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**Update Issues:**

**Spring 2016**  
**Summer 2016**  
**Fall 2016**  
**Winter 2016**



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**Sharon's quote for this issue:**

**Progress is impossible without change,  
and those who cannot change their  
minds cannot change anything.**

**-George Bernard Shaw**



## President's Message

Since our last UPDATES e-newsletter, tragedy struck AVVA with the passing of our National Vice President. Cathy Keister was one of the brightest, most dedicated business-minded, and hardworking Vice Presidents this organization has ever known.

Although Cathy could never be replaced, the Board knew that our organization must have a Vice President. During the April Board meeting in Silver Spring, MD, Elayne Mackey was unanimously elected Vice President by the Board to fulfill the remainder of the term. I know that Cathy would be pleased; I also know that Elayne will perform the duties of Vice President very well. Elayne is the former Region 9 Director and Elections Chair.

The April Board meeting also resulted in numerous actions through motions, appointments, and assignments for our next meeting. Agenda items included a reduction in life membership dues, updates to policies, approval of the 2017 budget, and a Leadership planning session. An educational session on Legislative Advocacy was led by Sharon Hodge after all business was completed. The minutes and reports are posted on our website.

Upon Elayne's election as VP, two positions became vacant. Casey Farrell (AZ) stepped up to fulfill the vacancy in Region 9 and Kaye Gardner was appointed and approved to be the Elections Chair. I know that Casey and Kaye will do an excellent job; I welcome you both.

Upon Cathy's passing, numerous appointments became vacant as well. Cecilia Essenmacher and I will co-chair the Membership Committee, Bobbie Morris has stepped-up as Incorporation Chair, I will assume the In Memory Plaque Taskforce Chair, and Linda Yates has recently been elected as the Chair of the AVVA Foundation (National Foundation for Veterans & Families).

*I want to also welcome Sharon Hodge. She has been recently appointed as our Governmental Affairs Chair. AVVA's legislative agenda is posted on our website along with current updates from Sharon; I know that our membership will be hearing more from her in the months ahead.*

*As we prepare for the Leadership and Education Conference in Tucson, Arizona, the Board will begin online planning sessions in June. Secondary PTSD will headline AVVA's educational portion of the Conference; Kate O'Hare- Palmer will be our guest speaker during our luncheon, our Project Friendship is Esperanza en Escalante (translated: Rising Hope). We will also have an Annual Membership Meeting for all to attend.*

*On behalf of the Officers and Board of Directors, I wish y'all a safe and cool summer.*

*Together Always,*

*Sharon*

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**Elayne Mackey Vice President**

*Thank you everyone for your support and good wishes. Those of you that know me well, know that I am a strong proponent of membership. Our Board of Directors is also, which makes it a pleasure to work with them.*

*Our membership is vital to AVVA; the Board works with and for you.*

*As I have said many times, AVVA is a grass roots organization, the best there is. Successful grassroots organizations have a well thought out, and well-written plan. Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America has this type of plan.*

*I applaud our Officers and Board members as well as our membership. Behind the scenes, onlookers would see a dedicated, hard-working group of people with a definite goal.*

*I will do my very best to uphold the office of Vice President, serving with honesty, integrity and a big heart for you all.*

### **AVVA April, 2016 meeting in Silver Springs, MD.**



**Sharon Hobbs, AVVA National President receives the VVA Commendation Medal from VVA National President John Rowan.**

**Yes, we are very proud of Sharon!**

## Feature Article

### ***A giant step in the next generation of prostheses for Veteran amputees.***

Researchers and physicians hold their collective breath as Veteran Ed Salau clicks his new prosthetic leg into place and stands on it for the first time.

“Oh my gosh, I can’t believe this day is here, it’s so surreal, I have Goosebumps,” says Dr. Sarina Sinclair, a key researcher on the team.

And then fist pumps all around as Ed jokes about the Hokey Pokey dance being a whole lot easier now.

In 2004, Salau’s platoon was ambushed by the enemy while out on patrol in Iraq. Two rocket propelled grenades penetrated his patrol vehicle and his left leg was so badly damaged it later had to be amputated just above the knee.

“It’s so weird. I can feel the ground again. I haven’t had that sensation in eleven years,” said Salau.

“It’s perfect. I’m stoked”



What started as scribbled ideas on posted notes all over the wall of a research lab is now a reality that could impact the lives of these two Veterans and countless others in the future.

The device is called a percutaneous osseointegrated prosthesis or POP. It features a titanium rod surgically implanted into the bottom of the thigh bone. The rod allows a prosthetic leg to be securely attached without the need for a socket.

This team has worked years to get to this day. Peter Beck, an attending orthopedic surgeon for VA and an adjunct professor for the University of Utah, has been invested for over a decade. He says the big barrier for years was preventing infection and perfecting the surgical procedures for inserting the rod into the femur bone.

“Bryant, you’re up.” Says Bart Gillespie, VA Salt Lake City physical therapist.

Veteran Bryant Jacobs was also injured in Iraq in 2004.

He sees himself as a trailblazer willing to take this risk for other Veterans that may follow. He wife is right by his side as he stands on the POP for the first time.

