



Vietnam Veterans of America
Sammy L. Davis Chapter 295



February 2021 Newsletter

Canceled: VVA 295 Board & Regular Meeting on February 10



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Meetings are the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm; Board Meeting 6:00pm

Newsletter Editor: Holly Tookolo If you have any information for the newsletter, the deadline is the last day of the month—email me: htookolo@indy.rr.com 317-844-3554 or cell 317-294-4607

VVA 295 Officers

President	Larry Shaw	comdshaw@yahoo.com	765-618-4067
Vice President	VACANT		
Secretary	Mike Dolan	michaedolan@prodigy.net	317-374-5578
Treasurer	Fred Bishop	fbishop89@gmail.com	765-621-5515
Chaplain	Robert Wright	gospelbobw@gmail.com	317-714-4618

Board of Directors

Steve Anderson	asteton@aol.com	317-431-9683
Ron Ayres	ron.ayers@att.net	317-319-6968
Rick Brown	rbrown46140@gmail.com	317-509-2022
Mike Hamm	indyhambone@sbcglobal.net	317-371-9833
Verne Hanson	ver61el.handon@comcast.net	317-439-7982
Steve Mabrey	spmabrey@comcast.net	317-459-6255
Don McFarland	dmac101@comcast.net	812-593-2554
Ken Walters	kennethgwalters@gmail.com	317-372-2231
Dennis Smalling	smallingindy@sbcglobal.net	317-313-1577

AVVA Liaison

Tony Gigli	Anthony.gigli@gmail.com	317-965-1976
Holly Tookolo	htookolo@indy.rr.com	317-294-4607

WARRIORS HOPE

Every Thursday evening at 6pm you will find John Smitha at the Fort Harrison Veteran Center leading and helping a group of veterans with fellowship. Coffee and donuts are usually available. All veterans are welcome. It is good to talk with other veterans. If you have questions, call John Smitha, 317-439-6304.



If

**Reminder: The Veteran Magazine is online at www.vvaveteran.org
The January/February issue is out there now. There is a good article about the Chapel of Four Chaplains.**

Important Dates

- Feb 2** Groundhog Day
- Feb 10** VVA 295 Board Meeting at 6pm; Regular meeting at 7pm-BOTH ARE CANCELED
- Feb 14** Valentine's Day
- Feb 15** President's Day
- March 10** VVA 295 Board Meeting at 6pm; Regular meeting at 7pm
- March 14** Daylight Saving Time Begins
- March 20** VVA Indiana State Council Meeting

THIS DATE IN HISTORY

- Feb 12, 1955** U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group takes over sole responsibility from the French for training and organizing the South Vietnamese army.
- Feb 2, 1962** The first U.S. Air Force plane is lost in South Vietnam. The C-123 aircraft crashes while spraying defoliant on a Viet Cong ambush site as part of Operation Ranch Hand.
- Feb 4, 1962** First U.S. helicopter is shot down in Vietnam. It was one of 15 helicopters ferrying ARVN troops into battle near the village of Hong My.
- Feb 1, 1965** A Cuban publication reports that Cubans are helping to train the Viet Cong.
- Feb 9, 1965** U.S. Marine Corps Hawk air defense missile battalion is deployed
- Feb 10-Mar 2, 1966** The U.S. 1st Infantry Division and a battalion from the Royal Australian Regiment conduct Operation Rolling Stone to provide security for road building crews working on highways in Bing Duong Province, III Corps.
- Feb 1-16, 1967** Nearly 10,000 U.S. troops from the 9th Infantry Division and 173rd Airborne Brigade launch Operation Big Spring, a drive against the 273rd VC Regiment in War Zone D, a Communist stronghold near the Cambodian border.
- Feb 14-21, 1967** Operation Tucson in Binh Duong Province, III Corps, masks the movement of the U.S. 1st Infantry Division in preparation for Operation Junction City.
- Feb 27-May 8, 1969** U.S. Marines conduct Operation Purple in Quang Tri Province, I Corps. The operation is aimed at driving North Vietnamese troops back across the DMZ..
- Feb 10, 1971** Four journalists, including Larry Burrows of Life Magazine, Kent Potter of UPI, Henri Huett of AP, and Keisaburo Shimamoto of Newsweek are killed in a South Vietnamese helicopter accident in Laos.
- Feb 19, 1972** Hanoi allows five U.S. airmen held in the North to send televised messages to their families from the International Club in Hanoi, in the presence of journalists and diplomats.
- Feb 12-27, 1973** The return of U.S. POW's as part of the peace settlement begins with North Vietnam's release of 142 of 587 U.S. prisoners at Hanoi's Gia Lam airport.



