

The Voice of 436

May 2020 ✪ Major Louis. F. Guillermin Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 436



Next meeting:

See Upcoming Meetings
VFW Post 845
4601 Lincoln Highway,
Downingtown, PA 19335

Bad weather cancellations:
email notices will be sent
or call 484 705-5041

Chapter officers 2019-2020

President: Frank Houck
1st V.P.: Ken Schweitzer
2nd V.P.: Barry Amole
Secretary: Michael DiPuppo
Treasurer: Jim Doedderlein
Directors: Robert Gallagher
Chris Pitt
Sandy Lopacki
Vince DiLodovico
Bud McCullough
Rick Weimar

Chapter 436 President, Frank Houck, has provided this message for us to share with the membership:

"Per the latest information from Gov. Wolf, stay-at-home quarantine may be lifted on May 8th. I am sure there will be certain restrictions if this happens. If we can have our Chapter meetings, we will hold elections and swearing-in at our banquet, as planned. If NOT, the plan is to submit our election report, listing all current Officers, BODirectors, delegates, etc.; and all current office holders will continue to serve in their current positions until such time as we can hold the election and the swearing-in ceremony. After which, I will submit a correction report to State and National listing the new Chapter Officers, prior to the July 15th deadline. This is in keeping with loose guidance from State.

National President Rowan has also asked for donations, as practically all VVA funding programs have ceased due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Donations can be sent to VVA National @ Vietnam Veterans of America, 8719 Colesville Road, Ste 100, Silver Spring, MD, 20910.

I would urge all members to watch our website and Facebook page for updates as I receive them. If you know someone who cannot connect to these sources, please pass on what you have been informed of.

Please keep our ailing members and spouses in your thoughts and prayers as they continue to battle their ailments: Cindy Burns, Sally and Vince DiLodovico, Mike Ricci, Jan Prinzi, and Kathy Doedderlein. Member John Yanarella continues his battle against the cancer that has caused his life to drastically change. If I have omitted anyone, my apologies.

My memory is not what it used to be.

That's all I have for you all, except for my continued prayers for each and every one of you and your families. We will see the end of this soon, I pray, and with God's blessing, will survive. Our world has changed, and will never be the same, but I'm confident that "This, too, shall pass."

Take care. Frank."

The Downingtown Parade has been cancelled, but the VSO Commanders will still place a wreath at the Memorial as well as drop one into the Brandywine. The Chapter's Annual Banquet, including the swearing-in of our newly elected slate of Officers and Directors, has been postponed and re-scheduled (tentatively) for Saturday, June 13th, at 2:00 P.M. Unless circumstances require that date, too, to be canceled, the location, menu, and agenda should be the same as originally announced.

Other changes, so far, include: cancellations of the following: the Kennett Square Parade (5/25), US Army Heritage Days (Month of May), Good Neighbors Day (Kerr Park, July 4th), VVA's National Leadership Conference (July 14-18).

Upcoming Meetings

Although regular membership meetings are usually held on the 2nd Wednesdays of the month, exclusive of July and August, however, these are not normal times and so everything is subject to change. As noted, the Annual Banquet and swearing-in of new Officers and Directors has already been postponed (see above), and it is possible that our next meeting, which would ordinarily be held May 13th, could be postponed. Watch for updates. Also, since we can't be sure about the dates, we cannot schedule speakers for future sessions, either, at this time.

Website: <http://www.vva436.org> Your officers and Webmaster Prinzi stay in close touch and they have been very quick and effective in posting notices and updates so far (q.v.). Check them out and be sure to share any news with any other members you are in communication with.

Newsletter: While John Morris, Doc Maher and Jim Doedderlein are making every effort to keep the Voice of 436 active, informative, and up-to-date, these issues only come out toward the end of the month (or even a bit later), and depend on the printers' being open for business to print hard copies. So not only could there be a "glitch" in getting them printed and mailed out, but there is always a lag for truly up-to-date notices of sudden changes or cancellations, so, again, visit the Website in case the issues don't get mailed out on time.

Membership: Jim Doedderlein reports our roster dropped to 143 following the passing of Bud McCullough (R.I.P.) but will come back up to 144 with the new membership of Bernard Dunigan. We still have 9 AVVA members.

Agent Orange: Against the objections of the VA, a group of 34 Senators introduced the Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act of 2020, which would force the VA to provide disability benefits for Veterans with hypertension, hypothyroidism, Parkinson's, and bladder cancer connected to AO exposure during military service.

Membership form

Regular membership in VVA is open to any Veteran who served **anywhere** during the Vietnam War era.

Mail to PO Box 189
Phoenixville, PA 19460

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zipcode _____

Email: _____ Born: _____ / _____ / _____

- VVA Life Membership: \$50 (this is a reduced price)**
- I served in the US military, for other than training purposes, between 8/5/64 and 5/7/75
- I served in the US military in Vietnam between 2/21/61 and 8/5/64.
- DD214 enclosed (Applications without DD214s will be processed as associate memberships)
- I wish to join the Associates of the VVA. (No military service needed) (No age limits)
- AVVA Life Membership. Price based on age**

Financial statements: Since the VFW Post has been closed along with so many other facilities locally, state- and nation-wide, there is no news concerning any revenues from the small games of chance. Jim D's Treasurer's Report has been sent to Secretary DiPuppo.