“It’s perfect. That’s what we want. I’m stoked”

Bryant wants to be able to use the rowing machine without a prosthetic sleeve jabbing him in the groin. He also wants to snowboard again in the Utah Mountains. After voluntarily having his leg amputated two years ago, Bryant begged to be a part of the clinical study.

“I’m really excited. This is going to be a game changer for him,” said Gillespie.

Ed hopes to be able to climb Kilimanjaro one day, but in the near future, a long walk on the beach with his wife is a good start.

The pair is the first ever in the United States to receive the POP implant. Their first surgery was on December 7, 2015, to insert the metal rod. In a follow-up procedure on Feb. 8, 2016, doctors attached a docking mechanism, extending from the implanted rod and through the skin, to which the leg is attached.

Both Veterans are already raving about the comfort and fit of the new device. Initial first steps have now become longer stretches of walking and stair climbing. Each day the muscle grows stronger as the rod fuses with the bone, and each day the Veterans feel a little more confident and comfortable with their new legs.

But researchers and physicians warn this is just the beginning of a long process and there may be more barriers to overcome along the way. “As researchers we are anxious to gather our results and allow for future improvements. The thing about research is we don’t have all of the answers when we start,” says Dr. Larry Meyer, Director of Research, VA Salt Lake City Health Care System.

This is a VA-funded clinical trial, approved by the Food and Drug Administration. It will assess the feasibility and safety of the new implant in ten VA patients over the course of several years. It could be five years or more before the technology is widely available. By Tom Cramer

See more at:

<http://www.va.gov/HEALTH/NewsFeatures/2016/April/Surgically-Implanted-Prosthesis-for-Veteran-Ampute.asp#sthash.i1m4PfNv.dpuf>

### **Region I**

AVVA is proud to welcome three new Chapter Representatives to AVVA from Region I.

Joanne Blum Chapter 120 CT

Fran Guevremont Chapter 273 RI

Jim Davis Chapter 1044 ME

Congratulations to you all and we wish you the best of luck in your desire to see your respective areas grow.

### **Region II Nancy Rekowski Director**

With the devastating loss of my best friend and National Vice President Cathy Keister, reflection of her contributions and other members in Region II has consumed my thoughts. Cathy's dedication to her Chapter 862 in Harrisburg Pennsylvania, her service as Region II Director and AVVA National Vice President are in measurable. As much as I loved, valued and respected Cathy, she would be the first to remind me of the contributions of so many others in Region II.

Chérie Steers, New York State Pres. has served many years in that position. Chérie has an amazing dedication not only to AVVA but to other veterans service organizations. I'm fascinated that one woman could volunteer as many hours as Chérie.

A special thank you to Margaret Wojciechowicz for stepping up to be the Point of Contact for New Jersey and will be conducting the June elections.

Margaret formerly was the Region II Director. Margaret is dedicated to veterans and serves as a

Veterans Service Officer. I'm grateful to have her in our region.

Bobbie Morris serves as the President of her Incorporated Chapter 862, AVVA State Council President and is seated on the National Membership Committee and chairs the Incorporation Committee. Bobbie has a great spirit and shines a light on everyone she meets. Did I mention that the word no is not in her vocabulary?

A special tribute to Sandy Miller (Pennsylvania), VVA National Homeless Committee Chair for always being there as a consultant for AVVA's project friendship. Sandy was presented the AVVA's President's Award at our 2015 convention luncheon.

Bernie Rekowski, Chapter 948 (PA) has donated his time, talent and resources. Bernie designed, redesigned and designed again AVVA's membership brochures and printed certificates of appreciation, Fellowship and Member of the Year certificates, letterhead for NFVF, Project Friendship flyers and has committed to designing AVVA's flag brochure saving us thousands of dollars in design and printing costs.

I would also like to thank our VVA State Council and Chapter Presidents for supporting our Region II AVVA members and their activities.

I know it's sometimes dangerous to recognize only a few when so many give so much. If you have a State Council or chapter member who deserves recognition please let me know. You can also nominate those members for the Member of the Year Award and fellowship award. All nominations must be in by May 20. See the web site for details. AVVA Certificates of Appreciation are also available to honor your Chapter and State AVVA members. The certificates are free from AVVA National and can be ordered from the web site.

Last but not least, thank you to all our Region II members. You are the reason for our success.

## **Ch. 862 PA. Elections**



**From L to R;** Keith Black, Rita Sweeney, Sue Bridgewater, Bobbie Morris, Carl Curtis, Sandy Giordano, Linda Szatkiewicz and Election chairman Chuck Inman

**Region III Beverly Pounds Director**

## **Chapter 203 TN. Elections**



L-R: Joyce Simpson, President; Susan Price, Treasurer; Tammy Moody, VP. Sec. vacant

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## **Chapter 454 Louisville, Ky. Wynella Bethards**

On March 29, 2016, AVVA Chapter 454 along with VVA Chapter 454 members provided and served the food at the Vietnam Commemoration 50th Anniversary Event "Welcome Home" Luncheon at the VA Vet Center in Louisville, Ky. Fifty five Vietnam Veterans and some spouses attended. A program was presented in their honor. It was very meaningful to them. They were very appreciative of us and what we did.

The following day, March 30, 2016, AVVA and VVA members from Chapter 454 attended the ceremony

at the Capitol in Frankfort, Ky. where the Governor declared 30 March Vietnam Veterans Day in Ky. from here forward. It is wonderful to see the Vietnam Veterans getting the recognition they so justly deserve.