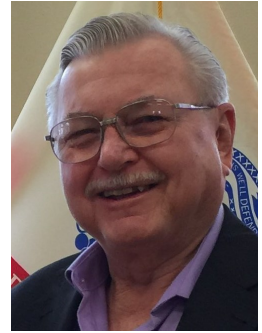
The Bunker

Hours 10am-2pm Sunday

Your purchases support VVA 295 and Fort Harrison Veterans Center. The Bunker ended up at VA for 6 weeks, January 4-February 12. Steve is still looking for another manager to help with the Bunker. Right now Steve and Wallace Vaughn take turns as manager at VA. Please consider volunteering or managing.. Steve 317-459-6255 or Holly 317-294-4607

President's Message:

Brothers and Sisters,



Hope this finds you well, and enjoying Indiana weather. If you can stay in, that's good. But, if you must go out, be careful. Watch out for ice. If you shovel, please do not over do, as we are not as young as we used to be. At least that is what I am told. If you are driving, make sure ALL of your windows and lights are clear. Not just so you can see where you are going, but what is coming at you as well. Plus it lets other drivers know what is coming at them. Do not speed, as you will not be able to stop if on ice or snow.

Due to Covid, and possibly Indiana weather, we have canceled this months February chapter meeting. Look for and read next months news letter, to see about our March meeting. But do not worry about the chapter as all mail is being opened, no matter how many months it takes to get here, phone messages are being checked, bills are being paid. Thank you Holly. Snow is being plowed. Thank you Tony. Service Officers are still helping veterans and their family's. The Bunker is still setup at the VA. going for a six (6) week stretch this time. (The VA. would like to have us there full time.)

Even though we are not meeting, that is just one (1) day a month to get you out of the house. Are you tired of sitting at home? Want to talk to other people? Need to get away from your mate, or family? Tired of the daily hum drum? Lonely? Well now, do we ever have a deal for you. You can meet new people, work with others, and help the chapter all at the same time. Volunteer to help Steve with the Bunker at the VA. the more people that we have, makes it easier on everyone. You can volunteer from one (1) day to a full week at a time. The hours are 7am to 3pm Monday through Friday. Unless you would like to be a Manager, then your hours are 6:30am to 3pm every day Monday through Friday. To EVERY ONE that has stepped up to help Steve and the Bunker, THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Not only is Steve still managing and keeping the Bunker supplied, but he signing up new members as well. Thank you Steve. This is something of which we all can strive to do; SIGN UP NEW MEMBERS. We should not look at this as a job, or chore. This is an honor of belonging that you can share with an other Brother or Sister. They could be your next door neighbor, store clerk, postal person, church member, member of an other club or organization that you belong to, or just someone that you meet on the street.

Do you feel that you live too far away to volunteer at the Bunker when it is at the VA.? Well Don drives over sixty (60) miles from the Southeast, Ron and I drive seventy (70) miles from the North. But we all enjoy the time spent there. But you can do things closer to home. Help a neighbor, your church, school, Homeless shelter, send care packages to those serving over seas. The list of things to do to help others as well as yourself is endless.

Life is only as good as we make it. If we stay alone, mope around, complain about every thing, and feel sorry for our selves then life will feel like it is dragging on for ever. But if we are cheerful, greet others with a smile, and a helping hand up, not out. Be a friend, to make a friend. It is easy to say things that are hurtful, and that can put people down. But it is also possible to say things that will build some one up, and help them to think better not only of themselves, but of you. To look good in our own eyes, we must look good in others. When some one thanks you for your service, it makes you feel good. Don't forget to pass it on to the veterans that you meet, and make them feel good also. Hold a door, buy a meal, let the other car go first. So many small things can help change a persons day, or way of thinking.

Valentines Day is this month. Share your love, not just this day but every day. After all you are an amazing person. Until we meet again either in person or by the news letter stay safe and well. May GOD bless AMERICA, out troops,, and you.


