



Mike Healy Umpqua Valley

VVA Chapter 805 Newsletter

“Never Again Will One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another”



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September 2011

Vol 4 Issue 9

Next Chapter Meeting Monday September 5th 7:00 PM VA Auditorium , Building 16

News From the Flight Deck



By Rob O'Brien

VA Hospital Decision - A Mixed Bag

In August's newsletter I wrote that the VA seemed to be dragging its collective feet regarding the future of our VA hospital in Roseburg. Well, right after that newsletter came out, VA officials have made their decision. They have said that there will be no cutbacks or further reduction in services at this facility.

They will expand mental health services and build a new inpatient mental health building. There will be an additional dental clinic. There will be a new telemetry unit, which could, in a pinch serve as a temporary intensive care unit (ICU) if the need is there. A total of \$55 million dollars will be allocated for these and other related projects.

However, the ICU we had will not be restored. This had been the single biggest issue we had been fighting for over the last 2 years. VA officials have said that there may be

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Prez Notes

Report from the National Convention

Chapter President Tom Johnson

For Tom and Jane it has been a busy month. Family camping, and the 15th National Convention of the “Vietnam Veterans of America” in Reno Nevada August 17th through August the 20th. Your chapter was well represented this year. VVA members in attendance were Tom Johnson, Jane Johnson, Jim Little, Terry Mooney, and Phil Ferrone. The AVVA was represented by Linda and Chris Mooney, Carmen Little and Lynn Ferrone.

The convention was an adventure for all of us. I will try to capture the highlights and there will be more to follow in the months to come. The first day was a get your feet on the ground day. Jim and I registered and went to the delegate training on Tuesday, A real course in parliamentary procedure. We all went over the agenda for the convention to try to cover as much as we could. All can attend the convention, but only delegates can be on the floor and vote.

Some of the things we had to get to were the committee hearings of which many were happen-

ing at the same time. In addition there were the AVVA activities on going. Jane attended the Women Veterans hearings, Jim attended the Health Care hearings, Terry and Phil attended the Incarcerated Veterans, PTSD, and the Agent Orange Hearings, and I attended the Homeless and Government Affairs hearings. The hearings are to brief the resolutions the VVA is working on and any constitutional changes. We learned a lot and gained many contacts. I feel we will be bringing information to the chapter and many of the contacts will help us with that information. Many of these contacts will also help with our fight to keep the Roseburg VA Hospital open.

Wednesday and Thursday evenings Jim and I attended the Region 8 Caucus (Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming). The primary reason for the Caucus is to meet the candidates for the offices in the VVA. Thanks to Francis Rowen the Region 8 Director we were able to start some dialog

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AVVA Rep



Linda Mooney



Chair Rob O'Brien

Board member



Rick Sciapiti

Flight Deck

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an ICU put in place if the need arises. We believe though that if it was put there now, there would be patients and staffing as well.

In view of all of this, we will continue to fight for an ICU now.

The Traveling Wall

On July 25th, the Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall was escorted through Roseburg and through the VA hospital grounds. Police departments from Winston, Roseburg, Sutherlin were represented along with Oregon State troopers. Then came the truck carrying the wall, followed by drivers in antique cars, trucks and hot rods. Over 200 bikers were also part of this escort, including members of the Patriot Guard, Bikers for Christ, Rolling Thunder and others. It could have been

a parade, although they moved rather fast. The only thing missing were the marching bands (LOL). They were on their way to Sutherlin as part of that city's 100th birthday celebrations.

The Wall was set up on July 26th and was there from the 27th to 31st.

This Wall is 80% the size of the one in Washington DC, listing the names of those service men and women who died in Vietnam. Surviving Vietnam veterans and others placed memorial items at the foot of the wall in places where the names of the ones they knew. Even if one didn't know anyone who was listed on the wall we were there for those who did. Veterans were able to talk with one another about their issues, and the bonding between us was so incredible that it's really hard for me to write about this without a huge lump in my throat and close to tears.

