



Vietnam Veterans of America of Northeast South Dakota

(Vietnam and Vietnam Era Veterans)

Chapter 1054

PO Box 1062, Watertown, SD 57201
605-881-9027 or 605-753-0200

Meetings held on the 3rd Thursday of each month:
7 pm at the Elk's Lodge, 300 West Kemp St., Watertown, SD

Email: vets@NESDVVA.org Website: www.NESDVVA.org March/April 2020



Message from Phil,

Hello again, I am filling in for our President Jack Kempter, who continues to under go chemo and radiation treatments for cancer. Jack says to say Hi to everyone, and that he is feeling good and the doctors say the cancer is in regression.

He also says to tell everyone he is anxious to get back to the meetings and comradeship of all the members in the club. He also thanks all those who have supported him through thoughts and prayers. Jack, we will keep those prayers, thoughts and hope coming to you as you certainly deserve them.

These next two months will be busy for Chapter 1054. We have the Elk hunt ticket sales to get on top of and we need everyone selling them. We also have the Gun Show on the 21st and 22nd of March. Randy Holiday needs volunteers to sell tickets at the show. Call him at 605-881-1601.

The chapter is also getting ready for the annual elections. This year we need volunteers for three officers, President, Senior VP and Junior VP, plus 3 board members. If you want to service in one of these capacities contact Jerry Denman, our Election Committee Chairman. If you want to run for one of the incumbent positions (Secretary or Treasurer) throw you hat in the ring, the more participants the better for the club.

Our Chapter can only grow and do better the more members get involved. WE ARE THE VVA IN SOUTH DAKOTA and it is all due to you members, remember and take pride in that. Today I had a meeting with some Veterans and they all asked, How do you do all you do as an organization? I said it is because we have a mission to help our fellow veterans, and we are dedicated to our mission, we remember still, things that happened to returning Military personnel and we swore a silent oath that we would never let that happen again under our watch! We have not failed our oath or our mission, and we will not fail! Remember we were (and still are) the Best they had!

Well I have talked enough, Pat and I are going to take a couple weeks or so off to go to Utah and see our son Todd and then drift back probably through Arizona and New Mexico, stop in Wichita and see our son Lee before we head back home. Please try and welcome us back with NO SNOW!

Senior Vice President
Phil Braeger



**Thank you
from our
Canadian
Comrades**

Well Gordie you lit another fire! Without you that fabulous event would not have happened and we can never thank you enough.

Chapter 1054's donation to our Memorial Wall is sincerely appreciated. That was the best "Welcome Home" we have ever had and the friendships and bonds that were made will last forever.

Wishing you and all our brothers in Watertown all the best in the coming new year.

Till we Meet Again! Rob Puryis

VVA Board of Directors:

President: Jack Kempter, Waubay 881-9027
Vice President Phil Braeger, Wtn 881-6782
Second Vice Pres. Darrell Berning, Wilmot 237-9754
Secretary Mary Modica, Wtn 605-868-4577
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Board Members:

Jerry Denman, Wtn 605-880-3630
Jim Strom, Clear Lake 253-677-0821
Randy Holiday, Hayti 605-881-1601
Bob Syring, Willow Lake 605-625-5010
Glen Folk, Milbank,
Ed Timm, Elkton 605-695-2960
Dean Halajian, Wtn 605-882-2678
Floyd Hermans, Milbank 880-2711
Chapter 1054 Chaplain Don Zafft, Estelline
605-873-2312

Please support the following businesses that are supporting us.



**Note from
Dr. Sneden**

The Watertown VA Outpatient Clinic is looking for reliable volunteers to help man the lobby during peak business hours.

The duties will include assisting Veterans in the lobby with using the Kiosk for checking in, helping with coffee and refreshments, and directing patients when their name is called. We are looking for 5 to 7 volunteers to cover the morning shift from 8-11 Mon thru Friday and 1-3 on Tuesday and Wednesday for Audiology clinic.

Volunteers must go through a security process as they will have access to patient information at the kiosk. Please have any interested parties contact the VA in Sioux Falls to start the process. This is a very rewarding experience for those who have done it in the past.

If interested email the Volunteer Services Coordinator in Sioux Falls at VHASUXVOLUNTARY@va.gov
Please distribute widely to all who are interested.

