

Fall 2016

Updates

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Sharon's quote for this issue:

**Without continual growth and progress,
such words as improvement, achievement,
and success have no meaning.**

Benjamin Franklin



President's Message

The 2016 VVA and AVVA Leadership and Education Conference was held July 19th – 23rd at the Hilton El Conquistador, in Tucson, AZ. AVVA manned the office every day of the Conference. Visitors dropped by to discuss issues, pick up brochures and Paper Safes, introduce themselves, and/or just to visit. We conducted two seminars which were both well attended; and manned our vendor booth everyday which resulted in record sales for the week.

Recipients of the Member of the Year, Fellowship, VISTA volunteers, and the AVVA Commendation Medal were announced during the AVVA Luncheon. Kate O'Hare-Palmer did an excellent job as our Luncheon Speaker. I want to thank the Board and Deputies for making this one of the best Conferences that I have ever attended. A full report of the Conference can be found on our website.

AVVA set a new record for our Project Friendship donations. Esperanza en Escalante (EEE) in Tucson was the recipient of check totaling over \$11,000. This success story happened because of generous contributions from AVVA and VVA members at the state-level and chapter-level. Once again, Sandy Miller, VVA Project Friendship Advisor, was instrumental in our success by researching and recommending EEE as our recipient this year.

By the time this is published, our new membership applications should be printed and ready for distribution. The application, along with the AVVA educational brochures (Spousal benefits, Toxic Exposure, and Secondary PTSD) can be obtained by contacting me or one of the officers. They are a great recruiting tools during membership drives and veteran events. Also, the Paper Safe is now in its fourth printing thanks to a grant from the National Foundation for Veterans & Families.

With the Conference behind us, it's on to the October Board of Directors meeting. We already have a full schedule; plus, it will be time to begin planning for the Convention in 2017.

National candidate and Delegate registrations will begin after the first of the year; bylaw proposed amendments will also be accepted. Definite dates will be determined during the October meeting and announced afterwards. I look forward to seeing you in New Orleans next year; it's not too early to begin planning now!

Together Always,

Sharon



Feature Article

The best heart healthy workouts for your 60s 70s and 80s.

Moderate aerobic exercise gets your body moving and your heart beating faster.

Learn safe cardiovascular exercise routines to help you maintain lifelong good health.

Elayne Mackey Vice President

Tucson AZ is hot in July but the Hilton Hotel was great, friendly and a wonderful location for the Educational & Leadership Conference 2016. AVVA shined once again; always offering the best they can be, which is outstanding. Thank you everyone.

We are so excited to see the PTSD '2' program move forward with the facilitator classes. Each facilitator will attend Go to Meeting classes.

As of now, we have representatives from Regions 2, 3, 4, 7, & 9 taking part in this most important program.

We are preparing for our October Board meeting. We always have plenty to keep us busy. It is the responsibility of each Officer and Regional Director to attend two, some times more, of the VVA educational tiers that are offered. We then report back to AVVA with any special requests that we could help with. Written reports are also posted on the AVVA web site.

Please check out avva.org as it is updated frequently and there is a lot of good information for our members.

Thank you all for a job well done and keep up the good work.

Whether you're spry at 80 or slowing down at 65, there is a safe, healthy exercise routine with your name on it. Even if you've had a long history of not exercising, there are compelling reasons to get active no matter what your age. "The fitter and more active you are, the longer you'll live and less heart disease you'll have," says Dr. Aaron Baggish, a cardiologist and fitness expert at Harvard-affiliated Massachusetts General Hospital.

Your starting point

To begin, take a hard look at your current level of activity. "I tell people the first thing they can do is to be conscious of their choice to move or not to move. They should try to move whenever possible. Build activity into your day simply by deciding to take the stairs versus the elevator or walking through an airport instead of hopping on the moving walkway," says Dr. Baggish. While everyday chores such as gardening, housework, and washing the car help you burn calories, they are not a substitute for structured, intentional exercise, says Dr. Baggish.

If you are already somewhat active or have a job that requires movement, the next step is to create a structured exercise program that suits your lifestyle. Dr. Baggish starts by asking his patients to identify the times during the day they can exercise. Next, the conversation moves to the resources they have at their disposal. For example, does their workplace or senior center have a fitness facility? If not, do they have access to an enclosed, weather-safe place to walk?

Designing your plan

The next big question: what do you do? For people in the 60- to 80-year-old age group, Dr. Baggish recommends an 80–20 split between moderate aerobic activity and resistance exercise. Moderate aerobic exercise can be anything from brisk walking to cycling, dance, or a Zumba class. "The ideal aerobic intensity permits you to have broken conversation—that is, being able to get out four or five words between breaths," he says. "Less than that, you're probably pushing yourself too hard. But if you can converse in whole sentences, you're not reaping the full cardiovascular benefits."

Resistance exercises—those activities that build your muscles—haven't been shown to have a large direct benefit on heart health. Nonetheless, there are many advantages to investing 20% of your exercise time in strength training. Not only does it help you increase your muscle and core strength, it improves your flexibility and helps protect against falls, which can be disabling for older adults. Anything that can be done with only your body is fine for just about everyone, regardless of your age or starting fitness level. Good movements to try include squatting, push-ups, arm reaches, and lifts. If your doctor gives you the okay to do more strenuous training, choose exercises at an intensity you can maintain for 12 repetitions without stopping. The aim is to work up to three sets of each exercise.

