

News and Views

Volume 21 Issue 1 January 2019

A Publication of:

Vietnam Veterans of America Redwood

Empire Chapter 223

PO Box 1583, Santa Rosa, CA 95402 Meets at,

see below

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Membership Application for:  
Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter # 223

Membership is open to US armed forces veterans who served on active duty (for other than training purposes) in the Republic of Vietnam between February 28, 1961 and May 7, 1975, or in any duty location between August 5, 1964, and May 7, 1975.

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NEWS AND VIEWS



Volume 21 Issue 1 JANUARY 2019

PLEASE SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH OTHER VETERANS



We are off to a New Year. The beginning of this article is the one that should have been printed in our December newsletter. I made a mistake and sent an old December article. This year Barbara Burke will be editing and overseeing our newsletter. I wish her the best and hope everyone will give her all the assistance she will need.

This last year has been both happy and sad. We have lost some very active and involved members and some that have not been able to be as active. This is also the last newsletter that Sonja will be the editor of and will be turning the mission over to the next editor. I cannot say enough how much I appreciate and thank her for the temporary job she has done. I think she has done an outstanding job but just cannot keep it up because of health reasons. She did tell me that it would just be temporary, and it has been over three years. I hope that the next editor will get at least as much help as you have given Sonja. I still feel that putting out our newsletter is one of the most important things we do. We need to keep our members informed of what we have done and what we are planning.

We will be holding another BBQ in the park at the end of March. Information will be in future newsletters. We will also have a Town Hall meeting with the VA on May 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss our health care and how it can be improved. They do listen to us and have made changes that we have recommended. We also sit on the Veteran and Family Advisory committee at the clinic and tell them monthly what our members and other veterans are saying about our clinic. The coffee cart is always a lead item. They love it and thank the members that volunteer there. The volunteers have a calming effect on the veterans coming in and leaving as well as providing donuts for the doctors. They like them and say we should not give them to the veterans with diabetes.

Let us all make an extra effort to become involved in the chapter activities in the coming year. With the numbers that are passing or just moving away we will soon be losing the reason we came together to start with. When we can sit and talk about our today and our tomorrow and not let our yesterday disrupt it to the extent that we cannot function, we can be as close to whole as we can get. This is something we need to pass on to the following generations of veterans. Life is worth living and being around others is not as bad as we once thought. We can keep standing up and speaking to the people elected to represent us and still treat each as a civil partner in life. We have made some remarkable changes in the lives of people we do not know, as well as the ones we do. We still have a long way to go but I do not think it is all uphill anymore.

As of this month there will no longer be one-year memberships. All future memberships will be for life and will cost \$50. The reasons behind this are with the number of one-year members it is not cost effective to have a staff sending out reminders. In our chapter we have 293 members and only 21 are one-year members. We can assist any member that has a hardship with the cost of a life membership. Just contact Witt Paterson or any of the board members and we can work it out.

On to the New Year- we are planning with the congressmembers to have a Town Hall meeting so they can listen to what we have to say. We will encourage all to start thinking about what you would like to ask or comment on. We do not have a firm date at this time. We have an advantage over a lot of areas by having the ear of our members of congress and the leadership of our local VA. We need to make sure we keep our local elected officials informed of these meetings. They can gain a lot from listening to us.

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Veterans Building:	Lou Nuñez
Website:	Elizabeth O'Gara

Contributors to the News and Views: Ken Holybee, Kate O'Hare-Palmer. Thanks to all. Would like to see more articles next month. Support the chapter. I don't write articles, I just put it together. There are a lot of interesting stories out there, send

Notice

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of VVA,INC., National, State or Chapter 223 or the newsletter staff, but those of the corresponding party. All articles by the Chapter have permission for reprint in all Vietnam Veterans of America newsletters. Anything else permission must come from the original source.

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9/19

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6/19



.. What The F..?

