

I sincerely hope that each and every one of you has a chance to share this holiday with family and friends....as the song goes, "the hap happiest season of all". There should be something going on at the Post to ring in the New Year of 2018, a year that hopefully brings prosperity to those in need, peace where there is none and relief to those who suffer the wounds of war.

Soup & Salad

Saturday January 13 marks the date of our Annual Soup & Salad. The variety and taste of all the selections will amaze you.

Lounge Events

Don't forget Karaoke on the 1st and 3rd Fridays at 8:00PM, Sliders every Wednesday from 5:00PM-7:00PM followed by Euchre at 7:00PM which has drawn a lot of interest this year.

I'll see you at the January meeting. It's a great time to be a Veteran and supporter of Chapter 528.



Don Dignan
D/2/16 "Rangers"
1st Inf. Div.
1967-1968



Come Join Us

Hot Soups - Cold Salads
Bread & Rolls
Coffee & Tea
Desserts for sale

THE MAYFLOWER/LT. GAMBLE VFW POST 6695
AUX IS HOSTING A SOUP AND SALAD DINNER AT:

1426 S. MILL ST PLYMOUTH, MI

SATURDAY, JAN 13th

5:00-7:00 p.m.

\$5 PER PERSON

CASH BAR WILL BE AVAILABLE

Contact Judy Thomason @

734-545-0184

Judythomason @gmail.com



Stacie, former Miss Michigan, and 2017 Miss Michigan playing their violins and singing for our annual Christmas Cheer at Ann Arbor VA Hospital on December 19, 2017. Photo courtesy of Ted Enright



Odds & Ends

Membership

There were 2 applications for membership this past month. Gary Bush, Air Force, and Tom Trestler, Army, have joined our chapter. Welcome Gary and Tom to chapter 528. Our current membership stands at 284 individual and 86 associate members. Of these we have 239 life VVA and 51 life AVVA members.

Lapsed Members: As of December 22, 2017 the following individuals have not renewed their membership:

VVA: Robert Bieske, Richard Suchan

AVVA: none

Dropped from Roster:

January VVA Renewals: Robert Kuhlman, J.R. Yarbrough

January AVVA Renewals: Anthony Lipare
If you have already renewed thank you. If you have not, please do so before the end of the month to keep your membership current.

Chapter Membership

The latest membership report from National shows Michigan has 3 of the largest chapters in the country. Chapter 154 is #4 with 765 members, Chapter 267 is #20 with 301 and our own Chapter 528 at #25 with 282. This is quite an accomplishment for our state. At one time we were ahead of 267 so they must be doing a better job of recruiting and retaining members. We need to keep looking for new members to stay in the top 25. Chapter 172 in Maryland is #1 with 1,044 members.

Christmas Trees

The Christmas trees were a complete sellout again, earlier this year than ever before. All of our trees were sold by the 2nd week of December. The unseasonably warm weather had a great impact on our sales. I would like to thank all the chapter members who came out to help set up and sell trees and to those who

purchased a tree. Your assistance helped the post make \$2,000 on this fundraiser.

Chapter Raffle

Leo Ksiazek finally struck gold when his name was pulled in the life membership raffle. Of course he did have a 50/50 chance since there were only 2 names in the drawing. Congratulations Leo! There won't be another drawing till the February meeting as attendance at the December meeting was down due to the weather. This resulted in a smaller 50/50 pot that pays for the life memberships.

Life Memberships

Just a continuing reminder of the new AVVA membership fees. They are: age 60 and over - \$100, and 59 and under - \$175. Anyone over 60 who purchases a life membership must provide proof of age (copy of driver's license or birth certificate). The life membership fee for VVA members is \$100 regardless of age.



Bob Lamoureux
Co. C, 3/47, 9th Inf. Div.
"Mobile Riverines"



Pearl Harbor Remembrance Ceremony Photo courtesy of
Dennis & Patty Bielskis



Chaplain's Corner

Learn from God's Creation

TGIF Today God Is First,
Volume 2 by Os Hillman

"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature - have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse" (Romans 1:19-20).

Have you ever had someone say, "I don't see any evidence of God. How can a person believe in someone you can't see or see any evidence even exists?" The Bible tells us that God is revealed in His creation everyday. Look at the human body and consider the likelihood of how thousands of body parts that must work together. Someone created it to work this well. If it were a manufactured product, it would be in the repair shop all the time because of all the moving parts required to make it work.

Consider the wonderful order and balance of nature and how the seas know their boundaries, the beauty of the mountains, and the balance of rain and oxygen needed to balance the ecosystems. Consider God's signature, the rainbow.

