

# 310 Dispatch

**Never again shall  
a veteran coming  
home from battle  
be made to feel  
alone and  
unappreciated!**



*Together We Make  
A Difference*

*Charles S. Kettles  
Chapter 310*



**August 2021**

Washtenaw County,  
Michigan



**Editor's Note:** Our Chapter's mood is of transformation and change. Jon Luker provides an extensive explanation of the Chapter's various options for change (p. 9). Also, be sure to participate with us in the Chapter's yearly Pig Roast—see p. 8 for details.

And keep in mind that you can always have access to the *310 Dispatch* by visiting [VVA310.org](http://VVA310.org). The Dispatch Team thanks you for your support.  
-- Paulo-Juarez Pereira

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## President's Message

By Stan Harrison

We are busy making plans for upcoming events. There should be lots of opportunities for you to help your Chapter. On August 29th, at the Saline American Legion, we will have our VVA 310 Pig Roast. This event is our major fundraiser of the year. We will need many hands to make it as successful as it has been in



the past.

On September 11th, there will be a picnic at the VFW Post to remember that terrible day in 2001. This year will be the twentieth anniversary. We said that we would never forget; so, let us take this opportunity to prove it.

On September 24th, 25th, and 26th, we will have our merchandise tent set up at the Clinton Fall Festival. This small-town event is a pleasant place to spend some time. So, plan to stop by and see us there.

October 15th will bring our Gary Lillie Recognition Dinner at the UAW hall in Ypsilanti Township. Angel Food Catering did such an excellent job last time that we are bringing them back for an encore. In more normal times, October would also have us looking forward to Halloween at the VA hospital—but this year, who knows? I'm sure that we will develop something for the patients there, even if we can't do an "in-person" event.

So, put us on your calendar. Would you mind helping support us as we serve our Veteran community? In the meantime, stay well and stay proud.

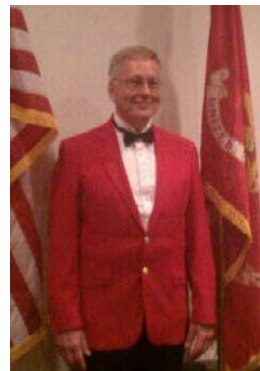
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## Chaplain's Corner - August 2021

By Rev. Gordon Moore

Sometimes the Lord seems far away during difficult times, and we wonder if He hears our cries. We have lived during the turbulent years of Vietnam and every war and conflict since. Now, from political and moral standpoints, we are again living in difficult times. Throw in a pandemic with uncertainties, and we add spice to the turbulent waters swirling about us.

I offer as an antidote the



everlasting word of the Lord taken this month from the Psalms. May it bring comfort and assurance to us that God is near to those who call upon Him and ever-

present help in times of trouble.

### Psalm 123

**Unto Thee, I lift up my eyes, O Thou that dwells in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of the servant look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of the maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until He has mercy on us. Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy**

upon us; for we are exceedingly filled with contempt. Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud. (Psalm 123:1-3)

### Psalm 125:

**They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed but abides forever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even forever. For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity. Do good, O Lord, unto those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts. As for such that turn aside from their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity: but peace shall be upon Israel. (Psalm 125:1-5)**

### Psalm 127:

**Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman wakes but in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for He gives His beloved sleep. Lo, children are an inheritance of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is His reward. As arrows are in the hand of the mighty man, so are children of his youth. Happy is the man that has his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate. (Psalm 127:1-5)**

The Lord and the children He gives us to invest in provide us with comfort during turbulent times. May we find comfort and strength in Him and His Word as we live and lead our communities, nation, and the world through these difficult

times.  
May His peace bring each of us the assurance of His presence.

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## Honoring August's Anniversaries on the Wall

**Lance Corporal Kendal Lee Benney, Jr.** was born on February 22, 1948 to Mr. and Mrs. Kendal L. Benney of Ypsilanti. Kendal lived with his father and step-mother in Big Rapids, Michigan until September of 1965, and after that he attended Ypsilanti High School. He left Ypsilanti High School during his Junior year and enlisted in the Marine Corps in March of 1966.