There were other memorials and tributes as well. Memorials dedicated to the casualties of every conflict from the

over

Chapter Office Hours

Monday-Wed-
Thurs 10-Noon

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 805 is a tax exempt organization under the provisions of the IRS Code Section 501 (c) (19) Exemption # 3202 . The Newsletter is published monthly.

Chapter Committee Members

- ✓ Fundraiser : Chair Jack Miles, Gary Baxman
- ✓ Communication:
- ✓ Membership: Chair Gary Baxman, Stephen Dickinson, Valerie Williams
- ✓ Office Manager: Gary Baxman
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- ✓ Advertising: Terry Mooney, Rick Sciapiti
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- ✓ Avenue of Flags: Fred Becker
- ✓ Southern Oregon Stand Down : Rick Freund
- ✓ Women Veterans: Chair Jane Johnson
- ✓ AVVA Secretary: Patti Sciapiti
- ✓ AVVA Treasurer: Christy Mooney

Flight Deck

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Revolutionary War up to including the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Other memorials listed the names of those who lost their lives on Sept. 11, 2001. There were memorials honoring those who lost their lives in the line of duty as firefighters, law enforcement and other first responders. There were ceremonies and entertainment throughout the day while the memorials were here.

Hall of Heroes

At the site where the Wall and other memorials were, there was also a building used as a temporary Hall of Heroes honoring those from the Douglas County area who gave their lives in WWII, Korea, Vietnam and the current wars in Afghanistan and Iraq through photos and other memorabilia including uniforms, firearms and other items honoring each service person from here who fell during these conflicts.

The Field of Flags

Our chapter and the AVVA had the privilege of spearheading the Field of Flags project to coincide with the Traveling Wall in Sutherlin from July 26th - 31st. The field was laid out over about 1 acre on July 25th. On the 26th, about 75 people showed up to put the flags up. Over 1,500 flags were put up in less than 45 minutes. Security was provided by us and other people from Roseburg, Sutherlin and elsewhere. We were blessed by nature as a stiff breeze blew through the flags.

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AVVA Information

AVVA Meeting—Monday August 29th 6 PM Si Casa Flores Mexican Restaurant 780 NW Garden Valley Blvd. Roseburg

AVVA Representative: Linda Mooney

AVVA Secretary: Patti Sciapiti

AVVA Treasurer: Christy Mooney



Sutherlin's Traveling Wall Tribute & Field of Flags



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images from the Wall and the Field of Flags



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· WILLIAM JACKSON · MORGAN THOMAS
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· ROBERT G DANIEL · DALE W



Flight Deck

While this was at first a challenge to keep the poles from bending too far and having the flags touch the ground, the breeze made for a very spectacular sight as over 1,500 flags rippled and waved through the afternoons and evenings. The site was chosen to be as near the Traveling Wall as possible, but that was impractical for the kind of field needed. The site chosen could be seen from Northbound I-5 between exits 135 and 136 when the flags were installed.

Visitors came through out the 4 days to see these flags waving in the breeze. All who came to see this were visibly moved, some nearly moved to tears.

In addition, there was a tent housing a temporary makeshift museum containing uniforms, photos, stories, art and weapons from the Vietnam war era done by those who served there. There was also a display honoring the fallen. This was 2 rifles inverted with the helmets on top, and 2 pairs of boots in front, known as "A Field Cross". The backdrop was service flags from all the military branches. Overall, this is something that will not be forgotten by anyone who was there.



There will be another opportunity to see the Traveling Wall, September 21st - 25th in Lincoln City.

Other News

Remember - Stand Down will be in White City September 15th - 18th. Our chapter has allocated \$2,000 for this effort. Volunteers are needed as about 500 homeless or disadvantaged veterans and families are expected to show up for services such as dental work, eye exams and eyeglasses, employment counseling, substance abuse counseling, shelter and other services. Volunteering for this event is a very rewarding experience.

There will also be a one - day Stand Down on September 9th in Coos Bay from 10am -2pm.

