



**Vietnam Veterans of America  
Sammy L. Davis Chapter 295**



**April 2022 Newsletter**



- April 10 Palm Sunday
- April 15 Good Friday
- April 17 Easter



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'Twas Easter Sunday.  
 The full blossomed trees  
 Filled all the air with  
 Fragrance and with joy.  
 ~ Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

**He is Risen**

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Website: [www.vva295.com](http://www.vva295.com)

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](mailto:htookolo@indy.rr.com) or cell 317-294-4607

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## VVA 295 Officers

President	Larry Shaw	comdshaw@yahoo.com	765-618-4067
Vice President	Don McFarland	dmac101@comcast.net	812-593-2554
Secretary	Mike Dolan	michaeledolan@prodigy.net	317-374-5578
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
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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

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## 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.



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## Reminder: The Veteran Magazine is online at [www.vvaveteran.org](http://www.vvaveteran.org)

The March/April 2022 issue was mailed and on website. Read the article about A Piece of the Rock: The Replica Vietnam Veterans Memorial at Fort Wayne on page 24.

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## Membership Report

VVA membership total as of February 28, 2022 is 346. By Steve Anderson

AVVA membership total as of February 28, 2022 is 36. By Holly Tookolo

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Don't be a duck. Be an eagle. Ducks quack and complain. Eagles soar above the crowd.

# Important Dates

- April 10 Palm Sunday
- April 15 Good Friday
- April 17 Easter
- April 13 VVA 295 Board Meeting at 6pm; Regular meeting at 7pm

## ELECTION NOTICE:

April 13 at the regular meeting the elections will take place.

Nominations will be held at the March and April regular meetings.

- May 8 Mother's Day
- May 11 VVA 295 Board Meeting at 6pm; Regular meeting at 7pm
- May 21 Armed Forces Day
- May 21 VVA Indiana State Council meeting and election
- May 30 Memorial Day

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## THIS DATE IN HISTORY

- April 28, 1956** The last French soldiers depart and the French Military High Command disbands.
- April 15, 1962** Arriving aboard the aircraft carrier Princeton, the first U.S. Marine Corps air unit lands in South Vietnam.
- April 15, 1964** Former VP Nixon, returning from his trip through Asia, gives a number of speeches in New York City and Washington in which he criticizes the Johnson administration's handling of the situation in Vietnam and calls for extending the war into North Vietnam and Laos.
- April 1, 1965** U.S. Air Force begins Operation Steel Tiger to strike targets in the Laotian panhandle.
- April 10, 1965** The 5,000 U.S. Marines already stationed in the area of Danang are reinforced with the arrival of the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines and the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, which are deployed at Hue Phu Bai and Danang.
- April 24, 1965** President Johnson issues an executive order designation Vietnam a "combat area" and authorizes "hostile fire" pay, retroactive to January 1, 1964.
- April 12, 1967** Task Force Oregon is formed in response to MACV's need for reinforcements in I Corps and is stationed at Chu Lai in Quang Tin Province.
- April 8-Nov 11, 1968** The U.S. 198th Infantry Brigade and other elements of the Americal Division conduct Operation Burlington Trail, a combat sweep in in Qunag Tin Province.

### The Bunker



Your purchases support VVA 295 and Fort Harrison Veterans Center. The Bunker is scheduled to be at the VA all year. Steve is still looking for another manager to help with the Bunker. Right now Steve and Wallace Vaughn take turns as manager at VA. To volunteer call Holly 317-294-4607; to manage, call Steve 317-459-6255. Hours 7am-3pm at VA



## President's Message

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

This will be my last article as your Chapter President, having completed two terms. four years in which we have replaced both the heating and cooling system, put on a new roof. Nearly \$200,000.00 of improvements. Plus, an increase in membership by almost 20% by adding 50 new members for the Chapter.

