



Mike Voth Memorial

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter #5

Eau Claire, WI 54702

January 2017 Newsletter

Meetings held 1st Wednesday of every month @ 7pm at

VFW Post #7232, 2900 W. Folsom St., Eau Claire, WI



Volume 3 Issue 1

Editor – Julie McBee

Asst. Editor – Dennis Wood

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 01/04/17 Chapter Meeting @ 7pm @ Post 7232
01/07/14 Chapter Christmas Party @ Pizza Ranch
@ 2451 Truax Blvd from 5-8:30 pm
Cost is \$12 per person

CHAPTER CONTACTS

- President Mike Korger 715-726-3918
VP Larry Wrycza 715-402-0106
Treasurer Joe Heil 715-839-7089
Secretary Roger Schuh 715-926-6052
Chaplain Dennis Werlein 715-577-8514

BOARD of DIRECTORS

- Joe Graff 715-579-0912
Ken Lestrud 715-235-9432
Ralph Ottum 715-223-6260
Rory Schutte 715-563-1583
Ernie Werlein 715-926-4222

COMMITTEES

- Veterans Assistance: John Dorsey 715-835-5055
Finance: Joe Heil 715-839-7089
Outdoor Recreation: Bill Anderson 715-530-3481
EC City Veterans Memorial: Dan Ziegler 715-559-5158
Govt. Affairs: Bob Laguban 651-285-8518
Membership: Joe Heil 715-839-7089
Public Affairs: Joe Graff 715-579-0912
Minority Affairs: Roger Schuh 715-926-6052
Women Veterans: Julie McBee 715-202-0181
POW/MIA/Highground: Joe Graff 715-579-0912
Service Officer: Peter Breed 715-642-1246
Fundraising Chair: Larry Wrycza 715-402-0106
Fundraising Co-Chair: Julie McBee 715-202-0181
Scholarship: J. Graff, J. Heil, J. McBee, D. Werlein & L. Wrycza

Founding principle,

Vietnam Veterans of America
"Never again will one generation
of veterans abandon another."



God Bless All Veterans



“I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

To be given slow and deliberate, not a speed test!

Greetings,

A big THANK YOU to everyone who contributed time, talent and treasures in making 2016 a successful year of projects and activities for our VVA Chapter 5 and Veterans in general. Hopefully we are even more successful in the New Year.

It would be great if even more members stepped up to help plan the next Vietnam Veteran's Day, be on the Annual Fundraiser Committee, and be ready to help sell our raffle tickets, especially at the upcoming new season of county fairs and community activities. Let's keep our eyes and ears open for more ways to help and support all our fellow veterans.

I hope everyone had a blessed and peaceful Christmas and I hope you all have a Happy New Year!

I hope to see many of you at our next regular VVA Chapter 5 meeting at 7 pm on Wednesday, January 4th at VFW Post 7232 on Folsom St. on the west side of Eau Claire.

Hopefully many of you will be able to attend our own VVA Chapter 5 Christmas Party on Saturday, January 7th from 5 to 8:30 pm at the Pizza Ranch on Truax Blvd. across from Menard's West.

Mike Korger, President
VVA Chapter 5

VVA Meeting of 11/2/2016

Call to Order made followed with an opening prayer led by Chaplain Dennis Werlein followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by VP Larry Wrycza which was followed by a moment of silence.

Secretary's Report - President Mike Korger asked for a motion to accept the emailed report, Rory Schutte made the motion and Joe Heil seconded, motion carried.

Treasurer's Report - Joe Heil provided the numbers for the current funds available for the Chapter, with all looking well going into 2017. There are funds set aside for the Scholarship programs and Color Guard jackets. More research to be done in the near future on where to obtain those jackets. A Scholarship Committee meeting will be up and coming as well. Motion to accept by Rory Schutte, seconded by Joe Heil and motion carried.

President's Report – President Mike Korger spoke of a few items, including a Bowling Fundraiser in Neillsville at the end of January in which we could still use three or four more people on our team. He then went on to speak of Chapter 5's presence at the Regis High School Veterans Day event that was well attended. Also, a Committee needs to be formed with volunteers to help in areas of planning next year's Vietnam Veterans Day event, contact Mike if interested.

Vice President's Report – Larry Wrycza spoke of the Veterans Day event held at Regis High School with four members being involved with the Color Guard. There was a nice turnout at the event. He also provided information on the Fundraising Committee meeting which will be held in Colby at the VFW on December 14, 2016 at 1 pm. He wished everyone Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

NOTE: Joe Heil spoke of the Vets Council Meeting held on November 22nd and provided information in regards to there being plenty of Veterans Day events in the area to attend. More organization through the Patriotic Council may be done in order to cover more events. Next year there will also be an event at the North Star Middle School on the Saturday nearest the date in order to get more parents involved with attending. Member Douglas Farmer explained at the Delong School the Scouts were the flag bearers with local Representatives also in attendance.