Lance Corporal Kendal Lee Benney, Jr. began his tour of duty in Quang Nam Province, South Vietnam in December

of 1966 serving with C Company, First Battalion, Seventh Marines, First Marine Division as a machine gunner. Kendal was killed on August 20, 1967 while standing watch when he suffered multiple fragmentation wounds from a bomb.

Lance Corporal Kendal Lee Benney, Jr. is survived by his mother, father, step-mother, two sisters and one brother who was serving in South Vietnam when Kendal was killed. Kendal's brother was discharged from the Army and escorted his

brother back to the "World" for internment. Kendal lived 19 years, 5 months and 28 days. He is resting in the Altona Cemetery in Altona, Michigan. Kendal's name is listed on the Vietnam Memorial in Ypsilanti Township under Ypsilanti. His name also appears on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel 25E Line 018.

—++—

**Private First Class James William Davis** was born on March 24, 1947 in Erie, Pennsylvania to Mr. and Mrs. William A. and Gretchen Raub Davis. James grew up in Belleville, Michigan, but lived in Ypsilanti. He is a 1965 graduate of Belleville High School where he lettered in football and swimming. James



attended Michigan State University and Cleary College. James was employed as a customer agent for Trans World Airlines at

the Detroit Metropolitan Airport in Wayne, Michigan prior to entering the Marine Corps on December 13, 1968.

Private First Class Davis began his tour of duty in An Hoa, Quang Nam Province, South Vietnam on July 7, 1969 serving as a rifleman with I Company, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division. James was killed on August 13, 1969 as a result of small arms fire just one month and six days into his tour of duty "In-Country." James William Davis is survived by his wife, an 11 month old son,

his parents, and two brothers. He lived 22 years, 4 months and 10 days. He is resting in Washtenong Memorial Park in Ann Arbor, Michigan. James' name is listed on the Vietnam Memorial in Ypsilanti Township under Ypsilanti. His name also appears on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel 19W Line 029.

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## VVA 310 Chapter Meeting Minutes

*By Jon Luker, Secretary*

### Vietnam Veterans of America Charles S. Kettles Chapter 310 Regular Membership Meeting Minutes

**8 July 2021**

**Call to Order** by President Harrison at 1900 hrs.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Opening Prayer:** Bob Bull

**Moment of Silence** for POW/MIA'S, their families and those who are serving in hazardous places around the world.

**Roll Call:** A quorum was established. Welcome Home Everyone!

**New Members:** None.

**Guests:** None.

**Motion** to approve the June Minutes was not made because the Dispatch has not been published yet.

**Officer Reports:**

**President's Report:**

The Flag Day event was a success. We didn't get as many people as we expected, but the event itself was what we hoped to present. People were given support, made connections, and had fun relaxing in a family-friendly environment.

Fisher House presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Sandie Wilson for the large contribution made by Michigan Vietnam Veterans. Also, Debbie Dingle's office presented us with a copy of the declaration changing the name of the Ann Arbor VA Medical Center to the LTC Charles S. Kettles Medical Center.

**Treasurer's Report:** Reports were emailed to the Board. Reports were also made available to members and others via email on request. We have received several large donations for the Pig Roast. The result is that we are now projected to have a significant positive change in our unrestricted accounts by the end of the fiscal year—possibly positive enough to offset the losses from doing a Recognition Dinner.

**AVVA Report:** The report is printed in the Dispatch.

**Committee Reports:**

**Merchandise:** No activity except for a few challenge coin sales. It does not look like we will be allowed back in to sell at the VA anytime soon.

**Washtenaw County Council of Veterans:** Harrison. It is important for Vietnam Veterans and their next two generations of offspring to register for the National Birth Defects Registry. To register, go to <https://registry.birthdefects.org/registry/intro.php>

**Michigan State Council:** Luker. There is a significant amount of legislation related to veterans and veterans' services that is being considered in Congress. Contact Luker for details. JonLuker9@outlook.com

The VA now also has a program that provides veterans with a "lifeline" device. The VA pays the

monthly subscription and the price of the device.

The State Council is asking if any local chapters would like to sponsor the Annual meeting in the 2nd quarter of 2022.

**Memorial Maintenance:** Merritt. Lawn crews are out and doing good work. Doan is still committed to doing the concrete, but we can't do it now because the trenches are full of water and because the trench walls caved in. We need to find help to build concrete forms before Doan can pour.