Expanding your routine

Ideally, you should exercise for one hour, five times a week. Although this level may not be realistic for everyone, it's good goal to work toward. A thorough workout would include five or 10 minutes of light aerobic activity to raise your heart rate and get you warmed up, at least 30 minutes of activity at moderate intensity, and a few minutes of cooling down to allow your heart to return to its resting pace. Dr. Baggish says that many of his patients feel better and stronger if they include five to seven minutes of stretching after their workout, when their muscles are warm.

In addition, Dr. Baggish enthusiastically recommends integrating yoga into your exercise regimen. "The beauty of yoga is that anyone of any physical capacity can do some type of yoga.

People of all ages, whether they are in a wheelchair or have bad joint problems, can do yoga because it allows them to set their pace and priorities." But, like any form of activity, be sure to start at a comfortable level and challenge yourself if you're up to it.

Talking to your doctor

If you don't have particular medical concerns, a program of moderate walking and strength training is a safe way to go. If you have arthritis or other musculoskeletal issues or if you have heart disease, talk to your doctor before you start. And with any activity, you should ramp up to a more intense level gradually, as you feel ready. "Most of all, remember that something is better than nothing and there is no age when it's too late to start," concludes Dr. Baggish.

<http://www.health.harvard.edu/>

Originally published: April 2014

Region I

Chapter 273 - Rhode Island

VVA float in the oldest running 4th of July parade in the United States. AVVA & VVA chapter members created the float.



***Submitted by AVVA Chapter 273 Representative
Fran Guevremont***



Region II Nancy Rekowski Director

Attending the VVA/AVVA National Leadership Conference is always a phenomenal experience. Kudo's go to the VVA staff, program presenters and Wes Guidry.

Congratulations to Bernie Rekowski PA Chapter 948 and Bobbie Morris PA Chapter 862 all who were awarded the Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America Commendation Medal. The Commendation Medal is AVVA's highest award. Dan Levy (PA) was recognized with a Member of the Year Nominee certificate.

My greatest appreciation to all the chapters in Region II that held elections and reported that information for the national database.

Pennsylvania Bobbie Morris, President

A note of praise to the chapters in PA with supporting VVA working side by side in fund raising, stand downs, parades, banquets, picnic's, and volunteering in their communities.



A shout out to **Chapter 590** Dan Levey, for receiving a certificate for his nomination for the National AVVA award. Dan also received the Angel Award for his outstanding job as Representative in 590 at our last PASC meeting in June.

Chapter 862 just welcomed a new member Fredrick (Fred) Steinkirchner at the young age of 104... WOW!

Officers and board members of Chapter 862 PA.



Sue Bridgewater, Treasurer
Keith Black, Secretary
Rita Swesey, Board
Sandy Giordano, Board
Carl Curtis, Board

Far right Election Chair, Chuck Inman

Bobbie Morris presents the Angel Award to Chairman Bob Gwen for the great work in Chapter 862 for Support our Troops Rally.



VVA & AVVA Membership Recruiting Kokomo, IN. September 15-17, 2016 Veterans Reunion



Cecilia Essenmacher, Elayne Mackey, Sharon Hobbs & Bobbie Morris volunteered to recruit AVVA and for VVA. Great team along with Charlie Hobbs & Steve Mackey!

*The map of Vietnam attracted lots of attention.
New friends were made and old friends got
together again.*



The Huey still flies!



AMERICA

Region VII Percilla Newbury Director

ARKANSAS

Arkansas is also helping the residents of Louisiana.

We are very excited to have Anna Stafford as a new Chapter Representative and also an AVVA State of Louisiana State Representative for her state.

She is a very hard worker. Her husband and she attended the AVVA and VVA National Leadership and Educational Conference in Tucson. Because of the late elections in Arkansas **Ms. Stafford was sworn into office also by Ms. Sharon Hobbs, AVVA National President, in Tucson.**



OKLAHOMA

The State of Oklahoma also planning a second Agent Orange Town Hall meeting in combination with Hepatitis C in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Dates are pending.

Enid – Chapter Representative Karen Vollman (#940). The month of May was busy with Memorial Day. AVVA was busy with Blue Star Mothers with the Wall of Honor. They helped with the packing of care packages for Troops. They helped with the packing of medicine boxes for veterans and taking Veterans to the doctors. Participated in the June Flag Day ceremonies.

Lawton – Chapter Representative Penny Dunham (#751). Members attended meetings and deployments and supported troops and their ceremonies. Members supported needy veterans and others in their community. They work with POW's and MIAs and those at Ft. Sill Cemetery and Veterans Recognition Day. They provide support to the chapter for activities and programs.

Tulsa – Chapter Representative Wanda K. Ross (#216). Helped to sell Agent Orange Decals/License Plates. They put together FOOD BOXES for veterans in need. Giant **print Bibles** for Muskogee

VA Hospital. Assisted the Chapter secretary, acknowledging AVVA members for their service to veterans and a chapter. Helped with veterans-directing him or her to ODVS Service Officer or needed care at the VA.

An award was presented to Delores Washington by myself for a Good Samaritan Award. This is a very prestigious award in the State of Oklahoma. When someone goes beyond and above to help someone in need. Upon returning from the Arkansas State Council meeting Ms. Delores Washington, AVVA Life Member, performed humanitarian skills for a lady in need in a public restroom in the State of Oklahoma. I was with Ms. Washington while she held a very sick lady in her arms and continued to reassure her and pray for her until an ambulance arrived. This award was presented at the Oklahoma State Council meeting in Oklahoma City in April.