## **Ch. 454 AVVA & VVA**



**Region IV Jeri Wallis Director**

## **AVVA Florida State Association Report**

Election results are coming in from around the state, good job everyone! I have attended election meetings in Marathon and The Villages to assist with the process. On April 29, 2016 I had the honor to attend the monthly Pizza Party/Social Gathering at the Alexander Nininger State Veterans' Nursing Home in Pembroke Pines Florida with AVVA and VVA members of Chapter 23. What a wonderful experience witnessing the compassion and camaraderie that was shared with the residents.

We will be holding our election meeting on June 11, 2016 at the Holiday Inn in Orlando Florida at 8:30 am. In the Hospitality Suite. May 20, 2016 is the deadline for making reservations, call (407) 351-3333 and tell them you are with Vietnam Veterans of America Florida State Council. VVA will be holding a Secretary's Workshop at 3:00 pm and a Treasurer's Workshop at 4:15 pm in the Star Quarters Room. The Hospitality Suite is in the Penthouse on the tenth floor and will open at 3:00 pm on Friday, AVVA will be hosting this.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Respectfully submitted, Suzanne Blohm-Weber,  
President (386) 986-9153 [avva@fsc.org](mailto:avva@fsc.org)

**Region V Cecilia Essenmacher Director**

**Jeff Metheny of Illinois Region 5:**

It is always an honor and joy to be able to highlight the efforts of a member of Region 5. Recently, Jeri Wallis, Vista Coordinator requested that I verify hours submitted by Jeff Metheny of Chapter 984, and VSO in Rockford, IL. The following is taken from his response and with some paraphrasing:

Thank you for asking about my hours. I do not get paid for any of the hours I work, nor are they counted towards VA Voluntary Services.

I am a 100% service connected Afghanistan veteran. I was medically discharged due to my injuries and receive a pension from the military as a result. This has enabled me to do what I WANT to keep busy.

Currently I work three days a week at the VA clinic in Rockford, IL. (He sometimes makes house calls to veterans that cannot make it in to the office.) I also give speeches in the community and on WLS radio in Chicago talking about veterans benefits.

I order supplies for Stand Downs in three different states under a VA program called "Operation New Hope". Last year we received 98 pallets of goods. To date, I have received and distributed \$4.7 million worth of surplus military clothing and equipment in the last five years.

In addition, I volunteer with the Allen J. Lynch Foundation to raise funds to assist veterans. This year we are doing a clay pigeon shoot in early June and a golf outing in October.

My current side project is getting a local hospital to donate approximately \$20,000 worth of medical supplies to fill 18 medic bags for the Illinois Army National Guard.

This country has given me so much. I rejoined the Army after a 12 year break when I saw events unfold on 9-11-2001.

His last comment is one we can all try: You do not need to do everything that I have. All you have to do is start by smiling to a stranger and maybe opening a door for someone. Every little bit helps to make this World a better place.

Thank you Jeff for your continued service to America through AVVA!

**Region VII Percilla Newbury Director**

**SPRING HAS SPRUNG IN REGION VII**

As I have crossed Texas to Oklahoma, the wild flowers and bluebonnets are blooming and everything is turning green. April showers have brought floods, large hail and tornadoes across our region. So far no one has reported any disasters in their areas.

Region VII is busy with giving scholarships, recognition awards, and celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War Commemoration by the Blue Angels flying over Fort Worth, Texas to the grand opening of the NEW emergency room at the Thomas E Creek VA Hospital in Amarillo, Texas. Newspapers asking for scholarships essays in regard to the Vietnam War and printing the Vietnam Veteran's stories.

After the Texas State Council meeting in Victoria, Texas, the chapters are realizing how important it is to host an Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting and combining it with Hepatitis C. Oklahoma will be hosting one at Ponca City and Texas is getting ready for one in Amarillo. It is all about education and making sure veterans are aware of their benefits.

I attended the Texas State Council meeting in Victoria, Texas, the Oklahoma State Council meeting in Oklahoma City and will be in El Paso in June for the presentation of the VVA Achievement Award to the Honorable Beto O'Rourke.

**TEXAS**

**NEW AVVA TSC OFFICERS ARE:** Lynn Kennedy – President, Percilla Newberry – Vice-President, Terri Rangel – Secretary, Gina Mathews – Treasurer.

**Chapter 297 – Amarillo** – Is busy helping prepare for the upcoming Agent Orange Town hall meeting that will also include the Hepatitis C presentation in July. In September they will host a fishing tournament for children. There is no fee for the children to participate and the food is free. Each child will leave with a small prize or large prize.

Lots of preparation goes into both of these projects. New chapter representative is Kathy Barnes.

**Chapter 404 – Borger** – is also busy in preparing for the Agent Orange Town hall meeting with the assistance of Chapter 297. Chapter 404 is working with members to tell their stories and having them published in the local newspaper. If the veteran dies, then his story vanishes. They were also present in the opening of the new VA Emergency Room in Amarillo giving tours. New chapter representative is Virgie Morris.

**Chapter 1000** – has been very busy preparing for the next Texas State Council meeting to be held in Killeen, TX at the Shilo Inn and Suites. It will be October 14th-15th, 2016. This chapter meets on a regular basis to serve refreshments to veteran's homecomings and veterans being deployed. New chapter representative is Lynn Kennedy.

