

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*



**February 2024,
Washtenaw County,
Michigan**



Editor's Note: -- The contrast from winter to warmer weather is not quite what one experiences in non-tropical regions, but still there is much joy as bright days bring us pleasant light. May this issue of 310 Dispatch bring all our readers good health and plentiful blessings.

For the Dispatch Team, Paulo Pereira, Dispatch Editor.

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President's Report for February 2024

By Vance McCrumb



Not much to report on this month. We got through January without losing any additional members.

That's good! We picked up two new members: Budd Fry (Marine) and Larry Scholl (Navy). Budd is a member of our TLC coffee group and figured we would expel him from TLC

unless he joined our Chapter. :-)). Larry is a Washtenaw County Honor Guard member. That brings our head count to 215. So, we are holding our own.

Merchandise sales at the VA was very slow compared to December. Speaking of merchandise, Stan Harrison had shoulder replacement surgery on January 25th and was on his way home on the 26th. Stan said his meds are keeping the pain from the front door but expects them to come-a-knocking soon.

Sandy Wilson had knee replacement at the U of M. They tried to pull an outpatient on Sandy; but, being a tough Army Vietnam nurse, they lost! She is somewhat mobile but with a cane.

John Kinzinger had a health scare while at their Florida home. Thought he had a minor stroke but that wasn't the case as the MRI's were negative. He is experiencing some right leg weakness and expects more doctor's appointments to determine why his right leg collapsed when he got out of bed to turn off his bladder alarm. You know, the alarm that we

used to sleep through?



At our January meeting, we selected a challenge coin vendor and passed a motion to order new Chapter challenge coins. These will

replace our current Chapter challenge coin. See the

proof below. It is very similar to our Memorial anniversary coins but without the plaque on the back. Also, the Memorial image is a bit tighter with a right view angle as the 25th and 30th are left and front view, respectively. I believe the sell price is \$5.00 each, but that may change. And we may have them in time for our February meeting.

Arf,
V

P.S. Good judgment comes from experience, and a lotta that comes from bad judgment.

Chaplain's Corner--February 2024

By Rev. Gordon Moore

According to Wikipedia, "She Walks in Beauty" is a short lyrical poem written in 1814 by Lord Byron.

It is said to have been inspired by an event in Byron's life. On 11 June 1814, Byron attended a party in London. Among the guests was Mrs. Anne Beatrix Wilmot, wife of Byron's first cousin, Sir Robert Wilmot. Byron was struck by Mrs. Wilmot's unusual beauty, and the next morning the poem was written.

**

She Walks in Beauty

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Has half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;

W
thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind of peace with all below,

A heart whose love is innocent.

I share this poem for two primary reasons:

- 1) It is the month in which we celebrate love in general, and in particular, to a loved one, and,
- 2) In it I see the beauty of God's creation that draws a person to ponder why such beauty.

God's beauty is all around us, would we but look with such discerning eyes. Taste and see that the Lord is good. His mercy endures forever.

Blessings to all.

VVA 310 Chapter Meeting Minutes

By Jon Luker, Secretary

Vietnam Veterans of America

Charles S. Kettles Chapter 310

Regular Membership Meeting Minutes

11 January 2024

Call to Order by President McCrumb at 1901 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: Bill Coleman

Motion: by Wilson/Bull to approve the December Minutes published in the *Dispatch*. Approved.

President's Report:

Please see my remarks in the *Dispatch*.

Treasurer's Report:

Reports were emailed to the Board and to members who wanted one. Let Bourne know your email address if you desire these reports.

Nonrestricted funds increased \$517 as a result of a good sales day at the VA, despite paying 20 percent of sales to VA. Restricted funds are up again, due primarily to receipts from the Christmas Fund, which are now at more than \$18,000 for the fiscal year.

The Board amended the proposed budget for FY 24/25, so the membership vote will be postponed until February. You'll receive a copy of the revised proposed budget via email with your meeting notice.

AVVA Report: Please see the report in the *Dispatch*. AVVA

did provide tuition for three teenagers to attend Girls' State next summer.

Committee Reports

Merchandise: We had \$1,173 in sales at the VA this month. Sales are always the Tuesday following our meeting and we always could use help. We load in at 0730 and sell from 0800 until 1400.