Ms. Delores Washington accepting the Good Samaritan Award in Oklahoma City



TEXAS

Texas has been very busy with the completion of elections for 2016-2017. The new officers for Texas are Lynn Kennedy, President, Percilla Newberry, Vice-President, Terri Rangel, Secretary and Gina Matthews, Treasurer. The AVVA officers met in Salado, Texas September 20 at Lynn Kennedy's home preparing for the Texas State Council Meeting to be held in Killeen, Texas on October 14, 15, and 16, 2016. Officers are preparing for an exciting fund raiser for this year. Please keep Martha Brown, former state secretary, in your prayers for the loss of her son. PLEASE KEEP LYNN KENNEDY IN YOUR PRAYERS. Donnie and Lynn had been married for over 50 years last November.

On September 27th God called home an amazing Vietnam Veteran—Donnie Carlos Kennedy, Jr. suddenly. Many AVVA and VVA members attended the funeral in Killeen and also attended the

ceremony at the Texas State Veterans Cemetery in Killeen. Donnie is the husband of our AVVA Texas State President, Lynn Kennedy. He was truly a hero and awesome Vietnam Veteran that had been injured in Vietnam and overcame so many health issues. We will miss him terribly.

Chapter 404 has completed their second Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting and it was very successful. This meeting was a combination of Hepatitis C and Agent Orange. This chapter collected school supplies from Dollar General and presented teachers with extra school supplies for the school year. Teachers continue to spend money out of their pockets to help their classroom children throughout the school year. They also participated in the Fritch Howdy Neighbor Day celebration by providing children games and the prizes were school supplies.

Chapter 1000 is in preparation for the Texas State Council Meeting that will be held in Killeen, Texas at the Shilo Inn on October 14, 15, 16, 2016. This chapter always host an amazing meeting. Topics to be covered in the AVVA meeting will be Hepatitis C, the VISTA program, and information regarding Secondary PTSD. On Saturday, AVVA will be hosting BINGO with great prizes and refreshments.

Chapter 292 is working with VVA to take needed supplies to our neighbor State of Louisiana because of the recent flooding.

Chapter 297 is preparing for their annual Fishing Tournament they have prizes for the participants and food for all that attend. They also helped with the Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting. After the meeting several from 297 and 404 took the guests, that presented the Hepatitis C and Agent Orange Meeting, to see the musical production and dinner of TEXAS in the Palo Duro Canyon in Canyon, Texas.

Several AVVA members from Texas attended the AVVA and VVA National Leadership and Education in Tucson in July.

TEXAS AVVA OFFICERS



Chapter 574 was very busy preparing for the Ceremony Honoring Congressman Beto O'Rourke for being the first congressman in Texas to support the 1769 and 901. Upon arrival we were greeting to an Ice Breaker's meal at Bobby and Terri Rangel's home. The following day we had the opportunity to tour Fort Bliss and participate in simulators. After that we had lunch at Ft. Bliss in their cafeteria. Congressman Beto O'Rourke was presented an achievement award from John Rowan, VVA National President.



Members of AVVA 574 attending the Ice Breakers Dinner.



Several AVVA members from Texas attended the AVVA and VVA National Leadership and Education in Tucson in July.

Our very own Terri Rangel Chapter 574 was awarded the AVVA Member of the Year.



Texas and Oklahoma attending the Conference in Tucson.



LOUISIANA

Louisiana held their election in June and their new State Representative is Ora Wall and Region VII was very honored to have Ms. Sharon Hobbs, our AVVA National President to swear her into office. I was so impressed with the AVVA in Louisiana in their large number of attending at the AVVA and VVA National Leadership and Education Conference in Tucson.

Ms. Mable Foreman of Chapter 632 received the AVVA National Fellowship Award and her chapter presented it to her in a Chapter meeting.

Ms. Mable Foreman receiving her award.



Swearing in of Ms. Ora Wall new State Representative of Louisiana



Each chapter in Louisiana is helping the residents of Louisiana at this time of need after the state wide flooding. Please keep them in your prayers.

Region VIII John Birch Director

It has been a while since I had the opportunity to write about what I have been trying to accomplish in Region VIII. Since last updates much has happened and it is time to note these facts. There has been a formation of a Toxic Exposure Education Team with the goals of Educating Veterans and their families about their service members' exposure to toxins while serving our Nation. Currently Mr. Tom Owen (VVA) and advisor to this team is in Montana participating in Town Hall meetings. I will report on this more in the future.

I just returned from Idaho working the same function but in my case I was getting the people I contacted to know who we are and what our mission is about. Our mission is to educate! I had success in Idaho and appears we will be doing Town hall meetings in the near future in Idaho.

One of the biggest things I want to talk about is fishing!!!

Years back VVA Chapter 585 decided to do something for our Veterans that live in Veteran homes in the Willamette Valley Oregon. The chapter contacted a local businessman and discussed the idea. The person who donated the space for the dock wants to remain silent as to his identity. He and chapter 585 came to a mutual agreement and a sealed deal. A dock was built and donated, lake area donated and a chapter completed a mission! Over the years several groups of Veterans have been brought to the lake.

