The Spirit of '776

October 2025

Volume 27 Issue 10

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA CHAPTER 776

"Never Again Will One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another."

Meeting at American Legion Hall

October 25, 2023

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Director	Richard Wahlstrand				

VVA 776 Meeting

OCTOBER 25, 2023

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 1800 hours by President Steve Satre. Officers present are Vice President John Lavelle, Treasurer Joe Wesenberg, and Secretary Tom Lemons. Pledge of Allegiance said and moment of silence for POW/MIA and those still serving in harm's way across the globe.

Introduction: Harold Hansen, Thomas Lemons, Roger Granbois, Dennis Queal, Mike DeGeeter, Rod Kirsten, Bill Albracht, Shirley Richlen, Larry Witt, Lyle Peterson, Greg Paulline (FACETIME), Bruce Cheek, Edwin Hildebrand, Russell Risley, Darrell Thode, Bill Churchill, Joe Wesenberg, John Lavelle, Jim Meurs, and Richard Wahlstrand.

Secretary's Report: Approved. First and second unknown.

Treasurer's Report: Total September clover sales were $2,005. Our quarterly donation of $1,000 to the State Chapter was returned because they do not need it this time. Also, a $988 donation was made to the Honor Guard. Filed for audit.

Finance Committee: No report.

Members hospitalized or in distress: Greg Paulline, Fred Cook. Darrell Thode, Mike Peppers. Please include them in your thoughts and prayers.

Correspondence: We received a thank-you letter from Christian Care, who attended our last meeting, thanking us for the $250 donation. Humility of Mary also sent us a letter.

Coin Stories: No report.

Membership: 218 Members, 22 Associates. New members, Jim Keel, Gary Wertz.

Honor Guard: Since the last meeting we've had 13 funerals and one event.

VEAC: The Veterans Experience Action Center on September 29-30 had a very good turnout. Attendance was just under 500 veterans. Those who attended took advantage of wellness care and also learned about and applied for benefits. Women were 9.6% of those in attendance. (We had a table at this event.)

Veterans Outreach Center Luncheon: This event also had a good turnout.

Welcome Home Dance: This will be held on November 10 at Bally's. Edwin and Judith Hildebrand are going to sell 50/50 tickets. The veteran gets in free; others pay $15 dollars at the door.

Randy's Market: Still set for the week of November 13th. This is a round up to the next whole dollar at the cash register.

Davenport Veterans Memorial Park: A new 8'x40' mural will be dedicated at Veterans Memorial Park, 315 South Marquette Street, Davenport, on November 2, 2023, at 10:30 a.m.

Davenport Veterans Day Parade: Davenport will hold its annual Veterans Day Parade on Saturday, November 11, 2023. The parade forms in the Administrative Center parking lot, 600 West 4th Street, between 8:45 and 9:45 a.m. The parade steps off at 10 a.m.

Rock Island National Cemetery Veterans Day Ceremony: The ceremony will be held on November 11, 2023, at 1 p.m., at the Rock Island National Cemetery, Rock Island Arsenal. The ceremony will include a wreath placement as well as an honor salute and taps. Veterans Day is intended to thank and honor all those who served honorably in the military - in wartime or peacetime.

Bettendorf Veterans Memorial: Veterans Day Ceremony. Gather at the Bettendorf Veterans Memorial (1645 23rd St.) on Saturday, November 11 at 2:00 p.m. for an Opening Prayer, Wreath Hanging, Honor Guard, and Closing Prayer.

Christmas Party: December 7, 2023, at the American Legion Hall. Appetizers at 5 p.m. and dinner at 6 p.m. No meeting in November or December.

Iowa City VAHC: We have been given permission to visit patients on December 15, 2023. You must wear mask and gloves. An additional $100 was approved to buy caps. First and second unknown.

PX: Ed Hildebrand stated that he could take orders for shirts. Everything else remains unchanged.

Car Club of the Quad-Cities: $200 dollars to engrave trophies and the sponsorship of this event. Motion by Bruce Cheek, seconded by Ed Hildebrand. Approved.

Move monthly meetings permanently to The American Legion Hall. Motion by Ed Hildebrand and seconded by Roger Granbois. Approved.

A response to the Honor Flight. Back when we all didn't know if the Vietnam veterans were going to be included, there were 1000 to 1200 Vietnam veterans on the waiting list. It's now down to less than 200. If we don't step up and take this Honor Flight, we're going to lose it.

Presentation: 2 ½ years ago William Albracht received a call from Timothy Davis from "The Greatest Generations Foundation", (TGGF Mission Statement: We have dedicated ourselves to philanthropic responsibility in order to uphold the legacies of our nation's veterans, embodying the principles of duty, honor, and country. The forthcoming two decades will hold significant importance as we undergo a period of transition in our efforts to cater to the needs of veterans who served in the Cold War and Vietnam War.)

"In 1969 I took over security. I was in special forces at Firebase Kate. We started getting hit and five days later they couldn't bring in helicopters anymore because the NVA had brought in 37-millimeter anti-aircraft and were blowing helicopters out of the sky. We couldn't get resupplied. We couldn't get water. We couldn't get ammunition.

I made the decision that we were going to have to attempt to break out. We were able to break through their lines and link up with friendlies.

Timothy Davis was offering the opportunity to return to Firebase Kate. I decided I was going to do this, and I would start reaching out to the guys that I was in touch with. Some thought it was a great idea and signed up right away. Others didn't ever want to go back again.