Washtenaw County Council of Veterans: The Council remains adjourned until March.

Michigan State Council: The Annual Meeting will be in June in Marquette.

Memorial Maintenance: If you would like to join the Memorial Maintenance team, please contact Al (Fredo) Merritt and let him know. We noticed that the Township has many new groundhog holes, but we do not.

Website: We have had around 416,000 hits since the website was last rebuilt.

Membership: We are at 214 including tonight's new member Bill Coleman and Wednesday's new member Budd Fry.

Newsletter: No report.

Health Care: Medicare has determined that there are some services that old people can no longer receive. Therefore, be sure you know what is going on before you agree to get services outside the VA. VA Web Weekly has a story about the very high cancer rates due to the toxins in the nuclear missile silos. Studies show that prior DoD reports on safety were wrong. Asbestos, radiation and other toxins were much higher than safe levels.

LTCCSKMC: Driscoll: The VA has a new director of voluntary services who has indicated that volunteer services will be opened again. Bingo nights are back already.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Motion by Merritt, seconded by Clarke to purchase 500 Chapter coins (the ones with the black field) for \$2,898 (\$5.77 each) for sale at \$6. This purchase was approved by the Board. Approved.

Motion by Wilson, seconded by Merritt to purchase from the hospitalized veterans restricted fund 5 dozen donuts to be distributed at the VA during Veterans Appreciation Day.

Good of the Order:

Merritt: Breakfast on Friday: 0900 at Holiday's Restau-

rant, 2080 W Stadium Blvd, Ann Arbor, MI 48103, (734) 668-1292.

Bull: Handouts on table

- 988 There is a small group of veterans trying to get this number out everywhere. Please take 3 to 5 flyers with you and give them to somebody to display. The veteran suicide rate is getting worse.
- There is also a flyer explaining that veterans can now go to any emergency room (civilian or VA) to get free emergency mental health care, to the Comprehensive Prevention, Access to Care, and Treatment Act (COMPAC Act) of 2020.
- Walking with Warriors presents a free breakfast for veterans on the second Tuesday of each month at Harvest Moon Café on Michigan Ave (near Carpenter Road) from 8:30 to 10.

Hall: Looking for chair for Recognition Dinner.

Driscoll: We will be giving out 5 dozen donuts at the VA hospital for Veteran’s Appreciation Week and National Salute Week at 0900 on 13 February.

Closing Prayer Bob Bull

Flag Salute

Meeting Adjourned at 1944 hrs

Honoring February Anniversaries on the Wall

Specialist 4 Stanley James Thompson was born on



December 2, 1942 in Ann Arbor, Michigan to Mr. James B. and Mrs. Mildred Thompson. Stanley is a graduate of Ann Arbor High School and the Alexandra School of Cosmetology. He was also a former Washtenaw

County Junior Deputy. He entered the Army and spent two years in Germany before re-enlisting in 1962.

Specialist 4 Thompson began his tour of duty in Binh Duong Province, South Vietnam on September 21, 1965 serving as an infantryman with 3rd Platoon, A Company, 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division. Stanley was killed on February 4, 1966 when he stepped on a Viet Cong land mine.

Stanley James Thompson is survived by his parents and wife. He lived 23 years 2 months and 2 days. Stanley’s name is listed on the Vietnam Memorial in Ypsilanti Township under Ann Arbor. His name also appears on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel 05E Line 001.

—**—



Warrant Officer James Eugene Kirby

was born on October 27, 1941 to Mr. and Mrs. Grover P. Kirby of Ann Arbor, Michigan. James graduated from Ann Arbor High School in 1958. James Kirby was a professional serviceman serving in the Marine Corps for four years

before enlisting in the Army in November of 1964. He attended jump school at Fort Benning, Georgia, and later attended Air Force Flight school at Fort Rucker, Alabama. Warrant Officer Kirby was assigned to the 203rd Aviation Company, 223rd Aviation Battalion, 17th Aviation Group of the First Aviation Brigade in Phu Hiep, Binh Dinh Province, South Vietnam. Warrant Officer James Eugene Kirby began his tour of duty in Vietnam on November 2, 1968. James was flying a mission on February 11, 1969 when his aircraft was hit by enemy anti-aircraft fire and the aircraft crashed killing James instantly.