Chapter members provide support for those Vets needing assistance to fish, we provide food and good companionship to these men and women. I have had the opportunity to go out twice this summer to assist.

This is a fulfilling event for the Veteran who is a shut in and our chapter gets the rewards of smiles when helping land a fish. These men and women have the chance to bragging rights when they return to their cottages, it means allot to them.

Our working relationship with the staff from the Veterans home in Lebanon, Or. Is great. The staff are willing to take a day with the Vets outside of town on the side of a small mountain listening to the wind, cries of red tail hawks and the flash of fish hitting the bait. All who attend leave with the experience that there are people who care and still serve those who served.

Chapter 585 has done a great job and the pictures I provide tell the whole story!



Committees

PAPER SAFE REPORT

I am pleased to report that Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America has received a grant from the National Foundation for Veterans & Families, Inc. to enable us to order 10,000 new Paper Safes! I am excited to let you know that these will be available the first part of September. Unfortunately I had to place people on a back order list.

If you are interested in ordering the Paper Safe, please contact me at Switzer3@frontiernet.net or Sharon Hobbs, blondyhobbs@aol.com

Toxic Exposure Committee

I am pleased to report that Region 8 Director, John Birch has instituted a new committee in Region 8, named the Pacific Northwest Toxic Exposure Education Committee. The goal is to educate and gain the support to pass the legislation at hand, S.901 and HR.1769. Nadine Owen is chair of this committee and John will be the co-chair. Tom Owen will be the VVA advisor, organizer and coordinator. Our panel will consist of past panel members Tom has worked with in the past. We will make contact through VVA/AVVA chapters, VFW/Legions and other organizations that want to participate. This is a joint effort between AVVA and VVA. I have asked John to give a report on what has transpired since April of this year.



John Birch – Toxic Exposure

One of the hurdles to getting our toxic Substance Research Act passed has been to get the bills scored so they can be brought up for a floor vote. Prior to the April Board meeting I set up an appointment with Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid's office. On April 7th VVA's Director of Government Affairs Rick Weidman, joined Tom for a day on Capitol Hill. They met with Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid's Chief of Staff, General Bob Herbert, and Veterans Legislative Advisor, Brad Hatcher. The topics covered were Toxic Substance Research Act (S.901 and H.769), Blue Water Navy Exposure (S.681 and HR.969), and Doc's to Doctors (S.2279 and HR.4134. S-2279 was co-authored and introduced by Oregon Sen. Jeff Merkley.)

Gen. Herbert, two years ago, pledged to get some 11th hour Monsanto riders off the farm bill. He made it happen. At his meeting he pledged to work with the accounting office to get the bills scored and moved to the floor. Hopefully he will have the same success. We then focused on the Oregon legislators that have not yet signed on to H-1769 and met with senior staff and legislative advisors for each. The message delivered and request for action was the same at each meeting. Supported with stories from

the Faces of Agent Orange and the devastating effects on our progeny, coupled with up to date data provided by Mr. Weidman, we asked for their support and sponsorship for our bills. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, Rep. Kurt Schrader, Rep. Greg Walden, all Oregon Legislators have signed on to the Blue water Navy bill! Tom, received an email from Rep. Bonamici's office saying that she would sign on as a sponsor. Rep. Schrader's staffer said he had heard of the bill but knew little about it. I believe a barrage of phone calls and some letters to the editor in the newspapers in his district may be very helpful. Rep. Walden's legislative advisor asked for two weeks to do their work-up on the bill. Some letters to the editor in Mr. Walden's district along with phone calls to his DC, Bend, Ashland and Medford office and or letters to the editor in those cities, could help.

Tom attended a special meeting of the National VVA Agent Orange Toxic Substance committee where he followed through on an idea he presented to VVA Communications Dir. Mokie Porter, committee chairs Maynard Kaderlik, Nancy Switzer and Linda Mooney concerning a public awareness campaign about toxic exposures. One vehicle will be letters to the editor. Several letters have been written and approved by the committee and communications staff. They can be used as a guide to assist others in writing letters or just fill in the blanks, sign and send.

Since the start of this report two significant things have happened: 1) as of last week the congressional budget office has scored the bill, thanks to Rick Weidman, Sharon Hodge and General Herbert; 2) Tom has been advised by phone call that Congressman Walden's DC staff has completed their work up and this morning recommended to Mr. Walden that he co-sponsor H.1769.

On May 21st, Tom Owen and I were invited to Idaho State Council Meeting and we presented a 30 minute presentation and video stressing the importance of town hall meetings educating the veteran, the veteran family and the general public about the long term and generational effects of exposure to toxic substances. Region 8 committee members have also recently done presentations with civic leaders, medical professionals, and service clubs around the area.

Tom is the scheduled guest speaker at the meeting of the Central Oregon Veterans Council in July.

Up-coming events: Planning stages for a 4 state educational road trip. Between Tom and myself, I can confirm I have spent dozens of hours Tom has committed tens of dozens of hours on this activity.

-End of Report. Great Job Region 8-

In March I was asked to come to Washington and meet with your representatives. I thank Carl Tuvin for making all of the appointments. Jack McManus and I traveled the halls and pounded on doors and we did have great success.

I was asked to be a speaker and attended the following Faces of Agent Orange Town Hall meetings: Virginia Beach, Virginia, Des Moines, Iowa, Cleveland, Georgia, Ponco, Oklahoma, and Amarillo, Texas. All have graciously made it possible for me to attend.

