



MAIL CALL

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA CHAPTER 203

PO Box 23405 Chattanooga, TN 37422

July/Aug 2018

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CHAPTER MEETINGS:

Monday, July 16th
Monday, Aug 20th

American Legion Post 95
3329 Ringgold Rd
East Ridge, TN

TENTATIVE MENU

July: Hot dog w/ all the trimmings

Aug: Pinto beans/
cornbread/ country
casserole

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

CHAPTER MEMBERS:

I started this term with four goals. (1) **Improved Communication** (2) **increase our membership** (3) **overhaul of our chapter website** and (4) **reformat our newsletter**.

Improved Communication: We are working on a direct call to chapter members with a company out of Dayton, Ohio called "ONE CALL NOW" Hopefully our BOD will have something to report on this by our July meeting. This communication will take place through telephone messaging and will allow more members to be notified of upcoming meetings and events.

Increase our Membership: We now have volunteers calling our inactive members encouraging them to renew with us. We are planning membership drives throughout the rest of the year.

Overhaul of our Chapter Website: Our new website is up and running. As of third week in June over 550 hits which means people are using and surfing our pages. (www.vva203.org) If you haven't visited yet, please check it out.

Reformat our newsletter: I hope you have recognized that the MAY/JUNE and this issue of the newsletter have already been reformatted. I am proud to announce that beginning next issue, Bud Alley has agreed to be our editor.

Be sure to read our Upcoming Events in this issue. The Board has already begun working on our R & R Picnic; we are looking at two sites, hopefully we will have date and place to announce soon. We have a date and place secured for our Christmas Dinner this year also. (Friday, December 7th at Hickory Valley Baptist Church) More details next issue.

We are now on Facebook. VVA Chapter 203 is a closed group, you must be a Facebook member to participate. Access to our group simply requires requesting to join.

Come out and help us at all of our chapter events. I look forward to working with all of you.

I hope to see you at the July meeting.



Charlie

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Excerpts from a letter to Chapter 203 from Margaret House

To the very kind gentlemen who gave my dad a 21-gun salute and TAPS.

Dear Sirs:

I do not know you and we did not get to meet. It was a rainy day and you waited in the rain until the interment of my father. It was April 26th of this year. On a beautiful, sunny day, what you do is quite moving and appreciated. But on a day when rain was pouring down and you stand at attention, dripping wet, in honor of a fellow soldier whom you've never met, it is indeed and honorable act. We are very grateful! Thank you for you service!

You men, who knew not my Dad, gave him a very great honor with the 21-gun salute and TAPS. I do not want you to think it went unnoticed or unappreciated. Your picture was posted on my Facebook and the responses I received confirmed that my family also shared my feelings, complete with tears and a pride for those in military service, past and present. We are honored by your military service to this nation as well as your voluntary service on that rainy day. It is imprinted in our memory.

PFC Robert E. Ward, WWII veteran. He was 92 years old.

Forever grateful,

Margaret House, daughter of a hero

UPCOMING EVENTS

- July 8th: Missing Man Ceremony. Grace Point Assembly of God. 6613 Hixson Pike, Hixson, TN 10:45am
- July 16th: Monthly meeting. AL Post 95 East Ridge
- July 24-28th: National Leadership & Education Conference. Palm Springs, CA
- Aug 17-19th: Parade and membership drive. Walmart in Pigeon Forge TN
- Aug 20th: Monthly meeting. AL Post 95 East Ridge

**Mark Your Calendar:
VVA & AVVA Annual Christmas Dinner
Friday, December 7th
More details to come**

AVVA

Contact Information:

President: Susan Price 423-596-1219
susan_price_2454@msn.com

VP: Joyce Simpson 423-987-6851
jsimpson203avva@gmail.com

Treasurer: Kevan Harriss 706-375-8689
Kevanharriss@msn.com

Appointed Positions:

Membership Chair: Janice Brauch
423-316-5599 lbjanice13@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor: Sharon Hobbs
423-364-6385 blondyhobbs@aol.com

AVVA MISSION STATEMENT

To provide support to Veterans and their families through programs, projects, and education.