In Comradeship,

Larry Shaw
President VVA 295
765-618-4067, comdshaw@yahoo.com

IDVA Employee misuses state property and ghost employment

The Indiana Office of Inspector General received an anonymous complaint in December 2019 alleging an IDVA employee spent much of her workday using her state-issued computer to watch videos and take online surveys in exchange for money. An investigation by the state was conducted. IDVA suspended the employee without pay for misuse of state equipment and for personal gain while on state time, and required her to attend training upon her return. For the whole story and state's investigation report, click this link:

<https://www.wrtv.com/news/wrtv-investigates/veterans-affairs-director-responds-to-report-of-misuse-of-state-property-and-ghost-employment>



MilTax
FREE TAX SERVICES

TAX TIME IS HERE

This tax season, start with MilTax from Military OneSource and the Department of Defense. MilTax free tax services include tax prep and e-filing software and personalized support that address the realities of military life – deployments, combat and training pay, housing and rentals, multistate filings, living OCONUS and more. Other local resources are also listed below.

Military One Source
(800) 342-9647
<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/.../volunteer-income.../>

Holy Angels School
2822 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. St.
Indianapolis, IN 46208
(317) 926-5211
<https://indynaba.org/programs-committees/vita>

John Boner Neighborhood Centers
2236 E. 10th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46201
(317) 808-2393
<https://hbcc.org/.../financial.../free-tax-preparation.../>

Habitat for Humanity
3135 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46208
(317) 921-2121

VVA Service Officers

Dennis Smalling
317-313-1577
smallingindy@sbcglobal.net

Michael Dolan
317-374-5578
michaeledolan@prodigy.net

Food Drive for HVAF

Bring non-perishable food to the next meeting for HVAF (Hoosier Veterans Assistance Foundation) for the Veterans they are helping. What they need the most is canned meat & tuna, pasta and noodles. You can visit their website to see what they do. <http://www.hvafindiana.org/>

Roudebush VA Medical Center is needing volunteer drivers. Veterans Transportation Service provides Veterans a ride to their medical center or outlying clinic. This is a great way to help Veterans. To volunteer, visit or call Volunteer Services, 317-988-2734 or call driver Pat Parrish, 317-632-4263 (he's a VVA member).

HVAF needs volunteers. Volunteers help sort and stock donations that come to HVAF. They provide essential services to Veterans to help promote them towards self-sufficiency. Volunteers also beautify housing properties by raking leaves, painting and landscaping. Call 317-951-0688 or email hvaf@hvaf.org

Member Speaker Program at Meetings– Call Fred Bishop, 317-918-1142 to sign up.

Community Guest Speaker at Meetings

Call Larry Shaw to schedule a speaker from our community. 765-618-4067.

Program meant to heal brains of Indiana veterans fails to get fully off the ground

The state legislature appropriated \$1 million during the fiscal year 2018-19 biennium for the hyperbaric oxygen therapy program for veterans. WRTV has uncovered only \$272,000 of the \$1 million has actually been spent. Veterans with traumatic brain injuries and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can benefit from hyperbaric oxygen therapy, where patients are put in a chamber with two to three times the normal air pressure. Rep. Zent has filed HB1104 which would extend the hyperbaric oxygen therapy program for veterans through June 2025. The Senate has filed a similar bill, SB91.

For the whole story, click this link: <https://www.wrtv.com/news/wrtv-investigates/program-meant-to-heal-brains-of-indiana-veterans-fails-to-get-fully-off-the-ground-years-later>

Membership Report

As of December 31, 2020 the VVA membership total is 342.

I am sending in 2 new members 1-31-2021.

By Steve Anderson

AVVA membership total as of December 31, 2020 is 32.

By Holly Tookolo

Indiana HB1264 & SB316

The Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) has filed agency bills in the House (**HB1264**) and the Senate (**SB316**). **Citation Affected: IC 10-17-12;IC 21-14-4-6**

1. Removes financial hardship as a prerequisite for fund eligibility. (**Strongly Support**)
2. **Specifies disqualifying behavior for fund eligibility. See #note below.**
3. Removes a provision requiring service during wartime or a national conflict as a prerequisite for fund eligibility. (**Strongly Support**)
4. Removes a provision that prohibits service members with less than 12 months of service from receiving grants from the fund. (**Strongly Support**)
5. Removes a provision prohibiting the Indiana veterans' affairs commission from acting on an incomplete application. (**Support**)
6. **Provides that the department of veterans' affairs (department) may use not more than 15% of the monthly revenue generated by the fund for the purpose of paying administrative costs associated with the operation of the fund. See %note below.**

The disqualifying behavior for fund eligibility is the change in the Discharge Character of Service. Currently, the minimum Character of Service to be eligible for the MFRF fund in “**Under Honorable Conditions**” which is a General Discharge.