**Website:** McCrumb. We are up to around 290,986 hits since the new website went live.

**Membership:** We are at 212 members according to National.

**Newsletter:** Pereira. No report.

**Healthcare:** Wilson. Our long-time national legislative affairs director retired. Sharon Hodges took the reins. Although Congress added three new presumptives and is considering a few more, including high blood pressure, it is necessary for us to stay on Congress about veterans' issues, especially concerning Agent Orange and other toxins. Let me emphasize what Stan Harrison said about the importance of getting yourself and your next two generations on the National Birth Defects Registry. Please register.

**LTCCSKMC:** Kinzinger. Steven Spar is the new director of volunteer services. He has not been communicating with us like Beverly Conatser did, but he finally did acknowledge that VA patients did receive a steak dinner on the 4th of July and that the American Legion was given credit for that one. He also said that the VVA will be able to upgrade the dinners for POW/MIA day and for Veterans

Day.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:**

**Motion** by Kinzinger, seconded by St Antoine, to use the VA patient restricted funds to upgrade the two VA patient dinners described above, in accord with our annual budget. Approved.

**Motion** by Wilson, seconded by Bayha, to have the secretary apply for the \$600 VVA grant to send a delegate to the National Convention. Approved.

**Good of the Order:**

**Harrison:** Need a leader for the Recognition Dinner committee  
**St Antoine:** Milt Davis volunteers for several hours two days a week to take care of the grounds at Camp Liberty. The mower he used needed to be replaced. Members of VVA donated three times more to buy a mower for Camp Liberty than they donated to buy one for our Memorial. So that problem is solved, but Davis still needs help with all the work. If you can help on Tuesday or Thursday between 0900 and 1200, he would sure appreciate it.

**Bull:** The VFW is having an open house here from 1000 to 1700 hours on 24 July. In addition to hotdogs and all the other usual stuff we provide at the open house, there will be Little Blessings Equine Therapy, Blue Star Service Dogs, and Representative Dingle is sending her Veteran-issues representative. Other groups, such as Michigan Ability Partners, Humana Insurance, and Meni Draper's scrapbook group, will also be here.

**Bull:** VFW is honoring first responders here on September 11. Gates will open at 0930 for anybody that wants to set up early.

The event runs from 1100 to 1600. There will be a barbeque and a few games set up to help create a family-friendly atmosphere; but, this should be thought of as a remembrance, not a party or picnic. Three speakers will each make a five-minute presentation. We are inviting veterans, police, fire and EMS from Washtenaw County. **Bull:** Many of us suffer from one form of post trauma stress or another. One thing that helps to prevent us from thinking too seriously about suicide is knowing that we have somebody who can and absolutely will come to us in time of need, no matter what the need. Therefore, I urge you to carry with you the contact information for the top three people that would come to your aid, no matter what, no matter where, in times of trouble.

**Wilson:** Whenever you list an emergency contact on a form, or on your list of three people, please make sure to let that person know you did that, so they are not surprised when police arrive at their door.

**Bull:** Our can project has done well in collecting cans. Now, we need help getting those cans converted to cash, with proceeds to buy gift cards to give to Veterans in need. Please contact me if you are willing to help cash in those bottles and cans.

**Wilson:** Next week, Wednesday, Jack McManus, Chapter member and National Treasurer, will be at Brewed Awakenings. He will be able to help us better understand what is happening at the National level as far as developing their strategic plan. He will be happy to answer your questions.

**Throneberry:** Veteran's Radio is

going to restart the "There I Was" open mic forum again as soon as we can – probably August. As before, the sessions will be based on a monthly theme, and the five-minute talks will be recorded. The recordings will be included in a podcast and will sometimes be used on the Sunday radio show. As before, we will hold open mic night on the third Thursday of the month, probably in the evening.