Dr. John Sneden

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Address Changes.....
If you have recently moved could you please drop us a note with your new address...either to k_solberg@yahoo.com or VVA Newsletter
323 1st Ave NE Watertown, SD 57201

You're Invited!

The family of Jerome Waite is having a birthday party for him on March 22nd at the Fireside Room from 1:30-3:30 pm in Jenkins Living Center. Please stop by for cake and to wish Jerome Happy Birthday.

VVA Chapter 1054 had a booth at the Brookings Gun Show

A special thank you to the following for helping us at the Gun Show in Feb. We sold over 3500 tickets.

Randy Holiday, Chair, Phil Braeger, Gordy West, Jerry Denman, Richard Overby, Dean Halajian, Larry Longstreet, John Goebel and Bob Syring. We appreciated your help and support.



The Last Call of the Bugle

If you have ever been to a military funeral in which taps was played: this brings out a new meaning of it.

We in the United States have all heard the haunting song, "Taps....." It's the song that gives us the lump in our throats and usually tears in our eyes. But, do you know the story behind the song? If not, I think you will be interested to find out.

Reportedly, it all began in 1862 during the Civil War, when Union Army Captain Robert Elli was with Harrison's Landing in Virginia. The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land. During the night, captain Elli heard the moans of a soldier who lay severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention. Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment. When the captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead.

The Captain lit a lantern and suddenly caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier. It was his own son. The boy had been studying music in the south when the war broke out. Without telling his father, the boy enlisted in the confederate Army. The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial, despite his enemy status. His request was only partially granted.

The Captain had asked if he could have a group of army band members play a funeral dirge for his son at the funeral.

The request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate. But, out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him only one musician.

The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform. This wish was granted.

The words are: Day is done. Gone the sun....
From the lakes....From the hills....From the sky
All is well....Safely rest....God is nigh.

Watertown Winter Farm Show



The Chamber of Commerce again requested the VVA Color Guard to kick off this years Winter Farm Show. The above represented us by displaying our colors: Darwin Clyde, Connie Miller, Jerry Denman, and Greg Dubois.

Watertown Home Show



The VVA members had a booth at the Watertown Home Show to sell Elk Hunt tickets and to let share with others about our organization. Above is Randy Holiday, Dean Halajian and Roger Skatvold. Others that worked were Darrell Boyle, John Goebel, Earl Grover, Connie Miller, and Gordy West. We hope we have not missed anyone and appreciate your help on making this fund raiser such a success for our club.

Fading light.....Dims the sight.....And a star....
Gems the sky....Gleaming bright....From afar...
Drawing nigh....Falls the night.

Thanks and praise....For our days....
Neath the sun.....Neath the stars....Neath the
sky....As we go....This we know....God is nigh.
Remember those Lost and Harmed While
serving their Country.



Nomination Committee looking for Officers and Board Members

Jerry Denman is chairing the Nomination Committee for this years election of Officers

April will be the month for Election of Officers. All the officers positions along with 3 board members will be elected at our April Meeting. The Nomination Committee includes Jerry Denman, Herb Carstens, Bob Frink and Bob Syring. Contact any of them if you are interested in serving.

Appreciation Plaque presented to Bob Syring



A plaque was presented to Bob Syring, Willow Lake, for his help with our club. Bob is a member of the board, has written several grants for the club, helped with many of the projects such as flag day, funerals, color guards and many others. Thank you Bob for what you do for our organization.

VA's Expanding Use of TeleHealth Care

The use of the Department of Veteran's Affairs telehealth services rose 17% in one year, with 900,000 veterans opting to get care that way. That equated to 2.6 million instances of care in one year. Some of the stats are impressive.

The use of the app, VA Video Connect, rose by a whopping 235% in the past year, and more than 99,000 veterans opted to use it from home. Over 200,000 appointments were for mental health telehealth appointments.

We have a lot of choices for how we get our care, with more coming. Whether we want to go in person, talk on the phone or have a video visit, it's available. By the end of 2020, every mental health and primary care provider will be able to communicate with patients in all these ways.

The VA is trying to consider all circumstances: If you have a poor internet connection at home, it's opening other locations as tests sites, such as VFW Posts and American Legion halls, as well as Walmart stores, using ATLAS (Accessing Telehealth through Local Areas Stations). More will open as time goes on.