James Eugene Kirby is survived by his parents, his wife, a son, and a daughter. He lived 27 years, 3 months and 14 days. James is resting in the Bethlehem Cemetery in Ann Arbor, Michigan. His name is listed on the Vietnam Memorial located at the Ypsilanti Township Hall under Ann Arbor. He is also listed on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel

—**—

Captain Clark Newell Woodworth, Jr. was born on September 19, 1934 in Ann Arbor, Michigan to Clark and Rose Woodworth, Sr. Clark graduated from Ann Arbor High School in 1952, and from Michigan State University in 1958.



Captain Woodworth, Jr. began his career in the United States Army on January 2, 1959. He was assigned as the Drone Section Commander in the 503rd Aviation Company of the Third Armored Division, United States Army, Europe (Germany). He was based

at Fliegerhorst Airfield, Hanau, Germany from September, 1961 to January, 1964.

He also commanded C Company Seventh Battalion, Third Training Brigade at Fort Gordon, Georgia from December, 1964 to December of 1965.

Clark began his tour in Vietnam on January, 3, 1966 serving as an advisor with the 10th ARVN Infantry Division, Advisory Team 87, HQ, MACV Advisors, MACV. Captain Clark Newell Woodworth, Jr. was killed on February 28, 1966 as a result of multiple fragmentation wounds in Binh Thuy Province, South Vietnam.

Captain Woodworth, Jr. is survived by his wife and a sister. He lived 31 years, 5 months and 9 days. A memorial fund was set up in Clark's honor. The Woodworth Library is a 40,000 volume library located inside the entrance at Fort Gordon, Georgia which is named in honor of Clark. There is a portrait of Clark that is hung in the library that was painted by Norman Adams.

Clark Newell Woodworth, Jr. is at rest in Arlington National Cemetery. His name is located under Ann Arbor on the Vietnam Memorial located at the Ypsilanti Township Hall, and is located on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel 05E Line 092.

—**—

Specialist 4 Larry Adams was born on May 3, 1949 in Detroit, Michigan to Foster Adams and Merlin King. Larry attended Ypsilanti High School prior to enlisting in the Army on January 29, 1967.



Specialist 4 Adams went through Basic Training at Fort Leonard Wood before attending a ten week long helicopter maintenance course at Fort Rucker, Alabama. Larry started his tour of duty in An Kye, Thua Thien Province, South Vietnam on August 13, 1967. He served

with B Company, 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion, 11th Aviation Group, 1st Cavalry Division. Although trained as a helicopter mechanic, Larry was flying a mission on a helicopter as a gunner when the aircraft was struck by enemy small arms fire killing him instantly on February 23, 1968.

Specialist 4 Larry Adams lived 18 years, 9 months and 20 days. He left behind his parents, a brother and a sister. Larry is resting in United Memorial Gardens in Plymouth, Michigan. His name is located on the Vietnam Memorial in Ypsilanti Township under Ypsilanti. His name also appears on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel 40E Line 072.

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Private Keith Arthur Stoddard was born on September 20, 1950 to Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth R. Stoddard of Ypsilanti, Michigan. Keith is a 1968 graduate of Ypsilanti High School. After graduation, he worked in the laboratory of the State Highway Department. He entered the Army in March of 1970.



Private Stoddard began his tour of duty in Bien Hoa Province, South Vietnam serving as an Armor Crewman with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division.

Keith was killed on February 1, 1971 due to the accidental self-detonation of an explosive device.

Keith Arthur Stoddard is survived by his parents, one brother and five sisters. He lived 20 years, 4 months and 11 days. He is resting in Union-Udell Cemetery in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Keith'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 05W Line 073.

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Private First Class Roger Dean Bulifant was born on April 6, 1947 to Mr. and Mrs. Forrest L. Bulifant, Jr.. Roger attended Belleville High School in Belleville, Michigan.



Private First Class Bulifant enlisted in the Marine Corps in July of 1965. Roger was serving with F Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines, 3rd Marine Division in the Hue - Phu Bai area of Thua Thien Province, South Vietnam as a rifleman. He died as a result of multiple fragmenta-

tion wounds on February 28, 1966.