**Merritt:** Chapter Breakfast on August 13th: TBA

**Closing Prayer:** Bob Bull  
**Flag Salute**

**Meeting Adjourned** at 1949 hrs.

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## AVVA Newsletter August 2021

By Kathy Driscoll, President

The Pfizer, Moderna, and J&J vaccine have emergency use approval from the FDA. All Michigan residents over 12 are being vaccinated. The Ann Arbor VA Healthcare system is now vaccinating veterans and their volunteers. Henry Ford, U of M and St. Joseph (IHA) are rolling out their vaccinations. You can also apply to Washtenaw County Health Department to get your shots. You will get a message via email or on the portals. As soon as you receive your invitation, schedule your vaccination. Please encourage your children and grandchildren to be vaccinated. If you have concerns regarding the vaccination and your health, please check with your primary physician. Here are the websites to request a vaccination:

<https://www.washtenaw.org/3269/>

[COVID-19-Vaccination](https://www.uofmhealth.org/coronavirus/vaccine-info-update)  
<https://www.uofmhealth.org/coronavirus/vaccine-info-update>  
<https://www.stjoeshealth.org/health-and-wellness/covid-19/vaccine>  
<https://ihacares.com/resources/covid19/covid-19-vaccine>

Meijer, CVS, and Kroger Pharmacies are taking vaccine registrations. If you shop at Meijer, CVS or Kroger, please check the Pharmacies for more information. Please let me know if you need anything. AVVA and VVA 310 have resources available to assist you.

### Chapter Happenings

We had a table at the Open House on July 24th. Shirley, Corrine,



Kathy, Wendy Hibbitts, Jane and Meni attended.

Meni set up a table for scrapbooking at the event and was the photographer.

Thank you

to all who attended. We received \$35 on donations for 7 Wrist Story bracelets. We distributed Paper Safes, Agent Orange pins and Vietnam Poppies to those who visited our table.

### Fundraising Projects

- Wrist Story Bracelets are available for \$5 donation. We have 34 available. Proceeds will benefit Fisher House Michigan. Please contact me.
- If you can, please consider purchasing a second bracelet. If we sell out, we will have \$430 to donate to Fisher House Michigan.
- Our Fisher House Michigan specified line has a balance

of \$55. Seven bracelets were purchased at the Open House. Please let me know if you would like one.

- Agent Orange Masks \$10 donation. Please make your check payable to "Birth Defects Research for Children." I have a few, but Sandie Wilson is the main contact for this fundraiser for Birth Defects Research for Children. <https://birthdefects.org/> Please contact me for a mask.



### Paper Safes

We have AVVA Paper Safes from Nancy Switzer. Please let me know if anyone would like a Paper Safe.

### Service Projects

- Fisher House Michigan is requesting travel-size items of shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, body wash, etc., as well as pocket-size tissues. You can bring your donations to our August meeting or contact Kathy to pick up your donation. Please bring donations to our August meeting.
- Fisher House Michigan would like volunteers to make stress balls using large loop yarn. If you need a copy of the pattern, please email Kathy at [dkathyr16@gmail.com](mailto:dkathyr16@gmail.com). Please either drop off your donation directly to Fisher House Michigan or to Kathy Driscoll. I will be happy to drop them off for you.
- Rev. Bob Bull needs volunteers to assist the Veterans Resource Center on Wednesdays and/or Saturdays at the VFW Post

423. The center is open from 09:30 am to 5:00 pm. You will assist in keeping Post 423 clean and sanitary. Please consider volunteering an hour or two. Breakfast and lunch provided by Rev. Bob Bull, VVA 310 member. For information on volunteering, please contact Rev. Bob Bull at 734-664-7878.

- Please consider donating food to your local community food banks. Our communities still have families who are food insecure due to Covid-19.

Links to local Food Banks

Saline Social Services:

<https://www.salinesocialservice.com/ways-to-give/donate/>

Food Gatherers of Ann Arbor:

<https://www.foodgatherers.org/?module=Page&slID=donate-funds>

SOS Community Services Ypsilanti, MI:

<https://soscs.org/ways-to-give/>

Catholic Social Services

<https://csswashtenaw.org/family-children/cssw-food-pantry/>

Google Search for Food Banks in Washtenaw County:

<https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=washtenaw+county+food+banks>

### Legislation Action!

H.R. 2568 Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act

The last movement of this bill was on May 29, 2019. This bill was referred to the Subcommittee of Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. As of Thursday, December 17, 2020, there are 17 co-sponsors to this bill. Tim Walberg (R-17) is the only Michigan US Congressman to co-sign this bill. If you live in

another congressional district, please contact your representative to have him or her co-sign this bill. Our AVVA 310 has widows whose Veteran husbands suffered and died from liver cancer. Please consider writing your US Congressional Representative to support this bill in honor and memory of them.

