



Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 1071 - Denver

Location: Elks Lodge, 1455 Nelson St. Lakewood Co

Date: Saturday: March 16th, 2024

Scheduled Time: 10:00 AM MDT

CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

Meeting called to order by President Stan Paprocki

- **Opening Prayer: Otto Smolik**
- **Pledge of Allegiance: Stan / All**
- **Posting of POW/MIA Colors– Jose Gonzales, Otto Smolik**
- **Moment of Silence for POW/MIA'S- Stan**
- **Roll Call: Pres. Stan Paprocki, VP Trini Rael, Secretary Marty Chavez, Treasurer Doug Nunes, Sgt. at Arms Jose Gonzales.**
- **VVA Members present: (42) Wally Struble, Lynn Herbert, Phil Waters, Steve Newton, Otto Smolik, Jose Gonzalez, Doug Nunez, Jim Topkoff, Stan Paprocki, Trini Rael, Marty Chavez, Lou Jones, Mike Markham, Joe Romero, Erv Krueger, Jerry Zimmer, Stan Panfil, Ron Parr, Darrell Chapman, David Demars, Vicente Roldan, John Abeita, Rod Keiscome, Frank Riddle, Nelson Hendrickson, Mike McDonnell, Jim Higgins, George Zervos, Don Bates, Bill Easton, Joe Trujillo, Robert Doris, Larry Carroll, Terry Ritenour, Bill Bleau, Chuck Mallicoat, J D Unrein, Will Webb, Bruce Gottschalk, Chuck Chavez, Joe Dural, Hal Coffman.**

AVVA Members Present: (3) Renee Ambrose, Mary Ann Rhode, Carol Cordova,

Guests: (5) Diane Zervos, Jennifer Bates, Troy Hogoboom, Gary Wallen, Susan Bates,

- **Welcomed New Members: Stan**
- **Members Birthdays or Anniversaries: Stan; Jim Topkoff, 81yo, Mike McDonald, 80yo,**
- **Welcomed Guests: Stan; Gary Wallace with Ranger Companies, 75th Infantry, I'm Diane Zervos, here today to meet all of you guys and listen to George's presentation. Good morning. I'm Jennifer Bates. My dad was James. He served in Vietnam in the Air Force; He passed away a couple of years ago and. My dear friend Steve has been here for me the last two years. Thank all of you who have served our country,**
- **President's Report: Certificates of Appreciation presented to Former Director Terry Ritenour and Director / Secretary Marty Chavez, The significance of this appreciation: For your Support to the Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 1071. We express our greatest gratitude for your commitment and support of our nation. Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another**

- Vice-President's Report, Trini Rael; Election of the directors and the officers for the chapter will occur next month in April. Our bylaws require that the nominating committee submit a slate of candidates. Nominating committee consist of myself, our President, Stan and Owen Oliver. Nominated members are President, Stan Paprocki, Vice-Pres, Trinidad Rael, Marty Chavez, Secretary, Doug Nunez, Director-Treasurer, Bill Bridges, Director, Jim Higgins, Director, Steve Newton, Director. Owen Oliver, Director, Leonard Smith. Director, Jerry Zimmer, Director, Jim Topkoff, Director, Jim Higgins, Director, Cliff Fejfar, Director, Jose Gonzales, Director. If anybody is interested in running for office or a seat on the boards, please let Stan or myself (Trini) know.
- State Council delegate elections will also be coming up soon.
- Secretary Report: Marty Chavez; Be sure to register for the Honor Flight to DC and Quilts of Valor if you have not done so yet.

Financial Report: Treasurer Doug Nunes presented the monthly Treasurer's report for the month.

- Guest Speaker: VVA 1071 member George Zervos
George talked about his experience as an Army Aerial Surveillance Officer with the 1st Military Intelligence Battalion (Aerial Reconnaissance Support), in Vietnam from 1967-1968. The Battalion played a unique role in the Vietnam War by working closely with the US Air Force to produce tactical military intelligence for US and ARVN ground and air forces. The Battalion's mission was to interpret aerial film photography acquired by Air Force Phantom reconnaissance jets, and hand-held photography acquired by personnel flying in Bird Dog observation planes. It provided military commanders with intelligence reports for use in offensive and defensive operations, operational planning, and bomb damage assessments.

- Membership Report: Ray Holtz / Stan Paprocki:

1. We have not received our new roster from National for February as of yet.
2. We have 231 members, and 47 AVVA members giving us a total of 278 members.

Webmaster Report: Ray Holtz

1. February website visits were 1,013.
2. Posted photos of 9 News Videography session with the Colorado Woodworkers Guild.
3. Posted flyer for "Know your New 2024 VA Benefits" at the Elks Lodge March 19th 10 AM – 1 PM.
4. Posted Information from VA about cyber-attack on pharmacies.
5. Posted photos of Members Owen Oliver, Otto Smolik, Marty Chavez, Jim Higgins and Steve Newton who spoke to the students at Golden High School about their experiences in Vietnam.
6. Posted information on the Army Aviation Association of America that will be having their annual Summit at the Gaylord Rockies Hotel & Convention Center April 24-26, 2024.

- Honors Burial: Bill Bridges; March 16, 2024

**** Update on Honors Burial to the Membership**

We have received approvals for 27 of the 36 submitted names. We have been approved by Fort Logan National for the following dates.

The first 14 of 27 veterans will be honored.

Fort Logan National Cemetery

Commitment Shelter B

Tuesday, April 16, 2024

1PM

The remaining 13 veterans will be honored.