Roger Dean Bulifant is survived by his parents and one sister. He lived 18 years, 10 months and 22 days. Roger'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 05E Line 084.

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Specialist 5 Kenneth Lige Fulton was born on September 7, 1946 to Mr. and Mrs. Lige Fulton, Jr. of Willis, Michigan. Kenneth is a 1964 graduate of Lincoln High School where he was the senior class president and recipient of the Willie Heston

Sports Hall of Fame Award as the school's outstanding scholar-athlete. He played football, basketball and track. He attended Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, Michigan prior to entering the Army in 1966.

Specialist 5 Fulton began his tour of duty in Tay Ninh Province, South Vietnam on February 28, 1967 serving as a Medical Non-commissioned Officer with B Company, 588th Engineering Battalion, 79th Engineering Group, 20th Engineering Brigade. Kenneth was on a convoy in the Mekong Delta when it was ambushed. He was killed on February 15, 1968 as a result of multiple fragmentation wounds.

According to a posting from Jack Engle, "...a plea for help was made and SP5 Fulton answered the call without concern for himself, as he always had for the last year. 'Doc' did not have to be in the position he was in, he could and should have been in the rear until the area was secured. He had less than 15 days before going back to his earthly home, but yet chose to be where his 'duty' was. Instead, he went to his heavenly home. Going to the aid of a fellow soldier in need, he was killed in action."

Kenneth Lige Fulton is survived by his wife, a daughter and his parents. He lived 21 years, 5 months and 8 days. He is resting in Michigan Memorial Park in Flat Rock, Michigan. Kenneth'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 39E Line 047.

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Private First Class Ronald Lee Koch was born on December 17, 1947 in Ann Arbor, Michigan to Mr. and Mrs. Wilbert Koch of Lima Township, Michigan. Ronald is a 1966 graduate of Chelsea High School in Chelsea, Michigan. He worked for the Larowe Feed Company in Chelsea before entering the Army on March 2, 1967. He received his Basic Training at Fort Knox, Kentucky and Advanced Training at Fort Polk, Louisiana.



Private First Class Koch began his tour of duty in Binh Duong Province, South Vietnam on July 27, 1967 serving as an infantryman with A Company, 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division. Ronald was killed

on February 6, 1968 from shrapnel wounds sustained in an explosion.

Ronald Lee Koch is survived by his parents, a brother and a sister. He lived 20 years 1 month and 19 days. He is resting in Oak Grove Cemetery in Chelsea, Michigan. Ronald's name is listed on the Vietnam Memorial in Ypsilanti Township under Chelsea. His name also appears on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel 37E Line 060.

Hope Matters. Help Matters.

By Jon Luker, Chapter Secretary

Since 9/11, we have lost more Veterans to suicide than to combat. In fact, a new report on U.S. military deaths contains a stark statistic: An estimated 7,057 service members have died during military operations since 9/11, while suicides among active duty personnel and veterans of those conflicts have reached 30,177. That's more than four times as many."

(See Joe Hernandez, [NPR](#))

It doesn't have to be that way. It boils down to this: Hope Matters. Help Matters.

When we fail to provide what Veterans need and deserve because of their military service, we, as a nation, fail them. Veterans lose hope when they do not get the help they need. We are not talking about the hopelessness that many Veterans or even you or I might feel on a bad day. We are talking about the type of hopelessness that eats at your core. The type of hopelessness that makes leaving your family and friends behind a better option than living.

Each American has a responsibility in the war against Veteran hopelessness, but that role varies from person to person. What is your role?

[22aday.org](#) is here to help you answer that question.

What began as a favor to Ypsilanti Township has become a nonprofit corporation that performs two basic functions. You might be able to help with either or both. When Wendy Hibbitts, Al (Fredo) Merritt and I first did this, it was a one-time thing. When we saw the need for it and saw what happened to people who experienced it, we saw that we needed to take this on as an ongoing effort and formed the nonprofit corporation that you know as 22aday.org.