During that time Steve was allowed to set the Bunker up at the V.A. every day that the cafeteria is open. His income from these sales is what has paid for the lights, gas, water, lawn mowing, and snow removal. He also paid for a very large part of the roof, along with a nice donation from Rolling Thunder, and a few other groups in the building. I thank them very much, and you should too.

If it wasn't for Steve, and those helping him we would not have a building. Just because we have a lease, does not mean that we can't lose it, as we are responsible for all upkeep, and repairs.

March was the first nominations for Chapter Officers, and Board for the next two (2) years. I was honored to be nominated for President again. Thanks Jim that made me feel good that you have that much trust in me. But I declined the nomination. Some people think that I declined on account of health problems. But that is not it. When I was first nominated, I said that we would start having fundraisers for the Chapter. I failed to accomplish this goal.

The only fundraiser that we had is when we went to the Commissary with VVA Poppies, to help cover the expenses of bringing The Moving Wall here. The only people that helped was Jim Peirce and his wife, Jim Finney, Holly Tookolo, and me. Others were asked, but never showed up.

In the past few years, we have had members of both VVA and AVVA, and their spouses go Christmas shopping for veterans at HVAF, and then get reimbursed by State VVA. This year State VVA said that they could no longer do that. So, a few members said that they would have a fundraiser to pay for this. Needless to say, they never did anything as usual, and so there wasn't any Christmas shopping, or presents for HVAF. There are probably Veterans closer to the building that could use some help as well, but no one wants to take the time to find out.

Most of you do not know anything about me, so here is a fast wrap up. I served in the Army Two years. In Vietnam 65-66, I was assigned to B Company, 8th Combat Engineer Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division where I received the purple Heart and Bronze Star with V device, among the other ribbons that were given.

Came back home to the workplace where I hired in maintenance as a laborer, went to shift repairman, then as a electrician, and ended up as a electronics technician, with 37 1/2 years of service when the plant closed. During that time got married, we had three sons, was married forty years, she passed twelve years ago.

I am the first Dual Life Member of both VVA and AVVA in Chapter 295. Life Member of VFW, DAV, Amvets, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Howard County Vietnam Veterans Organization, VFW National Home For Children in Eaton Rapids Michigan, Associate Life Member 1st Cavalry Division, and Life Benefactor Member of the NRA.

Past State Commander of both VFW and Purple Heart, Department Judge Advocate for DAV, Instructor for VFW 5th District for twenty years. Besides being President of VVA 295, I am serving my second term as Vice President of Howard County Vietnam Veterans Organization, and Commander of Purple Heart Chapter 692 in Marion.

Through out the years I have worked with some boards that did not like one thing or another, or other members of the board, but in time they all came around to work together for the betterment of their respective organizations.

But that is not the case with the VVA Board, some of which have been on there for years, and plan to stay on in the future. All they want is the title. but not do any work for the Chapter, building, or grounds.

This is why I am not running again. I have met and worked with some great people in the Chapter. You should be proud of the workers in both VVA and AVVA, because I know that I am, and plan to work with them in the future.

Our meeting for second nominations and the election will be Wednesday April 13th 7pm at the building. If you care about your chapter, and the direction that it may go, please attend. Remember you do not need a large number of people on the Board that will do nothing. You need those that will work. Never forget that the membership has the last word, and can over rule any decision made by the Board. Our National organization found that out at the last convention. But this can not be done, if you are not at the meetings.

May God bless our troops serving around the world, their family's, America, and You.