Fort Logan National Cemetery
Commitment Shelter B
Tuesday, April 30, 2024
1PM

RESEARCH STATUS	Number
Approved	27
Interred	2
Denied **	7
Awaiting a response	0
TOTAL	36

** three were not veterans, one was not on active duty for other than training
The total is based upon the known response from the VA or from Vital Records

I have asked for and received 15 volunteers as pallbearers for the ceremonies. There are a few that can do one date but not the other, so we will be scheduling them as we believe that they can best service the work. I have ordered gloves for all those that need them (11).

I have asked Steve Braun, our bugler, to work both dates. He is checking his availability. I have gotten commitment from Jim Herstein, Patriot Guard, to be there for both dates. I thought we had a Chaplain, but he could not make the dates.

I am looking for someone with a strong stage presence to be our Master of Ceremonies and keep the program rolling.

I am also looking for a group to perform the gun salute.

American Flags will be loaned to us by Fort Logan.

I am in contact with the Castle Rock American Legion Post concerning their involvement as motorcycle escort the hearse from the Stork-Morley Funeral Home.

I have asked Jim Topkoff to offer a speaker role to Jeremy Hubbard of Fox31 News. He has done so, and we are awaiting an answer from him. I have, as a contingency, put in a formal request for either Joe Neguse (2nd District) or Jason Crow (6th District), a former US Army Ranger and Bronze Star recipient, to speak. We can also ask Carol Helstosky to be speaker as she has had a large involvement in our work.

Carol Helstosky's History Class has been doing biographical research on our list of veterans. The class gave a readout to Jim Topkoff on Wednesday, March 13, 2024 (I was in Arizona). Jeremy Hubbard of Fox31 was there to photograph the event and do interviews with students.

The urns will all be done before the end of the month. I will take them to the funeral home for preparation. The dog tags will be installed at that time.

Renee Molck will be doing our programs again this time. Once all the people that are assigned jobs on the agenda are known, I will send the information over for her to complete.

Press releases are planned for April 2, 2024, to be released. Fort Logan will do their own.

I would say that we are on target for our ceremonies and should be 100% ready in advance of the dates.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Bridges
Director, Honors Burial
VVA 1071

- Tony Lopez / Ch.1071 Scholarship Program: (Doug Nunes);
- Fund raising; Steve Newton; Memorial Day Poppies Fund Raiser will be held on May 25th at 5 different locations from 9 to 12. If anyone is interested in helping out, please see Steve Newton for more information.
- Merchandise: Jim Topkoff;
- Speakers Bureau; Higgins / Nunes; So far, we've made eight presentations to schools in the Denver metro area. We have four more in the April schedule. And maybe 5 or so you'll be hearing from me. More, more people that are. Lakewood. Right on the same day. So, we'll be looking for probably eight people for that one day. So, we'll be

kind of spreading ourselves, but we have. The other major schools that we've been to are all scheduled, so look forward to hearing from you again.

- **Members Meeting Speakers:** Higgins / Nunes; I just want to once again encourage 1071 members to consider coming forward and giving a presentation at one of the meetings. So far, we have had three folks stand up to give a presentation, including today's speaker George Zervos. Next month (April 20th) we have scheduled two nurses who are going to come and talk about their experience during the Vietnam War.
- **Director discussion:** Trini Rael; I would like to mention that I lost my brother on December 17th. Vietnam veteran, 69 to 70. He will be interred at the Santa Fe National Cemetery on April 15th.
- **Discussion from the floor.**
- **Door Price Drawings:** Jim Topkoff.
 1. Got another bouquet of flowers over there by our dear friend Renee. #898
 2. \$50.00 to the Olive Garden. #894 Joe Trujillo
 3. Granny Scotts Bakery, Pie Shop. #867
 4. Surprise package. #865 Joe Romero
 5. \$25 to IHOP by Mary Ann. #892 Bruce Gottschalk
 6. \$25.00 to the Home Depot. #890 Diane Zervos
 7. \$25 the Home Depot. #879 Dave DeMars

**** A Big Thank You to all who donated items for today's door prizes.**

- **POW/MIA-Retiring ~ Jose Gonzales / Remembering our Veterans ~ Otto Smolik**
Today we honor and remember one of our own.
LESTER A HANSEN CWO US Army
DATE OF BIRTH July 1st, 1942, DATE OF CASUALTY August 13th, 1969
CASUALTY PROVINCE: KONTUM, RVN
HOME OF RECORD: Pueblo, Colorado
On August 13, 1969, CWO 2 Lester A. Hansen was the pilot of a U.S. Army helicopter UH-1C) from the 170th Assault Helicopter Company on a reconnaissance team insertion mission. The team was to be inserted at a landing zone in southern Kontum Province, As the helicopter approached the landing zone in the lead position, it was struck with small arms fire and crashed. Another helicopter in the flight immediately responded and began extracting the crew. Small arms fire caused the rescue helicopter to take off early, and CW2 Hansen was not able to get aboard. However, he did grab the skid, but as the aircraft gained altitude, Hansen was unable to maintain his grip and fell about 100-500 feet. Extensive air and ground searches were conducted for the next four days without revealing any trace of Hansen. He was listed as Missing in Action.
CWO Hansen has a military stone in his honor at Ft Logan Nat Cem.
Still Missing in Action, Rest in peace Brother, Hand Salute

Benediction; Otto Smolik

- **Meeting adjourned: Stan Paprocki (Turn Cell Phones back on)**
- **Up Coming Events:**
 1. Saint Patrick's Day March 17th. 2024
 2. Veterans Benefits Luncheon, March 19th, 2024
 3. Palm Sunday March 24th, 2024
 4. Easter Sunday March 31st, 2024

- ❖ **Next VVA Members meeting April 20th, 2024**
- ❖ **Marty Chavez – Secretary, VVA Chapter 1071 – Denver**

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