Our first function is to execute a 30-day public awareness campaign that provides a visual and emotional impact about the size of the problem. We place 22 crosses a day, every day for 30 days. (That's based on a VA estimate from a few years back). Second, we help people who are impacted by their experience of seeing the field of crosses find their role in the solution. We've helped people who were feeling suicidal get the help they desperately need and deserve. We've helped people who know Veterans in distress communicate with the Veteran and ultimately get needed help. We've helped people who are suffering from the loss of a Veteran who committed suicide. Anyone who has suffered such a loss is invited to place that Veteran's name on one of our crosses. We've helped others learn how they can help encourage the government to support our Veterans properly. Others learn how to help get the word out, some by hosting the 30-day event. Even if you just check in with a Veteran you know, there is a job for you.

Our public awareness campaign is self-contained but needs a host organization with land, and it needs volunteers to do 15 minutes of work each day. Perhaps you are a member of an organization like VVA 310 that might volunteer to help place the crosses. Perhaps you know somebody with land, like Ypsilanti Township, who is willing to let us use their land. It's a big job, but the impact has proven that it is worth the work. We know firsthand that it has saved lives and improved the lives of Veterans and those who care for them. We've done this work from [Southeast Michigan to North Carolina](#).

Our [22aday.org](#) website provides information about the different ways people can help. We believe Veteran suicide can be prevented if Veterans get what they need, when they need it. We would like to help you provide hope and help in any of these ways:

- Helping Veterans and their loved ones to find and use the resources they need ([click here](#))
- Helping you help people you know who may be thinking of suicide ([click here](#))
- Helping you find what you need if you recently lost somebody to suicide ([click here](#))
- Letting you know how you can help to get the word out that there is a problem and that there is also hope ([click here](#))
- Helping citizens learn what the government

could do to help ([click here](#))

We also have a page that includes the name of every Veteran we know of that has committed suicide, so that they will not be forgotten. When the information is available, we include a short biography and a photo. Finally, your donations will also help. We only use donated funds for direct expenses, such as repairing lights, transporting the crosses, paying the website fees and so forth. You can donate via the website or by sending us a check to 22aday.org, 2164 Lakeview Drive, Suite 410, Ypsilanti, MI 48198.

Jocosity

By Ken Rogge

They had lived together in the backwoods for over fifty years. To celebrate their fiftieth anniversary, he took her to a large city, and they checked into a plush hotel.

She said to the bellman, "We refuse to settle for such a small room. No windows, no bed, no fan," she complained.

"But, Madam!"

"Don't 'But, Madam' me," she continued. "You can't treat us like we're a couple of fools just because we don't travel much. I'm going to complain to the manager."

"Madam," the bellman said, "this isn't your room; this is the elevator!"

Of Interest to Veterans Submitted by Dave Draper

Of Interest to Veterans

Submitted by Dave Draper

It's no secret that job scams are on the rise, but did you know that Veterans are often the top targets of job scams? Although job scams are widespread, Veterans often report more significant financial losses. Why is that?

Veterans are often targeted because they have access to benefits and resources.

Business and job opportunity scams were among

the Top 10 frauds reported to the Federal Trade Commission in 2022.

According to a recent Better Business Bureau report, job scams ranked as the second-riskiest scam in 2022.

Current Events

By Ann Dempsey Pereira

08 Feb: Monthly Meetings: AVVA, 1200 hrs, Alpha Coney; VVA Board, 1800 hrs; VVA General Mtg, 1900 hrs

09 Feb: VVA 310 Monthly Breakfast, 0900 hrs

13 Feb: Merchandise Sales, 0800 hrs, VA Canteen

19 Feb: Coast Guard Reserve Birthday (1943)

19 Feb: President's Day

** [Visit Veterans Radio online](#) and make a contribution to help keep this vital program on the air.

AVVA Newsletter February 2024

By Kathy Driscoll

Three members attended our January meeting at Alpha Coney, namely, Meni, Corrine, and Kathy. Tim Driscoll and Steve Hitte as well.

We agreed to donate \$700 to the Veteran Service Dogs in Howell. To date, we have raised \$529 for this fundraiser.

We would also like to participate in the Fisher House Michigan Ann Arbor Meal Train in September.