The IDVA proposed change is to change the Character of Service eligibility to “**Under Conditions Other Than Dishonorable**”. The “other than dishonorable” means a discharge from the military service without any record of the following:

- (1) A court martial.
- (2) The acceptance of an undesirable discharge to avoid trial by court martial.
- (3) Any offense against the security of the United States. Offenses under this subdivision include spying, mutiny, and treason.
- (4) A history of willful or persistent misconduct during active duty.
- (5) Any violent offense against another person. Offenses under this subdivision include assault, molestation, rape, and sexual perversion.

The major problem is, when you start making exceptions to a policy, it never ends. These funds should only be available to Honorably discharged Indiana Veterans.

% The 15% deduction from the fund for administrative cost is something that we strongly oppose. The funds collected from the Military and POW/MIA plates is to help our Indiana Veterans with financial hardships to get them through these difficult times. Especially during a pandemic. Governor Holcomb gave a directive to IDVA to cut their budget by 15%. This directive places IDVA in a position where they will be required to reduce and limit the support and services to our Indiana Veterans in need. Cutting the IDVA budget during a pandemic is the wrong thing to do and we must contact our Senators and Representatives to let them know that we **strongly disapprove the 15% administrative fee provision and the “Under Conditions Other Than Dishonorable” character of service provision in SB316 and HB1264. Please mention to the Senators and Representatives that reducing the IDVA budget during a State Pandemic is the wrong thing to do.**

Senator Bray (317-232-9416, senator.bray@iga.in.gov),

Senator Tomes (317-232-9414, senator.tomes@iga.in.gov),

Representative Huston (317-232-9651, H37@iga.in.gov) and

Representative Frye (317-234-9450, H67@iga.in.gov)

Every time we turn our heads the other way when we see the law flouted, when we tolerate what we know to be wrong, when we close our eyes and ears to the corrupt because we are too busy or too frightened, when we fail to speak up and speak out, we strike a blow against freedom, decency and justice.

~ Robert F. Kennedy



Invitation to All Indiana Area Special Forces Veterans to Join the **Hoosier Chapter** of the Special Forces Association

The **Hoosier State** inaugurated its only SFA Chapter in 2020! If you have ever served in or with the US Army Special Forces, we cordially invite you to apply for membership to the SFA and to our Chapter.



For the price of one cup of coffee a month, you can spend quality time with your SF brothers and rekindle old friendships while creating new ones. You'll network with like-minded men from across the state and surrounding areas who want the unique comradery of the Special Forces. Have a positive impact on the local community by participating in character building activities with local kids in need of strong role models. Participate in exciting chapter events, like various shooting ranges, boating, hiking, camping and even SCUBA trips.

The Special Forces Association is the largest special operations association in the world. Our members include active duty Green Berets, Army National Guard, veterans, and retired members and of the US Army Special Forces. The SFA serves as the Voice for the Special Forces Community; Perpetuates Special Forces Traditions and Brotherhood; Advances the Public Image of Special Forces; and Promotes the General Welfare of the Special Forces Community and the 1st Special Forces Regiment.

Visit our web site: www.SpecialForcesAC500.org to learn more and apply for membership!

Bunker Schedule at VA in Jan & Feb

Well, our schedule January at VA has turned into six (6) weeks at VA. Steve Mabrey and Wallace Vaughn taking turns being the manager for that week. Below is the schedule for the last two weeks. We could still use more volunteers. If you want to volunteer on Wed with Mike Dolan or Tue with Terri Anderson, let me know

Hours are 7am-3pm.

Managers get there about 6:30am.

Manager for week 5 is Wallace Vaughn

February 1 Andy Thimlar & Bob Parsons-all day
February 2 Terri Anderson-all day
February 3 Mike Dolan-all day
February 4 Larry Shaw & Ron Jones-all day
February 5 Don McFarland-all day, Ron Ayres-PM

Manager for week 6 is Steve Mabrey

February 8 Andy Thimlar & Bob Parsons-all day
February 9 Terri Anderson-all day
February 10 Mike Dolan-all day
February 11 Don McFarland-all day
February 12 Don McFarland-all day, Ron Ayres-PM

Thank you to all the volunteers.

Steve 317-459-6255; Holly 317-294-4607 or htookolo@indy.rr.com



Steve is still looking for a manager. If we could have several managers, they could take turns at the VA.