National Meeting – None

State Council – This meeting was not attended due to unforeseen medical issues that came up for Joe's wife. There was an idea sent to Joe by the State Council on a fundraiser where drinking glasses are made with the logos of the Chapter and then sold to create some funding. This will be looked into further by the Chapter.

VA Benefits/Claims – Pete Breed spoke to the members in regards to a number of areas. First, he provided a listing of medical issues that could be suffered by Veterans due to contact with Agent Orange. Secondly, he readdressed the Long Term Services through a Veterans home cost for Vets with 70% disability adding that anyone with questions could speak to him about them.

Thirdly, he covered Cold War Medal information. From 1946-1991, you may receive a certificate, not a medal, from the military after filing an application with the correct service. Another company is offering medals at the cost of \$24.95 for the medal and ribbon. If you would like the additional miniature medal, it would be an extra \$6.00 cost. These medals are NOT allowed to be worn on uniforms as they are not given by the US Military branches. Fourth, he covered replacement of medals, awards and service accommodations. You can get these replaced free from the military one time. The address to find the information is www.archives.gov/veterans/replace-medals.html. He then spoke of the Readjustment counseling that is available from a local man that lives in Menomonie and works in Barron. This is funded through the VA and he believed the individual would come to a Chapter meeting if requested by the President. He added, "There are no BS answers given, this guy can help".

NOTE: Dennis Werlein spoke quickly to members stating "You need to watch your medical records". After being diagnosed with a cancer issues, he reviewed his medical records and found that he had been diagnosed with diabetes back in December of last year. If he had been aware of this back then, he would have made a filing to the VA for diabetes related to Agent Orange. He added again, "Watch your records and keep watching them carefully". Douglas Farmer then spoke briefly about the Tomah VA Dentist who may have infected hundreds of Veterans with Hep B, Hep C or HIV by using the same drill on his patients. This Dentist was turned in by his hygienist and has recently resigned. Blood tests are needed for anyone who has visited and used this Dentist. Douglas was disturbed by a few things that have been happening, including the fact they claim to be contacting all who may have been infected, yet he never received any contact by the VA. There is no counseling or testing for loved ones. They are telling Vets there is a slight chance of being infected. He also spoke of how they are refusing to name the Dentist that did this, and attempts to communicate with the local Representatives have not gotten any responses. "It feels like they just want to wash their hands of it" he added.

Minority Report – None

Membership Report – There are currently 144 members as of October 2016. Joe Heil then spoke of a letter received from National stating that there will be no more hard copies going out to the Chapters on membership. Starting January 2017, the roster will only be accessible by one person for the Chapter in an electronic format. Joe Heil will continue to stay on top of this for the Chapter.

Old Business – Veterans Home: Joe Heil provided a brief list of elected officers: Chairperson, Diane W., Secretary, Carol P., VP, Harry B., Treasurer, Leroy J., Assistant Treasurer, Ralph B., as well as three trustees, of which Joe Heil is one. The new officers will take over in January 2017. He reported the funds are holding well at the Home. A change in position at the Chapter for representatives was then completed. Going forward, Rory Schutte will be the permanent representative with Dennis Werlein being the alternative. Their next meeting will be on December 21, 2016. The combined Chapter 5 and DAV 21 Christmas Party at the home will be Friday, December 9th from 3-4:00 pm. Assistance with set-up at 2 pm would be helpful. Chapter 5 and DAV 21 will be splitting the costs for this event.

Highground Report - None

Logos/Clothing Report – Joe Heil spoke of his ordering more t-shirts, sweaters, hoodies and braids. He believes these items will be in around Christmastime.

New Business – Joe Heil discussed the Scholarships that the Chapter is involved with. A letter from CVTC was received asking if the Chapter was going to continue with scholarships in the future. This Scholarship had been limited to the Eau Claire are, but is now being looked at to extend the area to all of Eau Claire County. A \$750 scholarship goes to a nursing student with two \$500 scholarships available to high school students that have Vietnam Veteran relative per criteria. Pete Breed asked if Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans could be added to the list. This will be discussed in a future committee meeting.

VVA #5 Goals and Outreach – None

Fundraising Report – Larry Wrycza spoke in regards to the upcoming meeting on December 14th stating that the committee is looking at a rider lawnmower from John Deere after the start of 2017. A couple of televisions will be on the raffle, as well as a couple of Henry rifles again. A quilt and cash prizes are being discussed as well. More information will be provided after the meeting is held.