Regarding S.901: The Toxic Exposure Research act of 2015, introduced by Senators Jerry Moran (KS) and Richard Blumenthal (CT), has been included in S2921, the Veterans First Act, under Title II, Subtitle I, "Research and Toxic Exposure." S. 2921 was introduced by Senators John Isakson (GA), Chairman, Richard Blumenthal (CT), and Ranking Member Senate Committee on Veterans' affairs. We all need your help in contacting your representative and continue to thank you for your Grassroots advocacy. We need to get this on the floor for voting! We will be asking you again to contact your Senate representative on the following call in dates: September 14, 21, and the 28th.

If you are interested in attending a Faces of Agent Orange Town Hall meeting the below are the upcoming meetings:

October 1, 2016

Tulsa, Oklahoma

Contact: Nate Washington Natewash51@att.net

Lew Broughton lewb5834@gmail.com

November 5, 2016

Ocean City, Maryland

Contact: Robert Hartman

loriandbobh@verizon.net

Bill Wolf serviceofficervva@gmail.com

November 8, 2016

Bend, Oregon

Contact :Wendy Rudy 541 706 2969

Tom Owen 541-619-8187

November 9, 2016

Santa Maria, California

Contact: Richard Segovia rsegov11b@gmail.com

Programs

PTSD '2' Elayne Mackey, Nina Schloffel

AVVA is proud to announce that our Secondary PTSD – PTSD '2' program is active and doing quite well.

A lot of time was spent developing the program. Why did it take so long? This is a serious subject matter; one so close to the heart.

AVVA takes all of their programs serious which leads to research, hard work and dedication.

The dates of 9/22 – 9/23 2016 found the first facilitator training session was held via the online Go to Meeting.

A total of 3½ hours was presented with information beneficial to our soon to be facilitators. This proved to be successful and we are ready to move on to the next step.

This program will not just be a few hours, there will be ongoing training, resources and possibly guest speakers. This is going to be a very strong functioning program. What we have to learn covers such a broad area. There is a wealth of information.

Currently we have prospective facilitators from Region 2, 3, 4, 7 and 9.

As times moves forward we will be accepting additional facilitators. If you would like more information please contact:

Elayne Mackey mmm4evr1@aol.com

Nina Schloffel neenr@att.net



VETERAN BENEFITS Pamela Scheffer-Bossardet

The following tasks were completed since my last report in Aril 2016

- Received 2 applications for AVVA Service Officer to include one attorney for VVA, both accepted.

- Speaking with prospective AVVA Veterans Service Officers and acquainting them with the procedures to attain accreditation.
- Interfacing with our insurance company to make sure all VSO's are covered with liability insurance.
- Continuously processing veteran's claims and BVA Hearings through Regional Office in Winston-Salem, NC.
- Collaborating with VA Regional Office in Winston-Salem for advanced VSO training.
- Helped plan and participated in the 50th Vietnam War Commemorative event at sponsored by VVA/AVVA Chapter 909 and Crosspointe Baptist Church, both from Concord, NC. Gave a "Welcome Home" presentation, representing the AVVA, including our mission and vision statements. Estimated attendance was 500-700 veterans.
- An all-out effort to recruit AVVA Service Officers throughout the organization down to the chapter level is needed. This should be emphasized by leadership going forward.
- Attended the Region 3 Conference as Deputy Region 3 Director where I presented a seminar on AVVA programs and gave handouts to attendees, with the assistance of Sharon Hobbs, National President. At the seminar I briefly went over Veteran Service Officer Program requirements and gave handout
- Attended the Mountain Man March in Gatlinburg, TN. Set up a tent near the start finish line with publications and information for veterans. Talked with many veterans and active duty service members about their benefits and Agent Orange in children and grandchildren. Processed forms that were filled out and sent by mail.
- I attended the NC State Council board and council meetings where state elections were completed.

VISTA Jeri Wallis

Hello everyone, as promised in the last updates here are the 2015-2016 winners for VISTA hours.

Chapter 240 Tennessee	4152.4 hours
State of Tennessee	7098.7 hours
Region 3	9194.3 hours

1st Place	Rose Wright Chapter 240 TN with 1362 hours
2nd Place	Jeff Metheny Chapter 984 IL with 1322.5 hours
3rd Place	Rita Clifton Chapter 772 GA with 783.5 hours

We finished with **18,461.6 hours for the year.** This is 2 ½ times more than the first year so let's congratulate all those Volunteers out there.

So far for the year 2016-2017 we have 9091.25 hours entered into the VISTA database. Now I know we can do better than this so let's write down all the hours you volunteer and get them to me. I would like to finish this year with more than 20,000 hours volunteered.

Thanks and let's keep up the great work.



Remember to claim your VISTA hours:

<http://avva.org/documents/vistapolicy.pdf>

<http://avva.org/forms/program/vistaform.pdf>

In Remembrance

In Remembrance will list those that have recently passed.

Our information is received from VVA Chaplain Father Phil Salois.