**Chapter 898** – just completed hosting a very successful Texas State Council meeting in Victoria, Texas. The hotel was amazing—anything you needed they made it happen. Hospitality room had awesome food and this chapter made everyone feel welcome. New chapter point of contact – Loretta Cross

**Chapter 575** – This chapter has been working very hard to host the presentation of the Vietnam Veterans of America Achievement Medal to the Honorable Beto O'Rourke. He was the first to sign in support of S.901 and H.R. 1769 from Texas and truly shows his support for veterans every day. This presentation will be June 29, 2016 in El Paso, Texas. New chapter representative – Terri Rangel.

**Chapter 987** - Stays very busy with fundraising activities. They are working with the East Texas Veteran's Resource Center who is working to help homeless veterans in East Texas. They managed to get a 50" flat screen to be donated to the Resource Center. They have given out scholarships a total of \$2,500 for two semesters. A member is making guardian angels to be given out to veterans and families all across Texas.

New Chapter Representative T.J. Call.

So far the following has been reported new chapter representatives: Chapters – 923 – Anne Koenig, 929 – Hilda Rodriguez, 343 – Suzie Meeks, 685 – Gina Matthews, 854 – Marie Ridgeway, 844 – Virginia Molina, 366 – Mary Davidson, 991 – Linda Taylor, 915 – Kathy Miterko (POC), 278 – Merle Morris, 937

– Linda Kuhn, 292 – Sandra Womack. Still waiting for more.

## **OKLAHOMA**

**Chapter 986** is continuing to help veterans by helping with a booth at the Deer Festival in Antlers, Oklahoma. The chapter has had some difficulties with members having surgeries, but will continue helping veterans

**Chapter 940** has worked with chairman on getting a Kuwait, Iraq, Afghanistan monument at Veterans Park east of Enid, OK to honor "Fallen Heroes" in those conflicts. AVVA continues to volunteer at the Blue Star Mother's store. They also help with fundraisers for the Blue Star Mothers. Presently helping a veteran that can't see to drive getting him to Doctor appointments, grocery store and business phone calls he needs to make to the VA.

**Chapter 751** continues to attend homecomings and deployments at Fort Sill with our VVA members. They continue to support needy veterans and others in our community. They participated in the POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremony at our Vietnam Memorial in Lawton's Elmer Thomas Park and Fort Sill National Cemetery.

**Chapter 216** participated in the Veterans Day Parade in Tulsa. Provided the Claremore Veterans Center with money at Christmas for Bingo Games as a prize (quarters go a long way in vending machines). Provides large print Bibles to the Muskogee VA Hospital. They put together carefully planned food boxes for veterans in immediate need.

**Oklahoma AVVA At-Large** managed the 96th Tulsa Veteran's Parade which had 15,000 in attendance and 108 entries. It is one of the oldest and largest veterans parade in the country. Visited the Jack C. Montgomery VA Medical Center and the Claremore Veteran's Center and provided Christmas cards and entertainment. Worked with veterans and their families seeking VA benefits. Also worked with Oklahoma State Representatives on special projects.

Oklahoma State Council meeting was held in Oklahoma City at the Saddleback Inn. It was well attended and elections were held.

The Friendly Fire that Keeps on Burning – Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting will be held at the Carolyn Rentfro Event Ctr., 445 Fairview Avenue, Ponca City, Oklahoma. It will begin at 1:00 p.m. until 4:30 P.m.

During the VVA meeting on Saturday Percilla Newberry presented a Good Samaritan Award to Delores Washington, life AVVA member. This award is given in grateful appreciation for her personal and selfless contributions toward others or assistance to individuals in need. She was commended for her outstanding dedicated compassion to others in need in the State of Oklahoma. Dee helped a woman in the bathroom on the Oklahoma turnpike by crawling under the stall to unlock it and held the very sick woman in her arms and prayed continuously with her until the ambulance arrived.

Wanda Ross is the re-elected AVVA state representative, Patsy Chinn is the At-Large Representative, Chapter 215 – Wanda Ross, 986 – Betty Cooper, 751 – Penny Dunham, 940 – Karen Vollman.

### **ARKANSAS**

They have been busy in Arkansas with events for fund raisers to help meet our VVA chapter's monthly expenses.

March 29th was Vietnam Veteran Appreciation day, and they honored that on Saturday April 02 with their third annual Veteran's Bike ride & Poker Run. Their AVVA members Scott & Ginger Roush, Melinda Umholtz coordinated the event. Local television (biker show) "Thunder TV", host Dennis Snow, came out & videoed some of the day's events.

They held a lunch for all participants & volunteers with hamburgers & hot dogs, all donated by our local First National Bank. They also held a silent auction on numerous baked goods donated by our AVVA members. They gave out door prizes all donated by various businesses. The turnout was well received. They accredited over \$1,300 into their bank account.

Their VVA Chapter member Richard Meers, has been working on getting the deteriorating old panel from the V.N. wall replaced at the National Cemetery, so they simultaneously had a program to present the new panel, which had been installed two days earlier. The company who made the new panel,

American Precision Fabricators owners, were in attendance as was the Mayor of Fort Smith, Sandy Sanders, along with the local news media.