### AVVA Chapter 310 Fundraising Report

As stated above, we have Wrist Bracelets for a \$5 donation. All proceeds go to Fisher House Michigan.

When I toured the Ann Arbor Fisher House, their staff mentioned that they need gift cards for Kroger or Sam's Club for weekly food shopping. I would like to take up a collection to purchase a \$250.00 gift card to be sent to April LaRock, manager of FHM Ann Arbor, in August 2021. Please consider a \$5 or \$10 donation at our August meeting, I will purchase the gift card. You can mail me your donation directly. Please make your check payable to VVA 310 with AVVA FHM Gift Card on the memo line.

Kathy Driscoll  
172 Oakwood  
Saline, MI 48176

Excerpt from email from April LaRock:

"Highest need for gift cards are for groceries: Kroger and Sam's Club (they accept Walmart gift cards too). That's where we shop the most. The larger the quantities too (each trip runs us about \$250-300) and we go at least twice a week. It takes a lot of time to process multiple \$25 gift cards for one trip (if that makes sense just from a donation tracking system)."

- **Lois Perrault Memorial Fund –**

### 2021 Girls' State Update!

- The fund balance is \$3,348.25. We plan to sponsor two delegates next year. (Girl State 2022)
- AVVA Michigan State Association News
- 2021 National Convention – November 2 – 6, 2021 at the Sheraton Greensboro at Four Seasons Hotel, Greensboro, NC.
- I submitted my Delegate Registration and Shirley Hitte as our Alternate Delegate.
- Candidates for National Office
- President Sharon Hobbs
- Vice President Kathy Andras
- Secretary Nina Schloffel
- Treasurer Kaye Gardner, Don Jones
- Region 5 Director Penny Meinhardt
- Region 5 Deputy Director Vivian Heidenrich
- 2022 Leadership Conference – Hyatt Hotel, Greenville, SC
- 2023 National Convention – Orlando, FL

### WCCV

I attended the July 19th WCCV meeting in Ypsilanti. We need an alternate delegate for WCCV. Please let me know if you would like to be my alternate. Responsibilities are to attend a monthly meeting if I am unable to attend. The August 16th meeting will be held at the Saline American Legion Post 322. Shirley and I plan to attend.

### Upcoming Events!

Next meeting will be in person at 6:00pm on August 12th.

Keep up to date with our Chapter: All AVVA and VVA 310 events are posted on our Chapter's webpage, [www.vva310.org](http://www.vva310.org) in the VVA News

Flash section on the right column on the homepage.

AVVA Charles S. Kettles Chapter 310 proudly supports the AVVA Mission and Vision Statements.

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.

Kathy Driscoll

Chapter Representative, AVVA Chapter 310

Past President, AVVA Michigan Association

[dkathyr16@gmail.com](mailto:dkathyr16@gmail.com)

734-355-4897

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### Current Events

By Ann Dempsey-Pereira

19 July: WCCV Meeting, Ypsilanti American Legion Post 282, 1930 hrs

24 July: All Org Open House, VFW Post 423, 1000-1700 hrs

25 July: CPR Class by Stephanie Hall of WACU, VFW Post 423, Time TBD

12 Aug: Chapter Monthly Board Meeting, 1730 hrs; Monthly Membership Meeting, 1900 Hrs ([Click Here to attend by Zoom.](#))

13 Aug: Chapter Breakfast, 0900 hrs

16 Aug: WCCV Members Only Dinner and Meeting, 1900 hrs,

29 Aug: Pig Roast (details on p. 8) Team Red, White & Blue: Saturdays @ 0930 meet at the Southeast parking lot of Gallup Park for their walk and run

\*\* Visit Veterans Radio online (click here: [veteransradio.net](http://veteransradio.net)) and make a contribution to help keep this vital program on the air.

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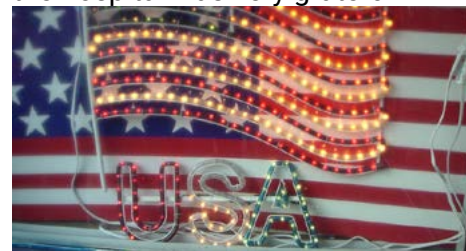
### Of Interest to Members

Dave Draper Contributed

On June 25th, VVA 310 member Paul Dunlap taught a pepper spray class. The Veterans Resource Center hosted the event. The course was informative and included both indoor and outdoor instruction. This activity is valuable training for anyone concerned about the troubled times we are experiencing. Participants were Jane Kinzinger, Shirley Hitte, Erika Behm, Ralph Henry, and Dave Draper. The class content was impressive, and I recommend it.