Our February 8th, the meeting will be at Alpha Coney at noon. If you are able to attend, please join us. This is an AVVA Local Chapter Election year for Chapter Representatives.

If you would like to run for Chapter Representative, please submit your intent to run at our February or March meeting. Our election will be at our April meeting, which is scheduled for Thursday, April 11th, at the VFW Post 423, at 6 pm.

The Recognition Dinner will be on April 13th at the UAW Hall in Ypsilanti, MI. We will have a bucket raffle. Please consider attending our Recognition Dinner and making a donation to our raffle.

Our guests will be our three 2024 Girls' State Dele-

gates.

I will be sending out our annual fundraising appeal letter this month. Please consider making a donation. This is our main fundraiser, which funds our Chapter.

VISTA Report

Please email me your VISTA hours. I will need the hours for September and October. If you assisted our Chapter at the Memorial and VA Hospital visits, I need to report them to the AVVA VISTA chairman.

Membership Report:

AVVA 310 has 33 members. Tim Driscoll is our new Dual Member. All VVA 310 members are invited to join AVVA 310 as Dual Members. If you would like to join AVVA 310, please contact Kathy Driscoll. AVVA has changed their membership dues. There is no longer a 3-year membership. Please select one of our flexible methods to structure the membership payment, as follows:

- Lifetime membership: \$100
- Yearly \$20
- \$25 for down payment plus monthly installments of \$25 until paid in full.
- VVA Dual membership \$50.**

Click [here](#) to access the membership application form.

Chapter Happenings!

AVVA Chapter 310 Fundraising Report

- Our Annual "No Bake, Bakeless" Bake Sale Fundraiser letters will be emailed and snail-mailed this month. Please consider making a donation.
- We plan to have a raffle table at the Recognition Dinner. Please consider donating an item for the raffle.
- We have 40 donated Wrist Story Bracelets left. Suggested donation is \$5. When we sell out, we will donate an additional \$300 to Fisher House Michigan. Contact Kathy Driscoll if you would like one. All proceeds will go to Fisher

House Michigan.



Service Projects

- Please consider donating food to your local community food banks. Our communities still have families who are food insecure due to economic circumstances.
Links to local Food Banks:
[Saline Social Services:](#)
[Food Gatherers of Ann Arbor:](#)
[SOS Community Services Ypsilanti, MI:](#)
<https://soscs.org/ways-to-give/>
[Catholic Social Services](#)
[Google Search for Food Banks in Washtenaw County:](#)

Lois Perrault Memorial Fund – 2024 Girls' State Update!

The fund balance is \$1,913.25. We sponsored three delegates to Girls' State 2024. We sent \$1275 to the Saline American Legion Auxiliary Post 322.

AVVA National and AVVA Michigan State Association News

The AVVA Michigan State Association will meet on March 3rd in Plymouth Canton. I plan to attend.

WCCV

No meeting in January 2024.

Next AVVA Meeting!

Our February 2024 meeting will be a lunch meeting at Alpha Coney Restaurant, Jackson Rd, Ann Arbor. Our members who attend voted to have luncheon meetings. If you are available, please plan to attend on February 8th.

Keep up to date with our Chapter: All AVVA and VVA 310 events are posted on our Chapter's webpage, 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
734-355-4897

VVA 310 member Pete Belaire, former President of VVA310, along with Chapter members, displayed leadership and compassion in assisting a young Marine wounded in Iraq. The story was featured in the Welcome Home supplement magazine of The VVA Veteran in 2008.

I took a copy of the Welcome Home supplement magazine signed by Pete and gave it to Tim, who works as a manager for Ann Arbor Arms on Jackson Road, Ann Arbor. - Vance

Chapter 310: Driving Lance Corporal Lang

Submitted by Vance McCrumb

With his van full of donated gifts carefully wedged between camouflage duffel bags, a folded wheelchair, crutches, and one wounded Marine, VVA Chapter President Pete Belaire headed down I-94 towards his passenger's home in Parma, Michigan...

Belaire had met Lance Corporal Tim Lang (Marine Corps) during one of many visits he and fellow members of the Washtenaw County Chapter made to the VA Hospital in Ann Arbor to cheer the wounded returning from the wars in the Middle East

"Tim wanted to go home for Christmas and didn't have a way to get there with all his medical accessories," Belaire said. "I just offered to drive him home."