KWTF.net "Roots of Rock"

Saturdays @ 0800 am

Requests & Dedications

Rock it Man@ mcn .org

...Be There

1/2019





## WELCOME HOME VETERANS DAY



VVA 223 AND AMVETS POST 40 ARE HAVING A BBQ



**SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 2019**

**Time: 1:00 THRU 4:00 P.M.**

**LOCATION: HOWARTH PARK (NEAR THE BOAT LAUNCH)**

**HAMBURGERS AND HOT DOGS  
CHIPS, CHILI BEANS & DRINKS**

**ALL FREE, BUT DONATIONS ARE ACCEPTED**

**ALL VETERANS AND FAMILIES ARE INVITED, TO OUR SECOND ANNUAL BBQ**

**A GOOD TIME FOR ALL TO GET TOGETHER.**

**IT'S A SOCIAL EVENT JOIN US, CHAT AND HAVE SOME FUN AT THE  
PARK WITH YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS.**

**VVA 223 and AMVETS Post 40 continues to work, proceeds continue  
to help Veterans and their families.**

**VVA Chapter 223 is 501(c) 19 Non-Profit Veterans Corporation  
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### **BOARD MEETING -SILVER SPRING, MD.**

It is the beginning of the year and it started with a freezing weather front back East. The temperatures dropped to 19 degrees and most of us rushed to get away Saturday before the snow storm closed the airports.

This meeting has a format of all committees meeting during their breakout sessions plus some time meeting with the whole BOD for special topics. We had the honor of having members of the Korean Veterans Association join us on Saturday morning. They were the largest allied troops that fought during the Vietnam war with over 350,000 serving. They lost 5,000 soldiers during the war. The BOD reports can be reviewed in the quarterly The Veteran. I went to some of the committee meetings and will give a brief review below.

#### **The Veterans against Drugs committee-**

Illicit drug use in the US has been increasing and the justice system is overwhelmed. There needs to be more drug treatment programs and overdose prevention sites. Oxycodone while driving is a difficult DUI case to prove because there isn't a standard established for levels of opiate used when operating a vehicle, even though this is an increasing problem. GHB is a club drug that depresses the central nervous system and can become addictive. Fentanyl is a powerful synthetic opioid analgesic that is similar to morphine but is 50-100 times more potent. It is a Schedule II prescription drug and street names are: Apache, China Girl, China White, Dance Fever, Friend, Goodfella, Jackpot, Murder 8, TNT, Tango, and Cash. It is the leading of all drug death in America. January is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. There are an estimate 25 million victims of human trafficking worldwide. The committee had a presentation from an organization, "Just Ask" that was started in Virginia to help stop the taking of teens into the trafficking world. You can go on line to read more about this program.

**Membership-**we are currently above 80,000 members and are transitioning to life membership at \$50 for any member. The goal of 85,000 members by the Spokane National convention this summer looks good.

**Homeless-** the committee is looking for a homeless program in Spokane to spotlight with the AVVA Project Friendship program for the Spokane convention. The Homeless department of the VA has been moved over to OPA and the HUD website is shutdown for now. The HUD/VASH program is protected by law but the December report hasn't come out and it may be related to the forced Government Furlough. The homeless count figures show nearly 55% being 62y.o. or older and the need for geriatric care is becoming a necessity. The VA requirements for admission to the VA nursing homes prohibits many who need this service from being considered. Keeping our aging veterans housed and off the streets must be addressed by, not only the VA, but non-profits across the county.

**Agent Orange and Constitution Committee-** Ken.

**Women Veterans-** the VVA Women Veterans Reception in November celebrating the 25 Anniversary of the VN Women's Memorial was a great success. The speakers included: John Rowan, Diane Carlson Evans(founder of the VN Womens Memorial), Marsha Four(VVA V.P), Dr. Linda Schwartz(former Women Veteran Comm. Ch., Former undersecretary of VA-Planning) Joan Furey(former VVA Women Veteran Comm. Ch.) We presented a small replica statue of the VN Women's Memorial with the 5 service coins and our VVA 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary coin and our Women Veterans Honor coin attached to the Vice President General of the Daughters of the American Revolution.(where the event was held) There were some great stories told of the creating of the statue, women's service during the Vietnam War, and the bonds that were cemented because of their service.