April 08-09, Their Chapter, held a yard sale on "Big to Do on Hwy 22" yard sale event. Everything they sold had been donated to them by members of their Chapter or others to help make funds to help our Veterans. They made a little over \$1500 in sales (Friday & 1/2 day on Saturday.)

April 27, AVVA member, Scott Roush rode his motorcycle in the patriotic escort for General Darby's statue from Norman OK. to Fort Smith AR, to be permanently placed in downtown, Cisterna Park on Saturday 4-30. Gen. Darby was a native son of Fort Smith AR. General Darby is well known for the motion picture Darby's Rangers. The "Steel-Horse" 2nd Annual Bike Rally was also held on April 29-30. Scott & his wife, Ginger, were in charge of the "CHILI-COOK OFF on Sat. there. AVVA



May 13 They will be setting up in Van Buren AR. for the Spring Festival where they will be selling tickets for raffles on a Cedar Chest, a Framed Wall Picture & and an Antique Firearm.

May 22, they will be helping out with the Coal Hill AR. VFW in hosting the luncheon for the riders on the "RUN TO THE WALL" Memorial ride from California to Washington DC.

More events to follow soon. Anna Strafford – AVVA Chapter Representative 467



## LOUISIANA



These are the **AWESOME—HARD WORKING** ladies of Louisiana that prepared the food for the Council of State Presidents meeting that was held in January. They are now preparing for the Louisiana State Council meeting that will be held in June. The food was amazing so if you are close around the 1st of June be there or be square. It will be a meeting you won't forget. Waiting on the chapter results.

**A BIG THANKS TO ALL THAT SUBMITTED THE ABOVE INFORMATION. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK. JOB WELL DONE!**

**Region VIII John Birch Director**

### **Seven Year Dream**

On the 17th of March Mr. Tom Owen, Nadine Owen and myself were invited to the dedication of a new Veteran Outreach Center in Portland, Oregon. After checking out the facility I was proud of the accomplishment of networking and motivation to complete a Seven Year Dream.

Amazing dedication! I had an opportunity to talk to Mr. Gary McAdams President of Chapter #392 about how this project started. For Seven years chapter 392 have been working on this plan establishing a Board of Directors with Gary directing this board. While conducting chapter business at the Portland VA facility they were looking for something better for outreach.

Through networking they came upon a benefactor who graciously donated the space to serve as that outreach center for Veterans, thank you Mr. Hardy.

With the move from the VA facility it allowed better access for those Veterans who were at a disadvantage due to travel. Gary mentioned that the relationship with the V.A. was very good for allowing them access to the V.A. facility but there would be better coverage of service off the hill where the V. A. facility sets.

The new Outreach Center has room to expand. There is an elevator for handicap access with enough space to allow handicap vehicles to maneuver the room. This has been accomplished with no cost to chapter 392 nor did they solicit private donation support to VVA/AVVA Chapter 392.

This project created enough of a buzz a proclamation was made and because of those efforts Chapter 392 was recognized and in this proclamation Gov. Kate Brown declared March 29th, 2016 "**Oregon Welcome Home**" pertaining to those who served.

I congratulate the BOD working hard for this outreach center, Chapter 392, Mr. Gary McAdams and all those who supported this Seven Year Dream! You have **earned by actions** the words proffered by our state Gov. Kate Brown.

**Region IX Casey Farrell Director**

### **California – Elayne Mackey President**

CA AVVA held their elections May, 2016. Officers serving again are: L to R: Debra Kennedy, Election Chair, President Elayne Mackey, Penny Chamousis Secretary, Carol Southern, Treasurer, Nina Schloffel Vice President.



CA AVVA was once again blessed to receive a donation from VVA Ch. 756, Long Beach CA.

This chapter is a great supporter of AVVA and we truly appreciate them. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> donation VVA 756 has made to us in the past year.

Two private donations of, \$100.00, each were also given to CA AVVA. It was definitely a great meeting this past weekend. Our plans are to use these donations to enhance our scholarship program.

### **Chapter 47 Riverside, CA.**



*Alice Gomez Ch. 47 AVVA Representative enjoys a Gary Sinise concert at Ft. Irwin CA – Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans*

### **Chapter 472 San Diego, CA.**

#### **Hiring Our Heroes, Wounded Veterans & Caregiver Program**

#### **The Elizabeth Dole Foundation**

*Richard (Sunny) Farrand & Senator Elizabeth Dole*



Sunny, also, was an assistant producer of the documentary, *The Day Remembered DVD Trailer*, about the 3/5 Marines on their 2010/2011 deployment to Sangin, Afghanistan.

### **Chapter 1024 – Brea, CA.**

Chapter 1024 VVA President Greg Gillispy was killed while out for his evening walk – April 2016. He was hit by a Driving While Intoxicated driver. Greg was very dedicated to VVA & AVVA and also a leader in his community. His wife, Betty is the current Ch. 1024 AVVA Representative.