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Dave Draper, Don Miller, and Bob Brown helped with the VA's food distribution program. Volunteers served 52 veterans with much food, including frozen meat, potatoes, vegetables, dry goods, canned and bottled beverages, milk, bread, fruits, and even a couple of light bulbs. Every one of the vets that pulled up in front of the hospital was very grateful.



Laughing is the best . . .



### Jocosity

By Ken Rogge

Upon discharge, hospital regulations require a wheelchair for patients. Once, while working as a student nurse, I found one elderly gentleman already dressed and sitting on the bed with a suitcase at his feet, who insisted he didn't need my help to leave the hospital. After a chat about rules being rules, he agreed to let me wheel him out to the elevator. On our way down, I asked him if his wife was meeting him. "I don't know," he said. "She's upstairs in the bathroom changing out of her hospital gown."

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### Explaining Inflation

Contributed by George Perrault

Went to the store the other day to pick up a loaf of pumpnickel bread. It is now called pumperDIME. Food costs so much these days, it would be cheaper to eat money!

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## Charles S. Kettles VVA Chapter 310



## 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Pig Roast Pork Dinner



**(Dine-in or Carryout)**

**Sunday, August 29<sup>th</sup>  
Noon to 4PM**

**Where:** Saline American Legion (corner of Mich Ave and Mill St.)

Enjoy A Wonderful Pork Dinner and Help Raise Funds for VVA 310 to: Care for our County Vietnam Veterans Memorial, put on special events for local hospitalized veterans, Thanksgiving Dinner for Dawn Farm residents and More.

**Meal:** Great pork, applesauce, baked beans, coleslaw, roll and a dessert.

**Activities at event:**

- Musical Entertainment, Children's Face Painting, Magician,
- Military Merchandise Sales, Beer tent and 50/50 Drawing

**Meal Ticket Prices:** \$15.00, Ages 6-12 \$5.00, Under 6 FREE

Tickets will be available at the Legion Post entrance day of event.

For more information, please call John Kinzinger, 734-645-8647

**The Saline American Legion Post** is supporting VVA Chapter 310 to put on this event. Thank you to all Legion and Auxiliary Members.

### Taps

By Dave Draper

If any of you have ever been to a military funeral in which taps was played, this brings out a new meaning to it.

'Taps...' It's the song that gives us the lump in our throats and usually tears in our eyes. But, do you know the story behind the song?

Reportedly, it all began in 1862 during the Civil War, when Union Army Captain Robert Elli was with his men near Harrison's Landing

in Virginia . The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land. During the night, Captain Elli heard the moans of a soldier who lay severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention. Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment. When the Captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier,



but the soldier was dead. The Captain lit a lantern and suddenly caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier. It was his own son. The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his father, the boy enlisted in the Confederate Army. The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial, despite his enemy status. His request was only partially granted. The Captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for his son at the funeral. The request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate. But, out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him only one musician. The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform. This wish was granted. The haunting melody we now know as 'Taps' used at military funerals was born. The words are:

- > Day is done.
- > Gone the sun.
- > From the lakes.
- > From the hills.
- > From the sky.
- > All is well.
- > Safely rest.
- > God is nigh.
- >
- > Fading light.
- > Dims the sight.
- > And a star.
- > Gems the sky.
- > Gleaming bright.
- > From afar.

- > Drawing nigh.
- > Falls the night.
- >
- > Thanks and praise.
- > For our days.
- > Neath the sun.
- > Neath the stars.
- > Neath the sky.
- > As we go.
- > This we know.
- > God is nigh.

I too have felt the chills while listening to 'Taps,' but I have never seen all the words to the song until now. I didn't even know there was more than one verse. I now have an even deeper respect for the song than I did before. Remember those lost and harmed while serving their country. Also, remember those who have served and returned and for those presently serving in the Armed Forces. Please send this on after a short prayer. Make this a Prayer wheel for our soldiers ... please don't break it. I didn't!