The 12th century Scottish Christian mystic, Richard of St. Victor said, "The whole of this sensible world is like a book written by the finger of God." Look at nature and wonder at the creative design of the hundreds of thousands of species of animals like the tiger, the elephant, the great whales, and the thousands of species of birds, just to name a few.

Consider the planet we live on. "The Earth is a rough sphere about eight thousand miles in diameter, which means that it's about four thousand miles straight down to the center. We're accustomed to thinking of it as a ball of rock, but that's not so: the great majority of the Earth is liquid - molten rock called magma swirling, incredible slowly, beneath our feet. The solid part of the earth that we live on, and in whose hollows the sea sits, is called the crust, and on average it's only a few miles thick - maybe ten miles. That's like a layer a third of a millimeter thick coating a football. We live on that incredibly fragile, thin layer of plates floating on the subterranean sea of magma." Yes, God has revealed Himself in His creation.

Chaplain's Notes: I wish the very best to all of you in our chapter in 2018. Happy New Year to you!!!

Rich Whipple

Chaplain (Certified)
(A sinner saved by God's Grace)

Cell: 734-751-2992
rekjwhipple@yahoo.com
HHC/2/503rd Infantry
173rd Airborne Brigade
1968 - 1969



Ann Arbor VA Hospital December 19, 2017

Photos courtesy of Ted Enright





Gary Estermyer
Michigan State
Council Delegate &
State Secretary

Sunday, December 3rd we were back in Howell for our State Council meeting/luncheon. All the officers and 16 chapter delegates were present. President John Riling started the meeting right at 10:00 AM with the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence.

John welcomed everyone and began his report speaking about the efforts of some county service officers who are seeking a cut of the Coalition service officer budget. County service officers already receive funding from their respective county and they are restricted from the appeal process in claim adjudication. John plans to attend the National VVA BOD and the Council of State Council Presidents (CSCP) meeting in Silver Springs, MD in January. He will be in Florida then so he will fly up from there. John then announced his committee chair appointments; Ken Rogge as Public Affairs Chair and Sandie Wilson as Veterans Health Care Chair. The delegates approved these appointments. John then began discussion on the State Council donation policy that the BOD has been working on for the past 5 months. All the delegates were given copies of the policy and the donation request form.

1st Vice President Ken Rogge reported that the CFC program in Michigan continues to experience major staffing problems. Ken has not been able to get us scheduled to participate in the program this year. Ken has also been working on our 501c(3), Vietnam Veterans of Michigan Foundation, Inc. (VVMF). We have our EIN however the mission statement and bylaws have to be firmed up.

2nd Vice President Tom Meinhardt reported that the Veteran's Day ceremony at GLNC went well where he performed the chaplain duties. John Riling, Ken Rogge, Gary Estermyer and Phil Smith also attended that event.

Secretary Gary Estermyer reported that no chapters have submitted bids to host the June 2018 Annual Meeting as of today. The idea to stage a DOD 50th event in June is very flexible.

Treasurer Floyd Carmichael reviewed the MSC report. The annual audit he submitted to our CPA Bruce Himrod passed with flying colors. He also has

been working on developing a MSC website. Floyd reported he had sent out our hurricane donations to Florida, Texas and Puerto Rico. He also asked all committee chairs to submit a committee budget request.

Our MSC Ambassador Tim Driscoll reported that he had attended a Downriver 4 Vets Thanksgiving event at the American Legion hall in Taylor. Nine busloads of wheelchair bound veterans attended that event and Tim was very impressed. Tim spoke about the Fisher House project in Ann Arbor and that donations are welcome. Sandie Wilson's old MSC car donation program has been very generous in making donations to Fisher House and helping out with the hurricane relief efforts. Tim was also involved in a PTSD town hall meeting at the Saline American Legion hall yesterday, 12/2/17.

A VVA campout is planned for the weekend of May 11-13, 2018 in Manton, MI.

Sandie Wilson covered a number of Veterans Health Care issues; VA hospital leadership problems, VA claims to cure PTSD patients in 13 visits and privatizing of VA health care.

Joe Mishler asked about the possibility of the MSC staging an Agent Orange town hall event. He also brought up the difficulties some veterans have getting transportation to and from VA hospital appointments. John then announced the appointment of Mike Goodpaster as chair of the A.O. Riders Committee. The delegates approved this appointment also.

Phil Smith then gave an election committee report. Nominations will begin at the February meeting and conclude at the April meeting. The elections will take place at the June 2018 meeting.

Floyd is working on the MSC and service program budgets for 2018-2019.