It's all a result of the Anywhere to Anywhere initiative. Before this was enacted, doctors couldn't legally treat patients with telehealth across state lines. Veterans in rural areas, or near state lines, were having to go long distances for in-person care.

If you want to explore using telehealth on your electronic device, go online to mobile.va.gov/app/va-video-connect. Scroll to the yellow note and use it to test whether your device is compatible with the VA Video Connect app.

There's an FAQ and how to demo videos. If you run into a snag trying to set up the app or a connection, call 866-651-3180 Monday through Saturday, 7 am to 11 pm ET.

To learn more about telehealth, go to telehealth.va.gov
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Color and Honor Guards

Chapter 1054 has several volunteers that help with funerals, ceremonies and special occasions. While we have featured the guys that help out in Watertown these two photos show the Milbank and NE area. Thank you for your service and for providing these services to Veterans in our area.



Paul Hermans, Tim Jurgens, Scott Malimanek VSO and Bill Totstenson



Al Burnham, Arlo Wellnitz, Bill Schumacher, Steve Strege, Floyd Hermans, Shawn Richards, and Darrell Boyle. Others not pictured are Glen Folk, Eugene Schmig, and Stephen and Annette Annet,

March is Women's History Month

March is a time to pay a tribute to all women who have served in the military and who are serving our nation now.

Somewhere around 265,000 women joined the military and served in Vietnam. Because there was no draft for the women, they volunteered to go to Vietnam so were considered volunteers rather than military personnel. Eight women were killed in Vietnam and are on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall.

More than 80% of the woman serving in Vietnam were nurses and medical personnel. Just south of the Vietnam Veterans wall stands a 15 foot nurses statue in Washington DC.

When several of the Vietnam Veterans visited the wall last September we also visited the nursing statue. A personal note was left there that said "I don't remember your name, but thank you for saving my life".

On our way to Washington DC last Sept. we were in O'Hare airport and had to walk a distance to catch our second leg of the trip to DC. There was a Y in the walk way. To make sure everyone took the left turn I stood in the fork to make sure we all stayed together.

I was standing with my Vietnam hat on and a guy came up to me and asked if I was a Vietnam Veteran, I said ye. He said he was also. He showed me his are that had bee very seriously injured, by a hand grenade and said "I met this nurse, I married that nurse, and we had four kids. It was all well worth it." I think it is a neat story. I know I have told this to several of you veterans but think of how he found the good in his service to our country.

We must not forget the women who were mothers, wives, sisters and daughters who were ones that kept the families together as their partner was off to war fighting for our country

We also need to thank those women who went to work at the factories, especially during World War II, when the factory workers enlisted to fight to save our country.

In March we salute all the women in our chapter and in the military for serving in your roles for our country.

Dennis Solberg



Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans

Monday March 30th
11:30-1:30 pm

Dakota Magic Casino Hankinson, ND

Michael J Fitzmaurice,
US Army Congressional
Medal of Honor Recipient Vietnam

Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate will be hosting a Vietnam Era Veteran and a guest of a meal, music and camaraderie; call 1-800-325-6825 to let them know you would like to attend. (the menu will be prime rib & fish, salad, potatoes & gravy & green beans & cake.



You're Invited!

The family of Jerome Waite is having a birthday party for him on March 22nd at the Fireside Room from 1:30-3:30 pm in Jenkins Living Center. Please stop by for cake and to wish Jerome Happy Birthday.

Vietnam Veterans hold Reunion at Dakota Sioux Casino in Watertown Mar 6, 7, & 8th.

Friday, Sat and Sunday Vietnam Veteran group will be meeting at Dakota Sioux for a reunion with speakers on Agent Orange. The get together starts on Friday evening and ends Sunday with a Memorial Service. Sat will involve speakers, dinner, auction and networking for all



Vietnam Veterans. For more information Contact Roger Papka 605-881-6142

Reminder: If you haven't sent in your application for Red Wilk honor at the State Fair please do so ASAP. Remember you must enclose a photo and your DD 214.

Each issue of the newsletter is downloaded to our website nesdvva.org for a copy in full color.

If a Veteran you know or a close relative of a veteran passes away please call Kay at 886-3040 to send the family a sympathy card on behalf of Chapter 1054.