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## Open House

*A Report by Dave Draper*

On July 24th, from 10 am until 5 pm, the VFW Post 423 hosted an open house. VVA 310 and several other organizations were present. It was an excellent opportunity to get questions answered: VSOs, lawyers, and others were on site. Our gratitude to the participating organizations and all of the visitors who came out to the Open House.



Veterans and their caregivers received the help they were looking for, and multiple vendors and organizations came out. A special thanks to those who volunteered for cooking up the dogs and brats. Thanks to Bob Bull for putting countless hours into planning and setting up this event.

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## A Bit of VVA 310's History

*- By Vance McCrumb*

If you are wondering about the history of our VVA 310 Chapter, here are the dates of the longest-serving member, in terms of when they joined the VVA, as compared with the latest new member:

Longest-Serving Member:

Albert Fredo Merritt - 04/03/1985 with a 4-digit membership number in the 500s.

Latest New Member: Eric Downie - 06/13/2021 with a 7-digit membership number, 136####.

If you are curious about when you joined the VVA, send me an email ([dogman2@reagan.com](mailto:dogman2@reagan.com)).

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## A New Day

*By Jon Luker*

In the '60s and '70s, Vietnam Veterans approached organizations like the American Legion and VFW, and the old organizations denied admissions to the newcomers. The explanation was that we were not Veterans since Vietnam was a police action. As Vietnam Veterans began to congregate, they formed local organizations and provided support for a national organization.



They would focus on issues important to Vietnam Veterans (which the older organizations did not care about back then but thankfully do now).

VVA would provide Veteran Service Officers to help individual Veterans get correct results from their applications for benefits or compensation from the VA, just like the old organizations did. But VVA recognized that they could not stop there. They hired lawyers and sued federal, state, and local governments that were not treating Vietnam Veterans fairly or that failed to follow laws impacting Vietnam Veterans.

Although other organizations did lobbying, VVA developed the legislative proposals that the other organizations elected to support (or not), including legislation beneficial to Vietnam and later Veterans.

Finally, it was essential to VVA that no new Veteran should receive mistreatment as Vietnam Veterans had received. It is axiomatic now that post 9/11 Veterans get much better treatment than Vietnam Veterans, both while serving and after returning home. That is so because of public awareness, litigation, lobbying, and VSO programs VVA implemented on



their behalf.

Even though most of the legacy organizations are now run by Vietnam Veterans and post 9/11 Veterans, VVA is still the only organization with a litigation team that litigates Veteran issues beyond just VA benefits.

But the strong point for VVA is its problem: VVA's membership is limited to Vietnam Era Veterans. Even though VVA membership is still rising, not falling, Chapters are shutting down because their membership cannot do the required work. (Two state councils have also closed.) The solution was obvious to delegates to the 2019 National Convention: (a) Expand membership to include all Veterans, and (b) change the name so that others would be willing to join. The delegates voted overwhelmingly to order the Board of Directors to present a plan to do that at the 2021 convention.

As noted by VVA President John Rowan in the September/October 2020 online edition of *The VVA Veteran*:

"VP Tom Burke and I attended the Student Veterans of America Convention in January. We spoke to recent Veterans who are leaders of new Veterans organizations, to our families and friends, and to several Veterans who are on our staff. After those discussions, it became apparent that new Veterans are not terribly interested in taking over VVA in its present structure."

As a result, President Rowan concluded that those members who do not want us to change our name and membership requirements "well, they do not have to worry about that anymore." Instead, VVA administration

developed a new organization called Veterans Voice of America, Inc. According to the Voices website ([click here](#)), they just help Veterans (of any era) with the VA benefits claims and appeals. However, the website also indicates that "Vets Voice plans to provide our nation's Veterans with: unparalleled VA claims assistance, cutting-edge health care resources, and a loud voice in the halls of Congress" ([click here for more information](#)). Veterans Voice of America is funded by our household goods program. The VVA Constitution Committee Chair, Leslie DeLong, said that she is not authorized to reveal whether there will be a proposal presented to members that changes the name and membership requirements for VVA. Although it is possible that the Board is complying with the mandate, it is not likely that they are. Even if they do present a plan that members approve, we will discover that our main competition will be Veterans Voices of America. Vets Voices would win because VVA already gave Voices our major funding source--revenue from the household goods program--and we already gave them our best and brightest attorneys. That was the context in which our Chapter's Board of Directors began to develop a 5-year strategic plan. A major issue for the Strategic Planning Committee (the full Board of Directors) was whether our strategic plan would ensure that never again would one generation of Veterans abandon another. The committee agreed by voice vote to keep that promise. That made it just as obvious to us as it was to the National delegates that we