In Comradeship,

Larry L. Shaw

765-618-4067

[comdshaw@yahoo.com](mailto:comdshaw@yahoo.com)

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### **VA Proposes Rebuilding Roudebush Medical Center**

The Biden administration has released a sweeping plan to close some VA facilities, rebuild some VA facilities and build new facilities. Almost 70% of VA’s health care facilities were built more than 50 years ago, and the buildings have a median age of 60 years, compared with 8 1/2 years for private sector hospitals. The VA has been spending billions of dollars a year to maintain crumbling facilities. The population of veterans in some areas of the U.S. has declined but increased in other areas. Looking at all this, the VA has a list of their proposals which includes rebuilding Roudebush VAMC in a location close to where they are located and tearing down the old building. The plan to close the Fort Wayne VAMC but build a clinic on that site. For the whole story, go to: <https://www.militarytimes.com/veterans/2022/03/14/dozens-of-va-medical-centers-slated-for-closure-total-rebuilds-under-new-infrastructure-plan/>

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### **H.R. 6823 The Elizabeth Dole Act**

Elizabeth Dole Home and Community Based Services for Veterans and Caregivers Act of 2022 reinvests in caregiver support at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, establishes a user-friendly resource center, and expands VA Home-Based Community Services nationwide. This legislation provides greater access to resources and helps to determine which services provide optimal support for the caregiver, veteran, and their family, as they navigate a complex web of available assistance. The Elizabeth Dole Foundation’s vision is an America where military caregivers are empowered, appreciated, and recognized for their service to our nation. Since this bill was introduced, the VA is reversing course on the evaluation determinations and eligibility formula for caregivers. For more info, go to: <https://www.elizabethdolefoundation.org> and <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/6823>

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Dennis Smalling  
317-313-1577  
smallingindy@sbcglobal.net  
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VVA Service Officers

Michael Dolan  
317-374-5578  
michaeledolan@prodigy.net  
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## Community Guest Speaker at Meetings

Call Larry Shaw to schedule a speaker from our community. 765-618-4067.  
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## Crown Hill National Cemetery Columbarium Expansion

The Crown Hill National Cemetery Annex will be located at 725 W. 42nd Street, Indianapolis, IN 26208 and will be opening later this year. This Annex will provide 36,000 above ground columbarium niches for cremated remains, as well as a memorial wall. This cemetery will serve the needs of more than 250,000 veterans and eligible family members within a 75 mile radius. Douglas Ledbetter, director of Dayton and Marion national cemeteries, will oversee the Crown Hill National Columbarium. For more info, call Dayton National Cemetery at 937-268-2221 or go to: <https://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/crownhill.asp>  
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## Veteran Resources:

The VVA Self Help Guide to Agent Orange

<https://vva.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/AgentOrangeGuide2022forWeb.pdf>

Gulf War Benefits Guide

[https://vva.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/DisabilityCompGuide\\_Final\\_Singles.pdf](https://vva.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/DisabilityCompGuide_Final_Singles.pdf)

AVVA Survivor Benefits Brochure

[https://www.avva.org/documents/programs/SB\\_brochure\\_2020.pdf](https://www.avva.org/documents/programs/SB_brochure_2020.pdf)  
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## 39 Purple Hearts Awarded for Iraq Attack

The Army in December approved the awarding of 39 Purple Hearts to U.S. troops wounded in a January 2020 missile attack on their base in Iraq. No U.S. troops died in the January 12, 2020 attack, when Iran hit the Al Asad Airbase with 16 ballistic missiles.

Most of the wounded were assigned to the Minnesota National Guard's 34th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade and suffered traumatic brain injuries.

An Army spokesman said in December that an additional 11 nominations will be decided on the individual merits.  
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## S.2533 - Making Advances in Mammography and Medical Options for Veterans Act

March 23 the Senate passed this bill. The bill aims to improve the cancer preventative care for women who are enrolled in the VA health care system. It would expand access to breast cancer screenings through a pilot program in areas where VA does not offer the service. This would require the VA to upgrade to machines that produce 3D mammography which may provide more accurate testing. For more info, go to:

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/2533>  
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## SAR Flag—Suicide Awareness and Remembrance Flag

This flag was created by Kevin Hertell who comes from a military family. When he lost a cousin to suicide, he created this flag, taking inspiration from the POW/MIA and Gold Star flags. It is flying in 32 states. For more, go to:

<https://sarflag.org/>