Jack Devine reported that the state is having difficulties in locating suitable land to build the new veterans homes in Wayne, Oakland or Macomb counties. HB 5135 seeks to establish March 29 as Vietnam Veterans Day in Michigan.

Ken reported that VVA National now has over 82,000 members and Michigan is over 4,700.

Floyd reported that Ft. Custer National Cemetery has 35,326 interments. Floyd is now the secretary of that advisory committee and their director has transferred back to Ohio. Tom Meinhardt reported that GLNC now has had 35,437 interments. It was announced that the Wreaths Across America project is scheduled for December 16, 2017. A new group is planning to place a rose at each veteran gravesite on Memorial Day.

Continued on Page 6

Joe Mishler reported that on POW/MIA day there were 80 or 90 Waterford National Guard members at GLNC for their ceremony. The national count is now 1,602 POW/MIA from the Vietnam War. Joe would like to explore the concept of placing a POW/MIA monument at GLNC.

Ken reported that National VVA Public Affairs is planning to create a JROTC program.

Ray Essenmacher reported that during the Thanksgiving and holiday season veteran suicides spike. Ray also reported that a new therapy treatment for PTSD patients involves using a hyperbaric chamber.

Phil Savage reported that the VA hospitals in Detroit and Iron Mountain still need VAVS representatives.

Phil Smith reviewed the service office report. September recoveries were \$2,349,882 and October recoveries were \$2,597,414. Phil announced that I was going to officially start service officer training on December 4th and a secretary/receptionist is to begin on December 6th. The MSC service office personnel policy needs to be reviewed and possibly revised. Phil reported that the Coalition bookkeeper has resigned and Gary Easterling (American Legion) has agreed to take over those duties.

It was reported that the Jackson "Cotton" prison facility veteran inmates are now conducting fundraising projects. Cotton also has a K9 unit for the blind. Macomb and the St. Louis facilities also have K9 programs. Tom Meinhardt continues to visit the incarcerated veterans at St. Louis, Carson City and Freeland facilities.

Marilyn Lash, Michigan AVVA President explained their gift card fundraiser that will take place during this meeting. They profited \$405 from this project.

Cecilia Essenmacher, Region 5 AVVA Director, spoke about state and national AVVA members and many of the AVVA rules and regulations.

The next meeting for VVA and AVVA is scheduled for February 11, 2018 at 10:00 AM in Howell. The April meeting may be held in Holly on the 22nd.



Christmas Activity Wrap-up

Salvation Army Bell Ringing

Thank You to all of the members that came out on a great December Saturday to the Holiday Market in Canton. The results of our efforts last Saturday are not available at this time.

Winter Clothing Drive

Our 12th Annual Winter Clothing Drive was successfully completed on Monday, December 18. The clothing this year went to Veteran's Haven in Wayne. We met Vince, Judy and Mark who operate the Center.

Rich Whipple, Bob Dew, Ron King, Gene Spurgess, Don McLane, Jim Hodgson, Rich Adis, Don Dignan and I met for breakfast, went to Kohl's to purchase the clothing and delivered the clothing. We took three vehicles full of the clothing that was purchased at Kohl's and collected at the VFW and the First United Methodist Church of Garden City. The clothing that was purchased at Kohl's for \$2,004 and the retail value was over \$5,500. A great deal of thanks goes out to Lisa and her wonderful staff at Kohl's on Ford Road in Canton!!!

We also collected Kohl's Cash on our shopping trip which will be used to purchase items for the patients at the VA Hospital in Ann Arbor. Thank you to all who helped in any way!!!

Through our efforts I am certain we brightened the lives of many people, thank you all!!!

Check out the photo on page 8.



Gary Estermyer
USARV
58th Field Depot
Qui Nhon
May 68 - May 69



John Fleming
92nd Finance Section
Cam Ranh Bay





Leroy Paige

Honor and Remember

Michigan Chapter Honor and Remember, Inc. gave the U.S. Flag to the brother of Marine CPL. Richard L. Nowry from Plymouth, who was killed in Vietnam on June 9, 1968 during the TET Offensive. He was the first casualty from the Plymouth area to lose his life in the War. Chapter 528 sponsored and purchased the flag. We wanted to give the flag to Ronald Nowry or Ron's brother Mike Nowry, but both were unable to attend the 50th Anniversary for health reasons. On December 2nd we finally gave the flag to Ron at his home in Westland. Ron was very emotional and was moved by the Chapter for doing this - especially for someone we didn't know. He told us how it was such a shock for the family to receive the flag.