#### **Remember to claim your VISTA hours:**

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

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

**The Department of Defense (DOD)** has admitted to under-rating Veterans who were discharged between Sep. 11, 2001 thru Dec. 31, 2009. Any Veteran that was medically discharged in this time frame and was given a disability percentage of less than 20% is eligible to apply to the Physical Disability Board of Review (PDBR). Please review this link for information:

<http://www.health.mil/.../Physical-Disability-Board.../PDBR-FAQs>

This link defines who is eligible and other FAQs. This is separate from VA claims and will not affect a Veterans VA benefits. Veterans cannot complete this process electronically, because of the need for original signatures. -Faces of Agent Orange

**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**

- Ellie Cole FL
- Abbie McKenzie FL
- Lita Donovan IN
- Lonna Gargus KS
- George Noble MA
- Julie Cowdrey MI
- Linda Jacobs MI
- Nancee Hay MI
- Gerald Elam MO
- Brenda Ellefson ND
- Edward Cook NJ
- Thomas Gillon NJ
- Warren Craig NY

- Shirley Sills TX
- Donna Gill VA
- Doris Duncan WI
- Linda Nelson WV

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**Getting older doesn't necessarily mean you'll have a slew of medical conditions or poor quality of life.**

Getting older involves change, both negative and positive, but you can enjoy aging if you understand what's going on with your body and take steps to maintain your health.

Many different things happen to your body as you age. Your skin, bones, and even brain may start to behave differently. Don't let the changes that come with old age catch you by surprise.

**Here are some of the common ones:**

**Your bones.** Bones can become thinner and more brittle in old age, especially in women, sometimes resulting in the fragile bone condition called osteoporosis. Thinning bones and decreasing bone mass can put you at risk for falls that can easily result in broken bones. Be sure to talk with your physician about what you can do to prevent osteoporosis and falls.

**Your heart.** While a healthy diet and regular exercise can keep your heart healthy, it may become slightly enlarged, your heart rate may lower, and the walls of the heart may thicken.

**Your brain and nervous system.** Getting older can cause changes in your reflexes and even your senses. While dementia is not a normal consequence of old age, it is common for people to experience some slight forgetfulness as they get older. Cells in the brain and nerves can be damaged by the formation of plaques and tangles, abnormalities that could eventually lead to dementia.

**Your digestive system.** As you age, your digestive tract becomes more firm and rigid, and doesn't contract as often. This change can lead to problems such as constipation, stomach pain, and feelings of nausea; a better diet can help.

**Your senses.** You may notice that your vision and hearing aren't quite as sharp as they once were. You may start to lose your sense of taste — flavors may not seem as distinct to you. Your senses of smell and touch may also weaken. Your body is taking longer to react and needs more to stimulate it.

**Your teeth.** The tough enamel that protects your teeth from decay can start to wear away over the years, leaving you susceptible to cavities. Gum disease is also a concern for older adults. Good dental hygiene can protect your teeth and gums. Dry mouth, which is a common side effect of many medications that seniors take, may also be a problem.

**Your skin.** With old age, your skin loses its elasticity and may start to sag and wrinkle. However, the more you protected your skin from sun damage and smoking when you were younger, the better your skin will look as you get older. Start protecting your skin now to prevent further damage, as well as skin cancer.

Many bodily changes are a natural part of aging, but they don't have to slow you down. What's more, there's a lot you can do to protect your body and keep it as healthy as possible.

### **Keys to Aging Well**

While maintaining your physical health is important to healthy aging, it's also key to value the experience and maturity you gain with advancing years. Practicing healthy habits throughout your life is ideal, but it's never too late to reap the benefits of taking good care of yourself, even as you get older.

<http://www.everydayhealth.com/senior-health/understanding/index.aspx>

### **Here are some healthy aging tips that are good advice at any stage of life:**

Stay physically active with regular exercise.

Stay socially active with friends and family and within your community.

Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet — dump the junk food in favor of fiber-rich, low-fat, and low-cholesterol eating.

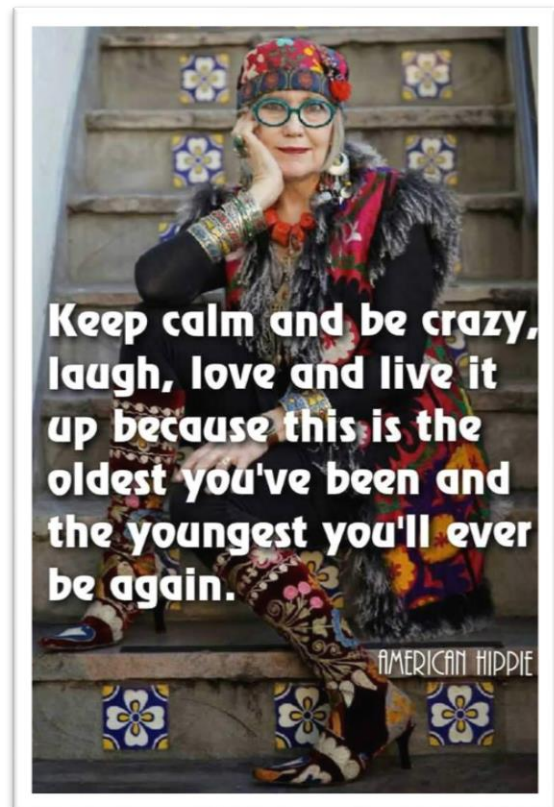
### **Don't neglect yourself: Regular check-ups with your doctor, dentist, and optometrist are even more important now.**

Take all medications as directed by your doctor.