Fiscal reports will have to be posted when ready and made available for vote/approval at the next meeting.

Education/Scholarship Committee: Jim D and Jed Burns tells us they now have seven scholarship applications so far. They will be talking among the members of the Scholarship Committee to decide how best to handle things this season as well as in the future.

Honor Guard: Frank reports the Downingtown Parade and the Good Neighbors Day at Kerr Park have both been cancelled. The Kennett Square Parade is also off now. At last word the Malvern Parade was still scheduled but a cancellation would not be surprising. No official word yet received from Mission BBQ for Armed Forces Day. Stay tuned for updates.

VA/Veterans Affairs: ** The VA strengthened their Care & Benefits with a \$243 billion budget request for FFY 21, including \$105 billion in discretionary spending and resources for health care benefits and national cemeteries, plus \$134 billion in mandatory funding for benefit programs. This of course was before all the major pandemic-related shut-downs and subsequent economic bailout programs.

** The VA blog site has a new mobile app for veterans [CHAMPVA Pay App] where you can find info at your fingertips re questions as to whether the VA pays costs of certain medical treatments, medications or durable medical equipment.

** Although the VA's VBA temporarily closed its 56 regional offices to the public on March 1st in response to COVID-19 to limit exposures of vulnerable veteran patients, VA Secretary Wilkie announced they are expanding existing technologies to remain accessible to veterans, service members and their families, and said many in-person services are already available via the phone or online through virtual options like VA video connect. More changes meant to ensure the safety and well-being of clients and staff can be seen at blogs.va.gov/VAntage and key in virtual services for veterans during COVID-19 pandemic. Or, go to <http://www.ebenefits.va.gov> for additional details.

** For information re resources for Veterans about avoiding foreclosure, & difficulty making mortgage payments, contact your loan services right away. A press release from PA AG Shapiro states that PA residents cannot be evicted during a state of emergency; for possible aid/resources, contact the County Veterans Services Office or visit hud.gov/states/pennsylvania/homeownership/foreclosure.

** A large study of 150,000 veterans done by the VA Boston Health Care System (as part of the VA's Million Veterans Program) has demonstrated that the risk of coronary artery disease rises with the level of intake of fried foods --- this in addition to the already known association of fried foods with chronic health

with chronic health conditions such as diabetes, heart attack, obesity and hypertension.

** In early May the VA announced it was preparing to absorb the overflow civilian COVID-19 patients from private hospitals, as part of its "4th mission" (established by Congress in 1982, in addition to patient care, training, and research) as backup to the nation's entire health care system. However, the announcement was met with widespread doubt and confusion, and was quickly scrubbed from the VA's website.

CVAMC/SEVC: ** CVAMC restrictions are still in place, as previously reported.

** Ken reports that the SEVC is still on lockdown. They did have cases in both residents and staff and were said to be recovering nicely in mid-April.

** Since then, the PATCH site reported their COVID-19 death toll had risen, However, Ken notes that not all these deaths were from COVID-19, PANG members are helping fill staffing gaps there as they have been doing at the Broomall Rehab/Nursing Center. No outside Bingo Night help is permitted until (hopefully) mid-June.

** CVAMC's Volunteer Services held its quarterly VA/VS meeting by teleconference on April 9th; Doc Maher and Ken Rose both participated.

** If you want to make donations, visit their website for suggestions, and please call Jennifer Lilly, their VS Chief, for ideas and directions. Right now they're asking for donations by way of David's Drive (<https://dd831.org>) to support the provision of bags of food to help needy Veterans' families.

Of Interest/Good of the Chapter: ** The VA and its partners FDA, NIH 3D Print Exchange, and America Makes) are developing a responsive network of 3D printing manufacturers who use effective, validated PPE design, to determine safety and effectiveness, and set the standards and help solve the supply chain deficiencies. ** The VA has posted 4 pages of Tips for Caregiving During COVID-19. Visit caregiver.va.gov/pdfs/CSP-Caregiving-During-COVID-19-Tip-Sheet-Apr2020.pdf.

Their support line is 1-855-260-3274.

** The April 8th PA DMVA Digest reports the VA is extending financial benefits and claims relief to veterans. Visit va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5412.

** Eligible Veterans can now receive a free Portal from Facebook video calling devices thanks to a partnership between Facebook and the ARC Military Veterans Caregiver Network, to help reduce isolation and improve social connectivity and morale. Eligibility includes Veterans and families in VA's Office of Caregiver Support Program, VA's Geriatric Service and Extended care program, or individuals identified by a VA provider as at-risk for suicide. Go to blogs.va.gov/VAntage and key in "Free Facebook Portal."

** If you're stuck inside and having "Cabin Fever" go to the same VA Blog site and key in "free books at Project Gutenberg."

www.vva436.org: for updates & meetings minutes.



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[Address label here](#)