Wayne Byrum, Ass't Director MiChapter, Ron Nowry - brother of Cpl Richard Nowry, Fallen Hero and Garry - a volunteer. *Photo courtesy of Leroy Paige*



Corporal Richard L. Nowry



Leroy Paige - Director MiChapter Ron Nowry and Brother Garry. *Photo courtesy of Leroy Paige*



Leroy Paige
RVN 69-70
1st Signal Brigade





Dennis Waling

AVVA State Council Meeting Report December 3, 2017

Report

1. Helping Hands Project is a grant program. Non-veterans have been applying. Changes are to be made for veterans or veteran related families.
2. Change in Vista Hours for AVVA only. No dual members combinations. VVA/AVVA members.
3. In Memory plate update – To be raised and lighted. Not all in Washington are on board. They must approve the materials that are used. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund is working with the AVVA.
4. At Large elections are January 15th. This is for the National Board.
5. National is budgeting for 10,000 more Paper Safes.
6. The Agent Orange store will be producing their own shirts but must get AVVA approval. Right now they can get approval from individual states as long as the name of the state is on it.
7. AVVA is working on a standard plaque design for all awards. Expense is capped at \$100.00 each.
8. Project Friendship raised \$15,500. Raised \$400.00 more since the National conference in New Orleans.
9. AVVA 20th anniversary will be celebrated in Spokane, WA at the National Conference. A book will be created for memories over the last 20 years.
10. Bobby Codgell of Livonia received a Lifetime Membership.
11. Executive Session – AVVA will start the process to convert to a 501c3 from a 501c4. A 501c3 donations are tax deductible. A 501c4 is tax exempt. All incorporated states will have to change to the 501c3. The cost is \$500.00 to \$1,000.00.

12. A State AVVA Challenge Coin is being created and should be ready for sale by the Spring of 2018. It will be 2 inches in diameter and will include the words "Michigan Association". Will be sold for \$10.00.

There was an envelope pull at the VVA/AVVA luncheon held by the AVVA. 33 envelopes containing gift cards from restaurants and stores ranging in price from \$25.00 to \$50.00 each. The AVVA made \$400.00 from the event.



Photo taken at Winter Clothing Drive. Bob Dew, Mark from Veterans Haven And John Fleming. *Photo courtesy of John Fleming*



Pearl Harbor Remembrance Ceremony *Photo courtesy of Dennis & Patty Bielskis*



JANUARY 2018



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 NEW YEARS DAY	2 AUX MEETING 6:30	3 SLIDERS 5-7 EUCHRE 7:00	4	5 KARAOKE 8:00	6
7 IAVA DINNER 5-7:30	8 VVA MEETING 7:00	9 VFW MEETING 7:00	10 SLIDERS 5-7 EUCHRE 7:00	11	12	13 SOUP AND SALAD 5-7
14	15	16 VFW HOUSE COMMITTEE 7:00	17 SLIDERS 5-7 EUCHRE 7:00	18	19 KARAOKE 8:00	20
21	22	23 VVA BOARD MEETING 7:00	24 SLIDERS 5-7 EUCHRE 7:00	25	26	27
28	29	30	31 SLIDERS 5-7 EUCHRE 7:00			

JANUARY 2018 BIRTHDAYS



Calendar by
Nancy Dignan
The Auxiliary

Richard Adis, Ronald Bator, John Berry, Charles Bilyk, Patricia Brothers, Mike Bush, Lee Camilleri, Robert Cheatham, Steven Cunningham, Patrick Doherty, Jim Dorey, Thomas Dorey, Louie Dorka, Gregory Epacs, Arthur Esper, Shawn Flaharty, Dennis Fuelling, William Gravett, William Harrigan, Peter Holden, Larry Kijorski, Patricia Klopschinsky, Johnnie Johnson, Ronald King, Andy Lawrence, Aggie Little, Donald Marshall, George Mason, John O'Hara, Dick O'Hare, Raymond Plesiewicz, Rick Popa, Mike Potochick, Phil Pursell, Donald Rauch, Donald Shannon, Eugene Spurgess, Mike Steffes, Joseph Tebor, Donald Tulley, Susie Wagner, Dennis Waling, John Wallace, Michael Wisinski, Walter Weber, Dale Worcester, Jimmy Yarbrough and George Zathey.