Limit alcohol consumption and cut out smoking.

Get the sleep that your body needs.

Finally, taking care of your physical self is vital, but it's important that you tend to your emotional health as well. Reap the rewards of your long life, and enjoy each and every day. Now is the time to savor good health and happiness. -Everyday Health



Q: What is the most common remark made by 60+ year olds when they browse an antique store?

A: I remember these.



## What's happening in AVVA?

### **National Leadership and Education Conference - JULY 19 - 23, 2016**

Hilton Tucson El Conquistador Golf & Tennis Resort - 10000 North Oracle Road, Tucson, Arizona, 85704

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#### **Events:**

- **AVVA Luncheon** Thursday, July 21, 2016 12:15 – 200 pm
  - **AVVA Annual Meeting** Thursday, July 21, 2016 2:00 pm
  - **AVVA will be presenting PTSD '2'**: Friday July 22, 2016 9:00 am. Room to be announced.
  - **VVA Awards Banquet** Saturday July 22, 2016 7:00 pm – 10:00 pm
  - **Veterans Mall:** AVVA products (hours vary)
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#### **AVVA will be presenting PTSD '2': Friday July 22, 2016 9:00 am.**

This program is designed and intended for the spouses and families of the veteran who may return home a changed person, one that his/her family does not recognize. It is envisioned to bring awareness to the existence of Secondary PTSD and to recognize the symptoms associated with it.

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#### **National Committees**

- **Awards** Percilla Newberry [pnewberry@avva.org](mailto:pnewberry@avva.org)
- **Bylaws** Cecilia Essenmacher [cessenmacher@avva.org](mailto:cessenmacher@avva.org)
- **Chaplain** Diane Nicholson [dnicholson@avva.org](mailto:dnicholson@avva.org)
- **Disciplinary** Nina Schloffel [nschloffel@avva.org](mailto:nschloffel@avva.org)
- **Elections** Kaye Gardener [Kayegardner@aol.com](mailto:Kayegardner@aol.com)
- **Finance** Susan Price [sprice@avva.org](mailto:sprice@avva.org)
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- **Government Affairs** Sharon Hodge [shodge@vva.org](mailto:shodge@vva.org)
- **Historian** Steve Mackey
- **Incorporation** Bobbie Morris [bmorris@avva.org](mailto:bmorris@avva.org)
- **Leadership Development** Sharon Hobbs [shobbs@avva.org](mailto:shobbs@avva.org)  
Elayne Mackey [mmm4evr1@aol.com](mailto:mmm4evr1@aol.com)
- **Membership** Cecilia Essenmacher [membership@avva.org](mailto:membership@avva.org)  
[cessenmacher@avva.org](mailto:cessenmacher@avva.org)
- **Policy & Procedure** Joanna Henshaw [jhenshaw@avva.org](mailto:jhenshaw@avva.org)
- **Public Relations and Media** Beverly Pounds [bpounds@avva.org](mailto:bpounds@avva.org)
- **PTSD '2'** Elayne Mackey [mmm4evr1@aol.com](mailto:mmm4evr1@aol.com)  
Nina Schloffel [neenr@att.net](mailto:neenr@att.net)
- **Strategic Planning** Nancy Rekowski [nrekowski@avva.org](mailto:nrekowski@avva.org)
- **Toxic Exposure** Nancy Switzer [nswitzer@avva.org](mailto:nswitzer@avva.org)  
Linda Mooney [lmooney@avva.org](mailto:lmooney@avva.org)
- **Veterans in the Justice System** John Birch [jbirch@avva.org](mailto:jbirch@avva.org)
- **Veterans Benefits** Pam Scheffer-Bossarde [pbossardet@avva.org](mailto:pbossardet@avva.org)
- **Volunteers in Service to America** Jeri Wallis [jwallis@avva.org](mailto:jwallis@avva.org)
- **Website** Joanna Henshaw [webmaster@avva.org](mailto:webmaster@avva.org) / [jhenshaw@avva.org](mailto:jhenshaw@avva.org)

#### **National Sub-Committees**

- **Newsletters** (sub-committee of Public Relations) Elayne Mackey [mmm4evr1@aol.com](mailto:mmm4evr1@aol.com)
  - **Product Sales** (sub-committee of Finance) Cecilia Essenmacher [cessenmacher@avva.org](mailto:cessenmacher@avva.org)
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**AVVA is proud to have two VVA Special Advisors who work closely with our Board of Directors:**

- **VVA Vice-President Marsha Four** - Special advisor to the BOD.

- **VVA Homeless Veterans Committee Chair; VVA Women Veterans Co-Chair Sandy Miller** - Special Advisor to AVVA's Project Friendship.

**Submitted by Project Friendship Program Co-Chair Nancy Rekowski.** Special thanks to Bernie Rekowski for the design and layout of the flyer. For a larger view of this flyer and more information, please see: <http://avva.org/> and scroll to the bottom of the home page.

**PROJECT FRIENDSHIP 2016**  
Serving those who have served us.

It is unacceptable that any veteran who served his or her country should become homeless. Esperanza En Escalante specializes in housing programs for veterans who are homeless, or on the verge of becoming homeless so they can regain independent living.