**Veterans Benefits-**The Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) has proposed implementing deadlines to VSO's written briefs. VSO written briefs are where we make legal arguments and submit additional evidence on behalf of VVA represented veterans. If VVA is unable to meet deadlines, a BVA judge will decide an appeal without a written brief from the Veterans VSO. Applying deadlines for written briefs this early in the new appeals process would be impractical and unreasonable. John Rowan, VVA President, wrote a letter to the Board of Appeals seeking to ensure that

the Appeals Modernization Act is implemented in a pro-veteran manner and is not adversarial. The Veterans Benefits Program continues to achieve a “win rate” at around 80%. There has been a large influx of cases from veterans around the country, however, and VVA cases are still being held up by our office, not the VA. They need more staff.

**Government Affairs**-one third of the Federal Workers on Furlough are veterans. The president is signing a retroactive pay order. The Blue water Navy Bills,HR403 and HR 299(includes Thailand and Korea)are still a priority. Call your representatives. The Cold War seems to be back. Kris Goldsmith, our Iraq war vet who works with Government affairs, has been following up on the fake VVA webpage that he discovered in August of 2017. Our organization was able to shut it down. However, there are now other fake Veterans pages on Facebook, Twitter, and Redix. The cybersecurity is lagging behind. These fake pages get you in as followers and then if you add your service photos they are stealing them and adding them to other websites. The intent is still unclear. It may be to sprinkle in political propaganda in its newsfeeds over time or it also is selling bogus veteran products(i.e. t-shirts) Kris has followed some of these back to eastern European areas. He has been working with NCIS on this. Be careful on what information you put out on the internet. The committee is going to develop one page “talking points” to be available to VVA members for help when they are talking to their congressmen and representatives about veteran related bills.

Until next time.....Kate O’Hare-Palmer

JOHN ZANE-MICHAEL WOLFF VETERANS VILLAGE DEDICATION. 12.21.18

665 RUSSELL AVENUE, SANTA ROSA, CA.

The Community Housing Sonoma County group held its dedication for the Veterans 14 tiny houses Village located between the county offices and Kaiser hospital. This village is employing the latest in small carbon-footprint building and technologies to reduce utility costs in addition to making each unit more environmentally friendly. Each unit is 250 sq.ft with a common laundry area, common room, and outdoor

future garden and gathering areas. The CHSC worked to secure the 1.8 million dollars funding and helped build a coalition of public officials and private businesses to help move this project along. The project is still \$200,000 short of final funding and there is a GO FUND ME page up for donors. The veterans are scheduled to move in on the third week of January 2019.

The men that the village is named after are: The contractor, Michael Wolff of Wolff Contracting, who is an Iraq war veteran. He is a Petaluma native. He earned his AS degree from Santa Rosa JC in 1998 and then enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps. He was assigned to a communications company where he built communication networks. In 2001, he left active duty and he remained in the USMC Reserves. He earned a BA degree from Sonoma State while resuming construction work. Michael was called back to active duty in 2008, went to Iraq, and returned home in 2010 to open Wolff Construction. He was enthusiastic about starting this project. He managed to gain the generous contributions of many subcontractors, consultants, and suppliers to get this project finished.

John Zane, 3<sup>rd</sup> District Sonoma County Supervisor Shirlee Zane’s father, was a Marine Aviator during WWII. He flew 22 missions during the war and then went to College at Georgia Tech. He then worked for McDonnell-Douglas as an Aeronautical Engineer in Long Beach, CA. He eventually managed a team to work on building spy satellites. He also served as one of the first parks commissioners in Chino Hills, CA.

The backbone of the project include: Congressman Mike Thompson, CA 5<sup>th</sup> District, Supervisor Shirlee Zane, Yohan Morgan, Senior Project Manager, Community Housing Sonoma County, Michael Wolff, and Paula Cook, Executive Director, Community Housing Sonoma County.