Chapter Officers

President	Rick Adis	734-737-9077
1st Vice President	Gary Pritchard	734-522-2033
2nd Vice President	Mike Steffes	734-421-7790
Secretary	Ron King	734-679-6424
Treasurer	Bob Dew	734-421-1805

Board of Directors

Mike Dicker 734-425-3414	Jim Hodgson	734-416-5159
Don Dignan 734-525-0157	Jerry Thomason	734-895-5257
Pete Glasgow 734-454-9663	Gene Spurgess	248-887-6212
Don Petrere 734-595-1422	Terry Wells	734-776-1891

Committees

A.O./Health Care	Bob Dew	734-421-1805
Agent Orange Events	Bob Dew	734-421-1805
AVVA Representative	Bryan Bentley	734-604-6066
By-Laws	Jim Hodgson	734-416-5159
Chaplain	Rich Whipple	734-751-2992
Chapter Historian	Gary Pritchard	734-522-2033
Fundraising	Bob Dew	734-421-1805
Homeless Veterans	John Fleming	734-421-0149
Membership	Bob Lamoureux	734-397-8389

Homefront Newsletter

Editor & Publisher	Tom Brown	313-336-0192
Assistant Editor	Don Dignan	734-525-0157
Distribution Chief	Jim Hodgson	734-416-5159
Assistant Chief	Ron King	734-679-6424
Assistant Chief	Dale Luebke	248-403-4244

Product Sales	Bill Petrere	313-706-4247
POW/MIA	Al Kerbyson	734-612-9757
Public Affairs	Don Dignan	734-525-0157
Sergeant-at-Arms	John Fleming	734-525-04560
Service Representative	Aggie Little	734-722-9535
Sportsmen's Raffle	John Spencer	734-716-0619
State Delegate	Gary Estermyer	313-283-6943
State A. Delegate	Dennis Bielskis	248-486-0001
State VVA Product Sales	John Riling	734-776-2239
VAVS Deputy	Ron King	734-454-4522
Vietnam War 50th Com.	Ron King	734-454-4522
Website & Newsletter	Tom Brown	313-336-0192

VVA Service Officer - State of Michigan

Phillip Smith - Director Toll Free-1-844-885-6424

Veterans Crisis Centers

Veterans Center	313-381-1370
Dearborn Crisis Center	313-584-7800
VA Medical Center Detroit	313-576-1000
VA Ann Arbor Health Care System	734-769-7100

Editor's Note and Disclaimer

Articles, event dates, and photos must be submitted by the **22nd** of the month in order to be considered for publication. Send the article or photo to Tom Brown 17730 Snow Ave Dearborn, MI 48124 or email Tom at tom@vva528.org. Except as otherwise noted, all published articles become the property of VVA Chapter 528 and may not be reprinted without the Chapter's permission. Chapter 528 reserves the right to edit for space. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Chapter, the editor, or the National VVA. **Mayflower Lt. Gamble VFW Post 6695 (734-459-6700).**

Chapter 528 Website: www.vva528.org

Chapter 528 Travel Site www.travelvva528.com

Advertising Rates: 1 year \$60; 6 mos. \$45; 1 issue \$15

Service Photos Needed

VVA Chapter 528 has 141 members' service photos displayed on our website www.vva528.org/members528.html and in our display case. I'm sure most members have a photo of themselves laying around somewhere. When you find your photo you can either mail it to **Tom Brown** @ 17730 Snow Ave. Dearborn, MI 48124, scan it and send it to: tombrown1949@gmail.com as a jpg or jpeg, bring it to our general membership meetings and give it to Tom or bring it to the VFW. Be sure to include your name, branch of service and the year the photo was taken. **Don Petrere** will place the copied service photo in our display case.



Tom Brown, Editor/Publisher
2nd Missile Battalion
44th Artillery Pershing 1st yr
HHD III Corps 2nd yr
Ft. Sill, OK



Terry Wells
Navy 1970
#143 member photo

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LPL Financial

Bob Carris
Registered Principal

40400 Ann Arbor Rd
Suite 204-B
Plymouth, MI 48170
734 453 7304 office
734 453 7461 fax
bob.carris@lpl.com
www.lpl.com/bob.carris

OSJ Branch: 31700 Middlebelt Rd
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Date of Birth _____

email _____

\$20.00 Annual Dues Enclosed _____

_____ I am a Vietnam Era Veteran and would like to be a member

(Copy of your DD-214 Form or other proof of Service Enclosed)

_____ I am not a Vietnam Era Veteran, but would like to be an Associate Member

I want to give more. Enclosed is my check for \$20.00 _____ \$50.00 _____

Other _____

New Member _____ Renewal _____ Membership Card

No. _____

Today's Date _____

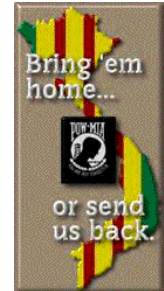
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Plymouth/Canton Chapter 528

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Plymouth, MI 48170-0473



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Plymouth-Canton Chapter 528

Vietnam Veterans of America

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