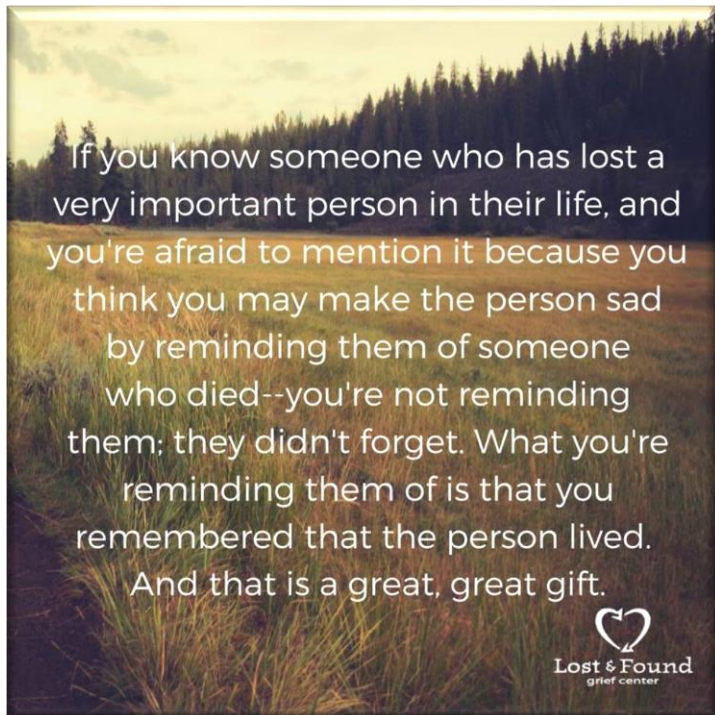
This information goes to Diane Nicholson, Region 6 Director. Diane then sends sympathy cards, on behalf of AVVA, to the families of the deceased, if there is an address.

We may not have all of the names of the deceased but we would like to remember those that we have received.

Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, love leaves a memory no one can steal.

- From a headstone in Ireland

(No submissions this issue)



What's happening in AVVA?

September 2016

AVVA, along with VVA, recruited membership at:

Howard County Vietnam Veterans Reunion

Kokomo IN.

September 15-17, 2016

October 2016

Full Board Meeting

Doubletree by Hilton Hotel

Silver Spring, MD

The Agent Orange pin was designed by Past AVVA President Mary Miller and her granddaughter. It was designed to honor Mary's husband Tom Miller and all those who are suffering from Agent Orange. It was copyrighted and Pennsylvania had Hoover Pin Co. do the first rendering of it. Mary has since given the copyright to AVVA National.



The reason PA is on stamped on the back of some of the pins is because the PA. VVA paid for the first set of pins. Not all pins have this.



Thank you to VVA Women Veterans Chair, Kate O'Hare Palmer and Sharon Hodge VVA present the AVVA wreath at Arlington National Cemetery – May 2016.



AVVA~ Leadership & Education Conference July 2016 Tucson, AZ.





Work



AVVA Luncheon



Before play!



More fun at the Luau



**AVVA presents:
Proud of the Past, Poised for our Future
&
Secondary PTSD – PTSD '2'**



*Jeri Wallace working
VVA registration*

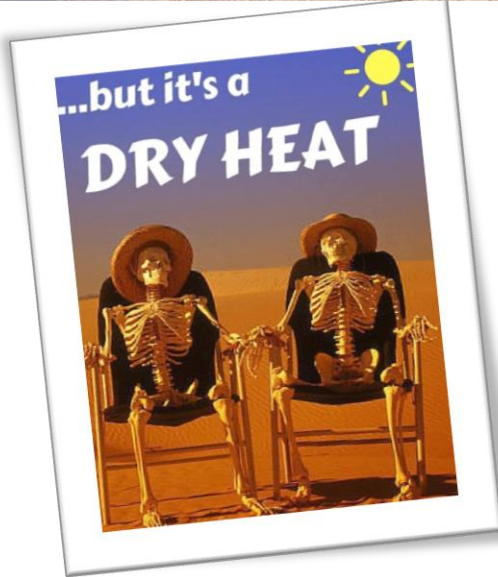


*Check presented to Esperanza en
Escalante*

\$11,016



Product Sales



2016 Leadership & Education Conference Report to the Membership – Sharon Hobbs

The 2016 VVA and AVVA Leadership and Education Conference was held July 19th – 23rd at the Hilton El Conquistador, in Tucson, AZ. The following report is a composite of happenings submitted by the Conference Committee members.

This report is a narrative designed for those members not in attendance and a review for those members present. All Board Members and two Deputy Directors played an active role in the success of the convention. Planning meetings began six weeks before through our online conference calling. All Board Members and Deputies were invited to participate in the planning; those not limited by work schedules took the opportunity to join in. Although AVVA's role in the Conference was somewhat limited, this report is a full accounting of our involvement.

Registration:

Official registration opened on Tuesday, July 19th, but the task of stuffing Conference bags began early Monday morning. VVA and AVVA bags contained a 3" binder with handouts for the seminars. Workers included Sharon Hobbs (National President), Elayne Mackey (National Vice President), Kathy Andras (National Treasurer), Casey Farrell (Region 9 Director), Charlie Hobbs (VVA Director-at-Large), Steve Mackey (CA State Council President) and Dennis Andras (VVA Region 7 Director).



VVA & AVVA, dual member, Steve Mackey receives the AVVA Commendation Medal from AVVA President Sharon Hobbs. Thank you Steve for your loyalty and dedication to AVVA.