VVA Officer Elections

This is very important. We need new officers this upcoming year. Most of our current officers are burned out or are moving away. Our by - laws now call for elections every year, terms starting at the January meetings. Candidates must be members in good standing, with VVA memberships current. Candidates must have been a member in good standing for at least 1 year and must meet other qualifications in accordance with chapter, state and national by - laws. See Gary Baxman to make sure your due's is paid up or your membership renewed if needed. We will have more information on the nominating process and officer job descriptions.

Also, we will be asking for phone numbers and addresses for all members who don't have email, so we can call you about meeting dates and other events. We will also need updated phone numbers and mailing addresses for all members. We send meeting announcements and other info online to those who have emails.

Meeting Highlights

Minutes of the August membership meeting will be available at the September meeting. That will be Monday, September 5th at 7pm at the VA Auditorium. See you all then.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be Monday, September 12th at the Library upstairs of the Auditorium at **6pm**.



Pictures of the "Field o Flags" above taken by JoAnn Compton-below from the I5 frontage road- Rick Sciapiti

VVA Convention update..continued from page 1

Notes from the Prez

about the Roseburg Hospital. On Thursday evening we were able to brief our region on what we have been doing for the past two years regarding the Roseburg VA. All the Delegates saw how the closing of the Roseburg VA Hospital to in patients could impact us all. We will be providing information to all the state councils about our cause.

The first morning of the convention our guest speaker was Richard Pimentel. Richard is a Vietnam Veteran who was wounded in the “beer bunker” during a mortar attack. As a Disabled Veteran he has worked hard to pass legislation for people with disabilities. Richard took us all on a roller coaster ride of emotions. Jim and I were both in tears. Some of those tears were of laughter and many of them were of sorrow. What an opening. **Richard’s life is depicted in the movie “Music Within”.**

Jim and I spent 3 days in the grid lock of a national convention as we listened to committee reports and voted on amendments and changes to the constitution. Some of the time leading up to the votes got rather heated at times.

Thursday Morning, the meeting was opened and Ken Fisher of the Fisher House Foundation and he was introduced by Medal of Honor Winner Paul Bucha. Paul earned his Medal of Honor while serving in Vietnam. We also were addressed by Cecil Roberts of West Virginia a Union guy that found his way out of the coal mines. Then we were addressed by the Secretary of Veterans Af-

fairs Eric Shinseki. Shinseki told us of all he is doing to create jobs, Veteran education, and Veteran Homelessness. He did not address anything about **Veteran’s Health Care. He did tell us about the new VA slogan, “I CARE” which stands for: Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence.**

Secretary Shinseki was escorted in and out under guard. Terry Mooney was outside when he left and was going to try to say “Hi from Roseburg”, but they put him in a limo and rushed him away. Terry was over in the conference room area a little later and saw the Secretary in a room and decided to see if he could talk to him. His body guards would not let Terry get close to the room. I guess they would send the Presidents Secret Service in mass if he ever did come to Roseburg.

After the elections on Friday and the run off elections Saturday morning John Rowan is still the President of the VVA, but the elections gave him many new members to his staff. The most shocking change that affects us is the Region 8 Board Member is no longer Francis Rowen. He lost to Tom Owen the State Council President from Oregon. We lost a real friend in Francis. Francis has really helped our chapter in the past. I will miss him and hope he will join our chapter. Thank you for all you have done for us Francis.

We all attended the Dinner Dance on Saturday evening. **Thanks to “Sailor” Terry’s recon** we found a table where we were

all able to sit together. It was a great finish to a successful mission. It was the first time we were all able to sit down together since the start of the convention. I am sure we are all brothers and sisters for ever

In two years the convention will **be in Florida. Let’s start a war** fund to get as many there as we can. You may ask, why I say that. Well, I think Jim Little said it best in his email to me today **when he wrote, “I’m still trying to** formulate my feelings and thoughts as the convention almost dissipated the bitterness and disappointment I have felt **since the end of the war!”**

We have much more information to get out to you all, but it will happen in future months and future meetings. Thank you to Jane, Jim, Carmen, Terry, Linda, Chris, Phil and Lynn for going to the convention and working so hard for our chapter. Also! Thank you to Chapter 805 for putting me in a position to attend **this year’s convention.**

Tom