AVVA VISION STATEMENT

To create a better everyday life for Veterans and their families

www.avva.org

The Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America (AVVA) is not an auxiliary. We are the sister organization of Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA). AVVA is open for membership to everyone including VVA members. Visit our page on the chapter website. www.vva203.org

*****SAVE THE DATE*****

Saturday, September 29th

SPOUSAL & SURVIVOR BENEFITS EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR

*Sponsored by Chapter 203 AVVA & VVA
4:00pm*

*Temple Baptist Church- 3201 Clio Ave (off Rossville Blvd)
Speaker: Charles "Chuck" Alsobrook, County Service Officer*

WWW.VVA203.ORG

APPOINTED POSITIONS:

Armory Sergeant:
Wayne Walker
423-718-6099

Chapter Chaplain
George Woodruff, Jr
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Website:
Joanna Henshaw

Editor:
Vacant

MEET OUR MEMBERS

JOHN SPARKS, LIFE MEMBER

Excerpts for THE PULSE, December 2015.....



April 14, 1973

Sgt. John Sparks' homecoming. Pictured with his parents after spending almost 5 years in the Hanoi Hilton

"I've spent five years dreaming of this day, of the day of my return to my family, to my country, to my people." Sparks told the crowd of 300 admiring students, city and civic officials, and others: "God bless you and may God bless this wonderful country of America, my home."

Excerpt for the Chattanooga Times newspaper

John Sparks, U.S. Army, was flying a reconnaissance mission over enemy territory on April 24, 1968 when his twin-engine OV-1 Mohawk was hit by anti-aircraft fire. With both engines gone, he and the pilot ejected over a heavily wooded area near the Laotian border. Sparks was captured and spent nearly five years in the Hanoi Hilton, the soldiers' euphemism for the most despicable prisoner-of-war camp in North Vietnam.

By any measure, most people would think that John Sparks had given enough of himself—for his country, his community. But there's something about veterans that makes them want to give more. Sparks says he feels fortunate: that the country and its people have given him so much that he feels obligated to give back. "Many didn't have the opportunity to come back and serve the community like we are able to do," explains Sparks, "and that's actually a privilege for us."

The information given in this story about John Sparks was just about all The Pulse could get. He was very tight-lipped about the amount and extent of work donated by him and his comrades except to say that veterans—mostly older veterans who are retired—have the time, energy and know-how to get things done. To get things done on time and within a budget.



RAY ADKINS HONORED FOR SERVICE

On Monday night at the VVA Chapter 203 monthly meeting a special ceremony was held to honor one of its own. Lt. Colonel Ray Adkins was inducted into the **Order of Saint Maurice**, by Colonel Larry Stovall and 203 member Bud Alley. Adkins has long been a fixture of veteran's service in the Chattanooga area. He was previously honored as Veteran of the Year by the Chattanooga Veterans Council among his other awards. Adkins, while a reserve officer, was called to active duty on numerous occasions.

In front of his brother and wife and members of Chapter 203, Adkins received the honor that is awarded to infantry soldiers who have distinguished themselves for contributions to, and loyal support of the Infantry and demonstrating gallant devotions to the principle of selfless service embodied in the American Infantryman. It is the highest noncombatant honor awarded to former infantry soldiers. **The Order of Saint Maurice** has its origins in the Thebes Legion in 287 AD when it defied the orders of Augustus Maximillian Hercules to perform pagan rites and kill innocent civilians. Facing death for its refusal, St Maurice was martyred along with the entire legion. He was declared a Saint by the Catholic Church and designated the protector and patron saint of sword-smiths and Infantry soldiers.



L-R: Col Chris Dooley, Honoree LTC Ray Adkins, Col Larry Stovall, & 1st Lt. Bud Alley

CHAPTER 203 RECOGNIZES AND THANKS BUSINESSES FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT

The Chapter Officers and Board members recently visited four area businesses and presented them with a *Reflections* print as a token for their continued backing.