March 2020

- 2 American Leg. Aux.
- 3 Cod Co Vets Council
- 4 Vets Council Radio Program
- 7 Milbank DAV
- 8 Daylight Savings Time
- 9 American Legion Riders
DAV monthly
- 11 VFW Aux.
Milbank VFW
- 12 American Legion
- 14 Corn Beef & Cabbage at VFW
- 16 **VVA Board Meeting in Milbank**
Marine Corp Aux
Sons of American Legion
- 17 St Patrick's Day
Milbank American Legion
Marine Corp.
- 18 VFW monthly meeting
- 19 1st Day of Spring
VVA Chapter Meeting
- 27 SD Vietnam Veterans Reunion
- 28 SD Vietnam Veterans Reunion
- 29 Ntl VVA Day
- 30 Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans
@Dakota Magic
- 31 Cod Co Vets Council

April 2020

- 1 Vets Council Radio Program
- 4 Milbank DAV
- 5 Palm Sunday
- 6 American Leg. Aux
- 8 VFW Aux
Milbank VFW
- 9 American Legion
- 10 Good Friday
- 12 Easter
- 13 **VVA Chapter Board in Wtn**
American Legion
DAV Mtg
- 15 VFW
- 16 VVA Monthly Meeting
- 20 Marine Corp. Aux
Sons of American Legion
- 21 Milbank American Legion
Marine Corp League



Greetings Brothers and Sisters:

By the time you get this reminder, we will be in the early days of Lenten season. 40 days for special prayers in our lives and especially for others who need God's Love.

This year Easter will come 9 days earlier than last year, are we going to be ready? We could be off guard by it coming early, so stop at least for for one hour, reflect on our lives and give some prayers to our Savior, thank Him for His love and the many blessings He's given to each of us and our families.

February 26th was Ash Wednesday. I spent an hour with my wife and the Lord in deep thought and prayer, rewarding and peaceful. It can be rewarding for you as well. For some it takes "stronger will power". Start with some small prayer and feel it grow in your heart, you'll see it really helps yourself to be a happier person, it will be a greater day.

Lenten season prayers are for preparation for Easter in remembrance of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus, our Savior. A reminder we should never forget, his love for us and in return, our love for Him.

Also we can not forget the many Veterans of all wars, especially our "brothers and sisters" of Vietnam who shed their blood for us. And other Americans so we may enjoy the blessings of Freedom.

Let's all enjoy Easter, April 12, with family and prayers for all. Here's a challenge to my "brothers", you be the one to lead the Easter dinner prayer.

Carry on....

Chaplain Don

Monthly Meeting Locations (alphabetical order)

American Legion-American Legion in Watertown
Codington County Veterans Council VFW Wtn
DAV American Legion in Watertown
Marine Corp League VFW in Watertown
Milbank American Legion American Leg in Milbank
Milbank DAV the American Legion Hall in Milbank
Milbank VFW VFW in Milbank
VFW VFW in Watertown
VVA Chapter 1054 Board of Directors Cliffords in Wtn
(1 st Mtg of the quarter) 1054 meets in Milbank
VVA Chapter 1054 monthly meeting Elk's Lodge
300 W Kemp 7 pm, 3rd Thursday of the Month

Application for Membership Chapter 1054

Name _____ Male _____ Female _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ work/cell phone _____

Branch of Service _____ Email _____

Type of Membership (Please check one)

_____ \$50 (Lifetime Membership) _____ AVVA Membership is \$175 for those under 60 years of age. AVVA Membership is \$100 for those over 60 years

Must submit copy of Drivers license.

Method _____ check _____ Money Order

_____ Credit Card _____ Mastercard _____ Visa _____ Discover

Credit Card Number _____

Exp. Date _____ Pin # on back _____

Signature _____

Eligibility: Membership is open to US Armed Forces Veterans who served on active duty (for other than training purposes) in the Republic of Vietnam between Feb. 28, 1961 and May 7, 1975 or any duty location between Aug. 5, 1964 & May 7, 1975. You must submit a copy of your DD-214 with this membership. VVA is a non-profit, Veterans service organization. Programs and services are funded by member dues and public donations.

Re-Up as a Life Member



William Appl and Harlan "Butch" Steen have been friends for years and been through a lot together. Below is a photo from their tour in Vietnam and above is their trip to DC this last Sept.



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Jim Dugan Co-Owner