**Esperanza En Escalante**

**IT IS OUR TOP PRIORITY TO END VETERAN HOMELESSNESS**

Esperanza En Escalante's programs target the distinct characteristics in veterans that lead to homelessness. Our efforts help them develop the necessary skills and changes needed to overcome their life barriers, and re-achieve independent living and stability.

A top priority for homeless veterans is safe, secure, and clean housing that offers a supportive environment free of drugs and alcohol.

**Transitional Housing for Homeless & Disabled Veterans**

**OUR PROGRAMS**

- job search assistance
- additional education
- vocational rehabilitation
- assistance in acquiring disability income

**NEEDS LIST**

- Linens
- Dishes
- Silverware
- Pots and pans
- Kitchen items
- Small appliances and electronics
- Furniture (particularly dressers)
- Gift cards

To support, make checks payable to:  
**Esperanza En Escalante**  
and send to:  
**Project Friendship Associates of Vietnam Veterans**  
8719 Colesville Rd.  
Suite 100  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

"Those who have served this nation as Veterans, should never find themselves on the streets, living without care and without hope."  
VA Secretary Eric Shinew

## **Australian Veteran – Looking for a Friend**

### **Please read:**

**My name is Geoff Hatherley**, I'm an Australian from Perth, West Australia and I'm looking for an American Vietnam Vet, named **Bill Grady**. I met him at Jungle Warfare School, Johore Bahru, Malaysia, in November/December of 1967.

We were on a six week visual tracking course together [42 Americans and 12 Australians]. We were based at Terendak, Malacca Malaysia, and your boys from what I understood, had volunteered for this course soon after landing in Vietnam. Bill and I became quite friendly during the course, but we never did exchange addresses at the time and consequently that precluded us from making contact in the future.

I have been trying to contact him for some twenty years, but without success. His name is not on The Wall in Washington and I believe that he was still alive four years ago, because a woman in Florida [ a former Vets widow, who voluntarily worked with Vets], told me that she knew that he was more than likely still alive, because his social security number wasn't on the public record. I am not familiar with your s/s system, so I cannot say whether that's right or wrong.

Anyway, I'm wondering if you or anyone you know, can assist me in locating Bill. I was in the US last year [July-Aug-Sept-Oct] on a thirteen week road trip and I made many enquiries then, but to no avail. I know Bill came from a northern state [OH, NY, VT, ILL], but of course he could be anywhere now.

He was also a \*conscript, not regular army.

Thank you for taking the time to read this note and hopefully you or one of your acquaintances will have some positive information for me.

Many thanks,

Sincerely,

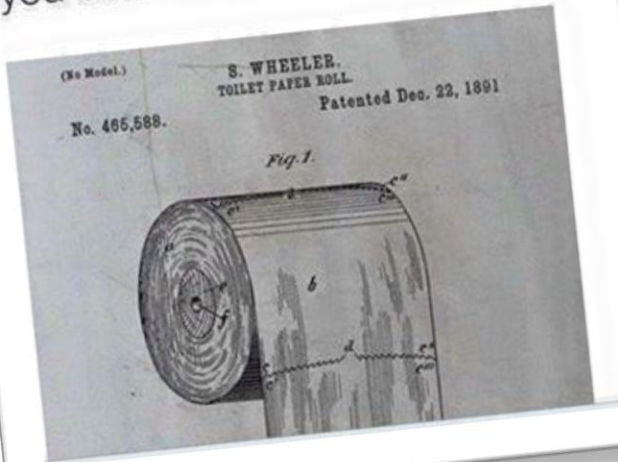
Geoff Hatherley. [geoffreylewis@bigpond.com](mailto:geoffreylewis@bigpond.com)

\*Conscript – enlistee



**Just so you know!**

The original patent from 1891 for a toilet paper roll shows the correct rolling direction, in case you ever doubted.



### 10 FUN FACTS

1. You can't wash your eyes with soap.
2. You can't count your hair.
3. You can't breathe through your nose, with your tongue out.
4. You just tried no. 3
6. When you did no. 3 you realized it's possible, only you look like a dog.
7. You're smiling right now, because you were fooled.
8. You skipped no. 5
9. You just checked to see if there is a no. 5
10. Share this with your friends to have some fun too! :-)



This is fun, give it a try.

### Best Way to Remove an Insect Stinger

**NEVER** squeeze the area or use tweezers because it may push more venom into the skin. Remove the stinger by either scraping your fingernail over the area or using a straight edge like a credit card. You want to wash the area with soap and water -- if there's swelling, apply ice. Try not to scratch because it may cause an infection.

### How to Identify Poisonous Plants

A good rule of thumb is "leaves of three, let it be." Poison oak and ivy usually are clustered in leaves of three. They contain an oil, urushiol that gets on your skin and can cause an allergic reaction. You only need to be exposed to a very small amount of this poisonous oil -- less than one grain of table salt -- for it to develop a rash. If you do get it on your skin, immediately rinse skin with rubbing alcohol or a degreasing soap like dishwashing soap and lots of water. Rinse frequently so that wash solutions do not dry on the skin and further spread the urushiol. An antihistamine can be taken to help relieve itching.

### Cool summer treat



### Ingredients:

- 1 cup of Greek Plain Yogurt
- 1/2 cup of natural Crunchy peanut butter

### Directions:

Combine the two ingredients and mix well. Chill for an Hour.

Serve with your favorite fruit.