Conference registration began at 9am on Tuesday morning. A total of 73 AVVA members registered for the Conference. VVA and AVVA registrations were combined. AVVA's registration worker in the VVA booth was Jeri Wallis (Region 4 Director).

AVVA Office

AVVA manned the office every day of the Conference. Visitors dropped by to discuss issues, pick up brochures and Paper Safes, introduce themselves, and/or just to visit. Nina Schloffel, Secretary Pro Tem in Joanna Henshaw's absence, was the overall manager of the office; however, it took a several other people to make it happen.

Workers included Jeri Wallis (Region 4), John Birch (Region 8), Kathy Andres (Treasurer), Elayne Mackey (Vice President), and Sharon Hobbs (President).

Luncheon

The AVVA Luncheon was held on Thursday, July 21st. There were approximately 100 in attendance. Former Army nurse, Kate O'Hare-Palmer was our guest speaker; she spoke on "Women Veterans: The Long Way Back Home". She is the current VVA Women Veterans Committee Chair of VVA's national organization. American flags were donated by Woodman's Life Insurance Chapter in Dickson, TN. Each attendee was given a flag, flag stand, and an umbrella compliments of AVVA. Beverly Pounds (Region Member of the Year: 3 Director) and Diane Nicholson (Region 6 Director) were assigned the Luncheon.

Nina Schloffel (Secretary Pro Tem in Joanna Henshaw's absence) assisted by creating and printing the Luncheon Program.

During the Luncheon, AVVA awards were presented.

- ***Member of the Year:*** Teresa Rangel
- ***Fellowship Award:*** Mabel Foreman
- ***AVVA Commendation Medal***
 - Suzanne Blohm-Weber (FL)
 - Joyce Koprowski (FL)
 - Steve Mackey (CA)
 - Bobbie Morris (PA)
 - Bernie Rekowski (PA)

VISTA Volunteer Hours Individuals:

1st Place: Rose Wright (TN Chapter 240)

2nd Place: Jeff Metheny (IL Chapter 984)

3rd Place: Rita Clifton (GA Chapter 772)

Regional: Region III (9,194 hours reported)

State: Tennessee (7,098 hours reported)

Chapter: TN 240 (4,152 hours reported)

Product Sales

During the Conference, our vendor table included AVVA flags, challenge coins, Agent Orange pins, and other numerous AVVA logoed pieces purchased from Proforma. Bobbie Morris, PA State Association President, donated numerous beaded items for our table. Cash and credit card sales totaled \$2,355.42. Cecilia Essenmacher (Region 5 Director) and John Birch (Region 8 Director) were in charge of making sure that the table was covered with adequate help during the entire Conference. Workers included Cecilia Essenmacher (Region 5 Director), John Birch (Region 8 Director), Casey Farrell (Region 9 Director), Percilla Newberry (Region 7 Director), Susan Henthorn (GA State Rep), Nancy Rekowski (Region 2 Director) and Bobbie Morris (PA State Association President). A detailed report will be available before the October Board meeting.

Project Friendship

The 2016 Project Friendship was Esperanza En Escalante (EEE). EEE is a non-profit organization (501c3) formed in 1989 by the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 106 of Tucson, Arizona. On Monday afternoon, sixteen people visited Project Friendship; our entourage included AVVA members, VVA members, and National Office Staff. We toured the grounds and met with the leaders and staff. On Saturday morning, we presented them with a check for \$11,016 which was \$1,016 above our goal.

NOTE: After returning home, thank you letters were sent to all who contributed. AVVA and VVA received a very nice "thank you" letter from Phyllis Russell, Executive Director of Esperanza en Escalante.

Visitors to Project Friendship:

Sharon Hobbs Kathy Andras Casey Farrell Jeri Wallis, Charlie Hobbs, Dennis Andras, Pat Farrell, Kayla Dispain, Elayne Mackey, Marsha Four, Cecilia Essenmacher, Sharon Hodge, Steve Mackey, Sandy Miller, Susan Henthorn, Kate O'Hare-Palmer,

Educational Seminars

AVVA offered two educational seminars during the Conference: "Recognizing and Living with Secondary PTSD" and "Proud of our Past; Poised for our Future". Both seminars were well attended.

The first mentioned, was the official rollout of our newest program. Interest in facilitating at the local level was very positive. Seven people signed up for our online facilitator classes before leaving Tucson. Forty-seven people took facilitator applications. Approximately 500 educational brochures were distributed during Conference week.

The second seminar was designed to bring refreshed awareness to the existence and purpose of AVVA's ongoing endeavors; and, all got a glimpse into AVVA's future planning and implementing of new programs and projects. The handout is available on the AVVA website.

Business meeting

The Annual Business meeting was called to order at 2:00pm PST on Thursday, July 21st. Officer and Board reports, National Foundation for Veterans & Families update, In Memory Plaque project update, and a Financial Report were on the agenda. After the official business was completed, a time of questions and answers was offered to the attendees.

Conclusion

The Conference was well attended, the food was good, and overall it went very smoothly. With the unified effort of our Board of Directors, the AVVA seminars, luncheon, vendor table, and our Project Friendship were all huge successes.

The minutes of the business meeting and the Board of Directors meeting are posted on the AVVA website. www.avva.org

A very special "thank you" to our Historian, Steve Mackey for the great pictures of every detail of the Conference.

Friday was ***"Support Our Active Troops"*** Day. Everyone was asked to wear red.