The statistics of homelessness in the United States vary depending on who’s counting. The annual “point count” is taken on a night in January each year. This is when people go out and count the people that are sheltered on the streets in the middle of the night across the United States. There are 6.9% of the homeless people that are veterans. Women Veterans have had a 10x increase in homelessness over the last eight

February 2019						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	Poker Night Helpers 4 pm
3	4	5	6	7 Continuum Care Mtg	8	9
10	11	12 Board Mtg 1 pm	13	14 Food Program 8-10 am	15	16
17	18	19 General Mtg 6 pm Pot Luck 7 m Meeting	20	21	22	23 Newsletter articles due
24	25	26	27 United Veterans Council 1-4 pm	28 Newsletter Folding 10 am		



January 2019						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3 Continuum Care Meeting	4	5 Poker Night Helpers 4 pm
6	7	8 Board Mtg 1pm	9	10 Food Program 8-10 am	11	12
13	14	15 General Mtg. 7 pm Pot Luck 6pm	16	17	18	19 Newsletter Articles Due
20	21	22	23 United Veterans Council 7pm	24 Newsletter Folding 10 am	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

years. Those that are “couch surfing” or staying with friends are obviously not counted. 10,836 of all U.S. homeless veterans are found in California. 200 homeless veterans reside in Sonoma County.\*

Kate O’Hare-Palmer

\*Sonoma Co. Community Development Commission 2018 Point-in-time Homeless County And Survey. July 2018



Veterans Village



Ken Holybee, Paula Cook ,Exec Dir, Kate O’Hare-Palmer



## SCHOLARSHIPS FOR MILITARY CHILDREN: DEC. 14 START DATE FOR NEW APPLICATIONS; PROCESS ALL ONLINE

Note: To watch a video on DeCA's YouTube page related to Scholarships for Military Children, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YbJrphCfYBY>.

FORT LEE, VA. – The Scholarships for Military Children Program for school year 2019 – 2020 kicks off Dec. 14, and continues accepting applications through Feb. 15.

This marks the first time the entry process will happen entirely online according to Jim Weiskopf, Fisher House vice president. “It will be simple to create an account, save your work and submit your application when finalized,” he explained. “The online process will make it easier for military children to reach their education goals.”

The program, entering its 19<sup>th</sup> year, recognizes the contributions of military families to the readiness of the fighting force and celebrates the commissary's role in enhancing military quality of life. It's administered by Fisher House Foundation, a nonprofit organization that helps service members and their families.

Thus far, the program has awarded more than \$18 million to 10,814 students.

Selection qualifications are straightforward. Requirements include completing the application; submission of the student's official transcript indicating a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above on a 4.0 scale for high school applicants, or college transcript indicating a cumulative minimum GPA of 2.5 or above on a 4.0 scale for students already enrolled in college; and an essay of 500 words or less, no longer than two pages.

Eligibility for the program is determined using the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System database. Applicants should ensure that they, as well as their sponsor, are enrolled in the DEERS database and have a current military dependent ID card. The applicant must also be planning to attend or already be attending an accredited college or university, full time,

in the fall of 2019 or be enrolled in a program of studies designed to transfer directly into a four-year program.

Applicants who are awarded a full scholarship to attend a college or university or receive an appointment to one of the military academies or affiliated preparatory schools are not eligible to receive funds from this program. A full scholarship is usually defined as one that provides for payment of tuition, books, lab fees and other expenses.

For scholarship year 2019-20, Fisher House Foundation will award 500 scholarship grants of \$2,000 each.

The selection process will begin immediately following receipt of all applications in February. “It will be exciting to see the increase in the applications with the new online submission,” said Marye Dobson, the Defense Commissary Agency's scholarships program liaison.

“I believe online submissions will attract more potential recipients as this method is right in line with the way many students attend classes, complete school work, and live their everyday lives.”

All rules and requirements for the program, as well as links to frequently asked questions are available at the Scholarships for Military Children website.

Fisher House also recently added an additional custom scholarship search engine to the site, tailored to military families, called “Scholarships for Service.”

It's free, easy to use, and available on mobile devices or computers at [militaryscholar.org](http://militaryscholar.org).

: Public affairs specialist (media relations) Defense Commissary Agency Fort Lee VA 23801 Kevin L. Robinson: Email: [mail-to:kevin.robinson@deca.mil](mailto:mail-to:kevin.robinson@deca.mil) , Phone: (804) 734-8000 ext. 4-8773

## Christmas Party 2018