Chapter Elections – This is a formality as the Chapter has elections set every two years with 2016 being an election year for our Chapter.

Web Site – No contact made yet.

Communications – Joe Heil had several to discuss, starting with a “Thank You” letter from the Veterans home in regards to the Honor Flight funding received from the Chapter. A letter from VVA Chapter 101 was received asking for support in making a change at the National level for Article 1, Section 3 of the provisions. There are over 600 women that served in Vietnam in several areas with the Red Cross that should be eligible to join the group. They are called the “Donut Dollies”, and it is being researched to get them included into the Vietnam veterans Organization for their service. This is something that will be getting addressed at the next National Meeting this summer and Chapter 101 would like the support of the other Chapters for this project. Some discussion on this was brief with the Chapter and more research will be done by Joe Heil. The Eau Claire Veterans Council sent a letter with information for Hospice Care in Eau Claire and the Hudson area. “We Honor Vets” is a program that assists with Hospice visits to those who may need assistance. They are looking for any volunteers that would give time to a Veteran or their spouse at their home working through the Hospice program they are enrolled in. More information can be obtained online at www.interimhealthcare.com/hudson,wi www.interimhealthcare.com/eauclaire. Also received was a letter from the UWEC Continuing Education for an event being held June 6, 2017. Senior American Day is the Event and the UWEC is looking for sponsorships. A gold sponsorship would cost \$2K, silver would be \$350 and a bronze would cost \$75. This is something to discuss at the next meeting. Joe then spoke of

the costs associated with mailing 115 newsletters a month and the need for labels coming soon. Anyone interested in advertising on the newsletter may contact Joe for more details.

Good of the Order

UWEC Vets Club – a fundraiser is planned, but information has not been received yet.

NOTE: There was some great news provided by Joe Heil in regards to the DAV van. A donation of \$16K was received from ARDC to put a handicap lift on the van. This will be installed in Appleton and will change the passenger count from 12 to 8 plus wheelchairs. On February 20, 2017, an event will be held at the Eau Claire Ford dealership for everyone that donated to the van. The hope is that the van will be in operation sometime in February.

Chapter 5 Christmas Party will be held at the Pizza Ranch on January 7, 2017 starting at 5 pm. Any changes to this will be noted in updates through email. The cost per person is expected to be \$12. A few other locations were discussed by the members with the Pizza Ranch selected.

Meeting Dates for 2017 were provided by Joe Heil and will be given for the newsletter.

Attendance Drawing was won by Douglas Farm winning \$90 which he donated back to the Chapter for the Christmas Party. The 50/50 Drawing was won by Joe Heil who also donated back the \$8 to the Chapter.

In other news, Pete Breed wanted to inform the members that the VFW Unmet Needs program has funds to assist Veterans with their needs. A \$750 allotment can be received for a Veteran who may have costs that they need help with. This is for any Veteran with a DD214 and proof for a need. You can contact your local Chapter or the VFW for more information. He added that the Rifle Raffle brought in \$7,800 to this fund and the Eagle Club 4 Wheeler Raffle brought in \$16K, so there is plenty of money to help Veterans who have a need.

Joe Heil wants everyone to know that **Veteran wives who are caring for their Vet at home are eligible for assistance with costs. There is reimbursement through the VA for them. They can also get more assistance through their CVSO. "It is VERY IMPORTANT that the spouses know they can get assistance" added Joe.**

NOTE: Ralph Ottum gave information that the pamphlet that is given by John Schultz would have this information in it as well. Pete Breed added that a spouse of a DECEASED Vet can receive a \$750 benefit monthly as well.

There were 16 Members in attendance. Closing for the newsletter is December 23rd. Closing Prayer given by Dennis Werlein. Meeting adjourned at 9 pm. The next Chapter meeting will be January 4th, 2017 at Post 7232 beginning at 7 pm.



Norah Talford,
Granddaughter of Rick &
Kristina, daughter of Sgt.
Rick Talford, Deceased.



Color Guard at Veterans Day Program at Regis High School, from left to right, Mac McBee with American flag, Joe Heil with POW flag, Larry Wrycza with Vietnam Veterans flag and Rick Talford with Chapter 5 flag.



2016 Christmas Party at the Veterans Home in Chipewewa Falls. Kristina Talford assisting with food service and Santa's elves Rick Talford, Joe Graff and Dennis Werlein.

VVA Chapter #5
P.O. 832
Eau Claire, WI 54702

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