Nancy Rekowski, AVVA Region 2 Director receives the AVVA Commendation Medal for her husband, Bernie Rekowski. (below)



Tips for Staying Healthy this Fall

Flu Vaccine? Who? You?

As temperatures get chillier and people spend more time indoors, flu season sneaks in. Because the flu virus can infect the lungs, it can cause a serious complication like pneumonia -- which can require hospitalization, even lead to death. That's why certain people must get a flu shot.

October or November is the best time to get vaccinated, but you can still get vaccinated in December or later. Flu season can start as early as October and last as late as May.

If you live with or care for a child under 2 years old, you are in a priority group for flu shots. ~ WebMD

Exercise Your Brain: Go Dancing

You know your heart benefits from exercise. Your brain does, too. Studies show that regular, moderate exercise -- 30 minutes of walking or a light one-mile run -- helps fight the effects of aging on the brain. No grueling workouts required!

All types of exercise count, including walking, bicycling, hiking, swimming, aerobics, and weight training. Ballroom dancing is another good one, especially fun on chilly evenings.

How does exercise work to prevent mental decline? Researchers believe exercise may stimulate the body to fight stress that's normally occurring in the brain -- stress that causes oxidative damage. All that good stuff from a little exercise! ~ WebMD

Should You Be Worried About Bruising Easily?

A bruise is basically a form of internal bleeding. Usually, it's from some sort of trauma that causes blood vessels, or capillaries, under your skin to tear. Blood from these vessels leaks into the surrounding tissues and clots, first turning the injured area red and then dark blue. Before a bruise completely heals, its color will continue to change from blue to yellow to brown as the body sends macrophages, a kind of white blood cell, to break down red blood cells and clear away the clot.

"It's pretty rare to have spontaneous bruising," says Dr. Dana Neutze, a family physician at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. "Sometimes the trauma is so minor you don't think of it as trauma." If you happen to bruise easily, it can take as little as a light bump into a table to cause a mark.

In rare instances, a bruise can be your body's way of telling you that something's wrong. Bruising is one of the most common symptoms that patients bring to their primary care physician, says Dr. Roy Silverstein, chairman of medicine at the Medical College of Wisconsin, Division of Hematology and Oncology and spokesperson for the American Society of Hematology. Often, though, easy bruising is not a cause for concern. It may just be the way your

particular body was built, for example, or a normal sign of getting older.

It comes with aging. Bruising from minor trauma is common among older adults. As we age, our capillaries weaken and, therefore, break more easily. Our skin also becomes less elastic and thinner as we begin to lose that layer of fat underneath. "If you have more fat under the skin or more elastic tissue, that's going to cushion the area better," Neutze says. "And it's also going to prevent more blood from leaking out because there's just not the space for the blood to seep into."

If you feel that your bruising is something more than normal, please see a physician. ~Health US News



Autumn is the season of warm, earthy colors; think deep greens, dark yellows and brilliant oranges.

When you eat foods that are rich in these colors, you are absorbing the vibrational energy of the earth. Fall foods are vibrant, colorful and nourishing.

One rule of thumb is that the more colorful the fruit, the better it is for your health and your immune system.

Interesting

A "Harvest Moon" is the full moon closest to the autumn equinox. Before artificial lighting, such moonlight was essential to a farmer's successful harvest.

While Americans typically use the word "fall," the British use the word "autumn," though both terms date around the 16th century. Before these terms, the period was called "harvest."

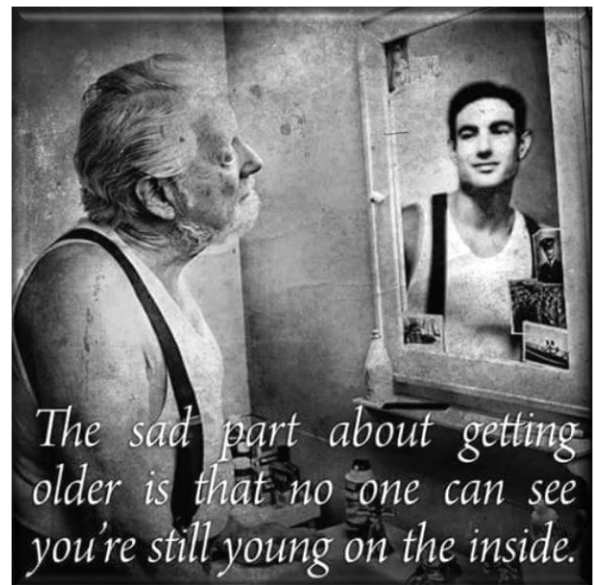
People who live on the equator or central area of the planet never experience autumn.

Red and purple leaves are actually caused by the presence of sugars from sap that is trapped inside of the leaves.





Fun to do for the kids.



The sad part about getting older is that no one can see you're still young on the inside.

Christmas Sock Exchange. Buy a pair of garishly colored/patterned socks and stuff them with an assortment of small treats. Tie them together with a bow. Make sure to take pictures of everyone's feet after they get their socks!



Make a fall tree using a tomato cage, Christmas lights, fall garland, ribbon and topper.



Do you want your cake to taste like it came from a bakery?



Follow these steps...

1. Read the directions on the cake mix
2. Add 1 more egg (or 2 for an even richer cake)
3. Replace the oil with melted butter and double the amount.
4. Replace the water with an equal amount of milk.
5. Mix and bake according to package directions