Belaire, a former Marine who had weathered a tour

in Vietnam and two bouts of cancer, had a lot in common with Lang, whose right leg and foot had been severely injured when he was struck by an IED



on the streets of Fallujah. Belaire recalled that, as he pulled into the driveway of Lang's home, Lang's twelve brothers and sisters descended upon the van and swooped up their wounded brother, carrying him toward the open doorway,

when Lang's mother stood with arms outstretched and wept. "Timmy," she said through her tears, "it's so good to have you home."

Embraced by his family and friends at the Washtenaw County VVA Chapter 310, twice recognized as VVA Chapter of the Year, Lang began outpatient therapy at the VA hospital in Ann Arbor. Learning of Lang's struggles to find transportation to and from the hospital, Chapter 310 members acted fast, contacting Chapter member Sandie Wilson, manager of the Vietnam Veterans of Michigan Car Dealership in Milan. Wilson, who sells donated cars to support a homeless veterans shelter, arranged for a car to be delivered to Lang. Chapter 310 picked up the cost of licensing and tax, while the Veterans Honor Guard of Washtenaw County chipped in \$500.00 for gas.

Unfortunately, soon after, doctors told Lang that the fight to save his foot had been lost. Facing amputation and numerous related medical issues, Lang was transferred to the Mologne House at Walter Reed

But the guys of 310 are still at Walter Reed for him, bringing him triple cheeseburgers from Wendy's and taking him shopping for a pair of specially fitted running shoes. Whatever road Lang finds himself on, Chapter 310 is making sure that he doesn't have to travel it alone.

Camaraderie Through Service

By John Kinzinger

People who have come to know Veterans of Chapter VVA 310 often mention the camaraderie that exists among them. But that comes through years of service. In this article, I will mention how camaraderie has come to develop among those Veterans who

volunteer to visit patients at the Ann Arbor VA Hospital and the good experiences they invariably have.

In 1988, VVA held its first Ann Arbor VA Medical Center Christmas program of room visits. Jack McManus and I started this tradition, which became an annual program. Except for the COVID years, we have held this event every year. This VA program, which does things throughout the year, is funded separately through an annual letter mailing to supporters. Several contributors are VVA310 members. We also receive gifts from other VVA Chapters, VFW Posts, Unions, businesses, and individuals. All, 100%, of these funds go to VA Medical Center projects and program for Veterans receiving treatments there.

For many years, we have given the hospitalized patients a special embroidered shirt, done by Linda Colby, wife of deceased Chapter member David Colby. Her business, Unique Apeel, is located at 1675 Plymouth Road, A2. Throughout the year she purchases a variety of shirts and embroiders themed with a Flag and the words "PROUD VETERAN" above the Flag and "FREEDOM IS NOT FREE" below the Flag. The patients love them.

On December 19th we had our best medicine with us, Miss Michigan 2023-4, Miss Michigan 2022-3, and Miss Washtenaw County 2023-4. One played the violin, and the other two signed photos, chatted and smiled cheering up every patient. We VVA members, of course, had great enjoyment bringing smiles to the patients and nursing staff, too. Each nurse's station received a wonderful candy tray made by Sandy Martinez, and Al below received some special attention from one of the nurses. Thank you all for contributing and participating.



The team is all ready to go from room to room to visit patients, bringing presents and smiles.



A moment of joy and music may create memories that last decades.



Camaraderie may turn into friendship as time goes by. Al Merritt has a moment of joy with a nurse.



This visit shows that hospital beds can be interesting, too.

What, then, is camaraderie? It is mutual trust, friendship, and the joy of spending time together. It is also the joy of serving others together.



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Website: vva310.org
Email: membership@vva310.org
Follow us on 310 [Facebook page](#)
VVA 310 Chapter Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 3221
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3221

Contact Us: Please direct any
communication to President and
Webmaster "Vance McCrumb"
<dogman2@reagan.com>.

Vietnam Veterans of America
Charles S. Kettles Chapter 310
P.O. Box 3221
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3221
Please forward. Thank you!