would need to change our name and our membership requirements. Our first outline of a long-term plan that would accomplish that objective made it clear to us that it would be a long time—measured in years, possibly—before we could admit new members and help them see the importance of paying it forward and teaching them how we’ve done that up until now. The board agreed to the suggestion of starting a new nonprofit rather than changing our current one, so that we can find, recruit, train and support new members immediately.

We discussed the difficulty faced by VVA National on its several attempts to start a supporting nonprofit. Each time VVA formed a new organization and funded it, the new organization was able to sever its relationship to VVA and to begin to lead itself in an entirely different direction. Once we developed a plan to prevent—or at least to slow the pace—of that type of rebellion, the committee agreed to develop a new nonprofit.

After some effort to obtain input from potential members as well as from our own Chapter members and those that have supported us all along, we arrived at the name “Local Veterans Alliance” for the new organization. Our approach is to build the organization’s legal framework and business plan while we simultaneously build the organization’s membership. To that end, we have filed Articles of Incorporation which are being reviewed in Lansing. Once that document is approved, the new organization will legally exist and may begin to conduct business. But much work will still need to be done before LVA can become a tax

exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code, and can be physically and financially fit to take on the mission we have given it.

Our expectation is that the new organization will basically put VVA 310 out of work before we are no longer physically able to do the work. In other words, we want our replacement trained and operating well enough so that we can close VVA 310 voluntarily, knowing that our mission is accomplished. Those of you who are Veterans, family members, loved ones, or caregivers of Veterans who want to ensure that our Chapter’s mission is carried forward are encouraged to join LVA as soon as it is operational. Members of VVA and AVVA will automatically become members of the LVA unless a member wants to opt out of the automatic process. If you would like to become a member of LVA or if you would like to opt out of the automatic process, please email [vva310@outlook.com](mailto:vva310@outlook.com) and express your preference. Please be sure to include your name and your preferred method of contact.

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### Good News About Veterans Travel

The Department of Defense will extend online access to the American Forces Travel website to honorably discharged Veterans of the uniformed services. Using AFT, Veterans can save up to 40% compared with commercial travel pricing.

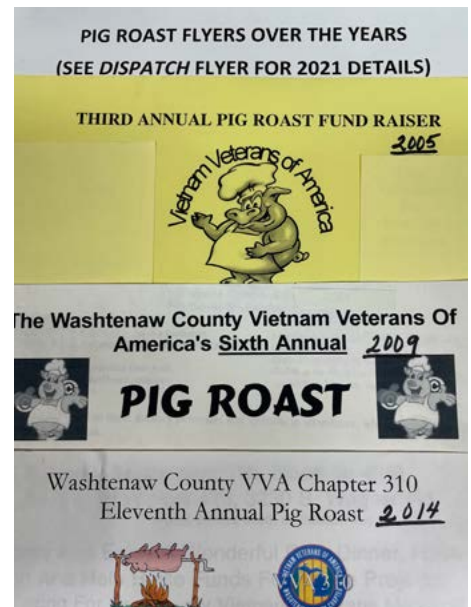
Military Community and Family Policy is directly responsible for establishing and overseeing quality-of-life policies and programs that help our service

members, their families and survivors be well and mission. For more information about the Department of Defense media release announcing the policy change, [click here](#).

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### VVA 310 – Looking Back

As VVA transforms itself, the mood favors a retrospective of the fantastic achievements of Chapter 310. So, here is a look at pig-roast flyers from various years, compliments of Jane Kinzinger. Also, a picture of a commemorative coin for the Chapter’s 20th anniversary.



# All About VVA 310

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

Charles S. Kettles Chapter 310

National Chapter of the Year - 1999 & 2007

Newsletter of the Year 2007, 09, 11, & 15

E-Newsletter of the Year 2017

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August 2021**

Vietnam Veterans of America

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Please Forward. Thank You!