Lane Funeral Home- South Crest Chapel
833 Chickamauga Ave, Rossville, GA

Pictured with the Officers and Board of Directors from left to right: Butch Williamson (retired Gen Mgr. & life member of Chapter 203) and Susan Tankersley (Marketing Dir.)



BiBa's Restaurant
5918 Hixson Pike, Hixson TN

Pictured with the Officers and Board of Directors is John Cunningham (Gen Mgr. & AVVA life members)



Mission BBQ
1926 Gunbarrel Rd, Chattanooga, TN

Pictured with the Officers and Board of Directors from left to right:



Camping World
6728 Ringgold Rd, East Ridge, TN

Pictured with the Officers and Board of Directors from left to right: Ralph Miller (Facility Liaison), Thomas Robertson (Gen Mgr.) and Eric DeMeyere (Gen. Service Mgr.)

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

VVA CHAPTER 203

CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE:

The Prophet Isaiah reminds us that God brings out the Stars and call them by name. **Isaiah 40:25-26.** Because of His great power and mighty strength not one of them are missing. **V.26.** Just as God knows the Stars by name, He knows us individually and personally. We are each under His watchful eye. **V.27.** If we are incline to worry, we can turn that worry over to God. He is never too weary or too tired to pay attention to us. He has all Wisdom and Power, and He loves to use it on our behalf. The Holy One who direct the Stars has His loving arms around us.



George E. Woodruff, Jr.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

MEMBERSHIP TOTALS

As of May 31st

1-Year:	52
3-Year:	88
Life:	693
TOTAL:	833

RENEWALS DUE BY MONTH

May	4
June	4
July	3
Aug	6



Membership responsibilities require vigilant oversight. I will continue to contact those members who are past due, giving them a reminder and an opportunity to stay active. Remember that paying a 3-year membership through the Chapter PO Box reducing the fee to \$30. ***DON'T FORGET TO NOTIFY ME OF ANY CHANGE IN YOUR ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, OR EMAIL.***

-Dan Taylor, Chair
423-991-5628
danjrann@bellsouth.net



CHAPTER VVA & AVVA EVENT

In May, the Chapter held a successful fundraising and membership drive at the Walmart in Kimball, TN.

Here's another way to determine eligibility for VA disability benefits

The National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP and on Facebook) is offering a free online app for veterans at <http://app.nvlsp.org>. It is designed to help veterans and their advocates identify the VA disability benefits to which they may be entitled. By answering a series of questions, the specific disability benefits claims that could be filed with the VA are identified. The app is available through the Apple app store and Google Play.

The questionnaire covers claims for service connection and non-service connected pension benefits only. It will not: assist veterans with claims for an increase in disability ratings the VA has already assigned for disabilities connected to military service; benefits based on claims previously filed with the VA; or benefits for disabilities that are the result of VA health care, VA vocational rehabilitation or participation in a VA Compensated Work Therapy program.

All NVLSP's legal assistance to veterans and their families is free and it also helps veterans with applications for combat-related compensation, certain types of VBA appeals, discharge upgrades, Integrated Disability Evaluation System processing, cases at the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims and more. Learn more about NVLSP at <http://www.nvlsp.org>.

VVA'S MOTTO

"NEVER AGAIN WILL ONE GENERATION OF VETERANS ABANDON ANOTHER"

PRODUCT SALES CLEARANCE SALE



Monday, July 16th
4p – 7p
American Legion Post 95 parking lot

Tee Shirts	\$3.00
Hats	\$3.00
Pins	\$1.00
Patches	\$.50
Decals	\$.50

PO Box 23405
Chattanooga, TN 37422

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Make your check payable to **VVA Chapter 203**
Mail to: PO Box 23405 • Chattanooga • TN • 37422

Name: _____ Sex: F M

Mailing Address: _____

Phone (H): _____ Phone (C): _____

E-Mail: _____

Yearly Membership Dues:

1 Year: \$20

Life Membership \$100

3 Years: \$30

NOTE: A copy of your DD214 must accompany this application