

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 2020
Washtenaw Co.,
Michigan



Editor's Note: Of special mention in this issue is Rev. Gordon Moore's article about the need for God's help at a time of struggle. Also, I am adding a few items of interest to the current events section. Feel free to suggest material of interest. Finally, my thanks to Dispatch contributors for great content and submission on time. Be well, and with God's help, we are returning to normal.
-- Paulo-Juarez Pereira

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President's message

By Stan Harrison

Here we are pushing ahead in the year of the plague. We struggle to make the necessary accommodations and still maintain some sense of normalcy. Now Major



League baseball is back, sort of. They have no fans in the stands. They have rule changes and masks in the dugouts. Even the TV announcers aren't on site. We are a little bit like Major League baseball (except they can hit a curve ball). We also have made changes in order to go on. We had to—not just because of government mandates, but also to protect one another. There could also be civil liability issues if we were to flout the new rules. So, we wear masks when appropriate. We social-distance. We meet outside. Whatever it takes. Let's be smart. Be safe. Be strong. Be proud.

Chaplain's Corner

By Rev. Gordon Moore

I would like to build upon July's leadership theme, as we close in on the national elections, by looking at leadership from those in the position. What does a person who is godly do when surrounded

by those who oppose God's will and direction? What is the focus of a person in that kind of position? Amazingly, we do have an example from a powerful and godly king in Scripture to look at. David had his faults, to be sure, because he was housed in the weakness of the flesh, but God Himself declared David to be a man after God's own heart (a phrase for someone wanting to do God's will).

David recorded his heart's plea and thoughts in Psalm 35. It has 28 verses, and each verse tells of the



soul's struggle to keep God the main focus when in leadership and to allow God to help in the battle for righteousness.

Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me. Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help. Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt. Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the Lord chase them. Let their way be dark and slippery:

and let the angel of the Lord persecute them. For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have dug for my soul. Let destruction come upon him at unawares; and let his net that he has hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall. And my soul shall be joyful in the Lord: it shall rejoice in His salvation. All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto Thee, which delivers the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that lays waste to them? False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not. They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul. But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned unto mine own bosom. I behaved myself as though he had been my friend or brother. I bowed down heavily, as one that mourns for his mother. But in my adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: yea, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not; they did tear me and ceased not: with hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth. Lord, how long will you look

on? Rescue my soul from their destructions, my darling from the lions. I will give you thanks in the great congregation; I will praise you among much people. Let not them that are my enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause. For they speak not peace; but they devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land. Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, aha, our eye has seen it. This you have seen, O Lord: keep not silence: O, Lord, be not far from me. Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, even unto my cause, my God and my Lord. Judge me, O Lord my God, according to your righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me. Let them not say in their hearts, Ah, so would we have it: let them not say, we have swallowed him up. Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at my hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonor that magnify themselves against me. Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favor my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, let the Lord be magnified, which has pleasure in the prosperity of his servant. And my tongue shall speak of Your

righteousness and of your praise all the day long.

David's prayer and thoughts are so poignant to our world, nation, and state today, so much so that we should pray a similar prayer for righteous leaders that this next election will reveal the Righteousness of our Lord God. Peace and safety to all,
Gordon

VVA 310 Chapter Meeting Minutes

By Jon Luker

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

9 July 2020

Call to Order by President Driscoll at 1909 hrs.

Pledge of Allegiance

Opening Prayer: Robert 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: Larkin Pham, Phil's daughter is selling face masks with military themes for \$10 each to raise money to restore Saigon Lady, the C-130 her grandfather, Pham Quang Kheim used to fly the family and many other people to freedom 45 years ago.

Motion to approve the June Minutes by Bull/St Antoine. Approved.

President's Report:

- Kathy and I have been married

for 50 years.

- Still no hospital sales yet.
- 10 June we got the motorized cart to Del Mayes. Stan and Lloyd helped to get it there. Del really loves being mobile again.
- 13 June we had elections.
- 14 June Flag Day brick dedication and flag retirement ceremonies went very well. We also had hotdogs and such.
- 15 June Gary Chriscinske, a member, passed away. Dave Saims is helping his wife with her VA paperwork.
- Member John Kessler passed away. We attended his funeral in Wayne.
- I have 120 American Flags in Saline that need to come down.

Meeting suspended for Swearing in of Officers: Sandie Wilson Meeting resumes, President Stan Harrison presiding.

Treasurer's Report: Bourne. Again, not much activity. Printed report available. Report also emailed to officers and board members. No questions. Merchandise team will take over sales of challenge coins and Chapter jackets.

AVVA Report: No report.

Food Pantry: A couple of people received food support.

Merchandise Report: No activity due to restrictions. Ann Arbor Arms is preparing to do their event again in the fall.

Washtenaw County Council of Veterans: Luker. Next meeting will be at American Legion Post 282.

Michigan State Council: Luker. Next meeting is set for Howell American Legion on 9 August.

Memorial Maintenance: Merritt – The bench is finished, but we have not been able to get a pad poured yet. Google finally agreed that VVA 310 is the correct group to take

care of the information available on Google about the Memorial. Google is investigating whether to change the name on their map from Civic Center Drive to Veterans Memorial Drive as we requested.

Website: McCrumb. The website is webbing away.

Membership: The official number is now 207.

Newsletter: Pereira. No report.

Healthcare: Wilson. 25% of all patient visits will happen via phone or video. VA is still taking patients from Beaumont Hospital. VA is being conservative about reopening due to risk that there will be a second wave.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Motion: By Luker, seconded by Lee to have Merchandise reorder the same quantity of the same coins we ordered last time. Approved.

Good of the Order:

Draper: One of our veterans ran into a whole bunch of problems all at once. Don Miller, Marv Rivers, Bob Bull, Erika Behm and Tim Driscoll got involved right away. His church got involved also. VFW fund was able to help him as well. Berry provided Holiday Restaurant gift cards. The veteran wanted Dave to give us all a hand and to say thanks.

Bull: We bought groceries for one of our veterans.

Bourne: Still have food cards

Rivers: Shada Eadie's eyes are going bad. She's had a couple procedures. Laser in a couple weeks should make things better.

Bull: Can drive produced about 3,000 cans. Once we can sell those cans, we'll buy food cards that we give to volunteer services at the VA. I got some T shirts to the VA as well, per their special

request.

Bull: Still sending letters to veterans at the two state-owned group homes. Please contribute a letter or two.

Flag Salute

Closing Prayer

Meeting Adjourned at 1955 hrs.

Chapter Breakfast on August 14, 0900 hours: Holiday's Restaurant, 2080 W. Stadium Blvd., Ann Arbor, MI 48103.

Honoring August 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 where 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 his 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.



AVVA Report -- August 2020

By Kathy Driscoll

I hope everyone is feeling well, wearing a mask, and staying socially distanced as we all help slow the spread of the Covid-19 virus in Michigan. Please let me know if you need anything. AVVA and VVA 310 have resources available to assist you. We have an anonymous AVVA member willing to deliver cereal and drinks on Wednesdays and a hot meal on Fridays to any AVVA or VVA family in the Dexter, Ann Arbor, Saline, Chelsea, Whitmore Lake, or

Pinckney area.

A few AVVA members attended the "Open House" at the VFW Post 423 on Saturday, July 25th. I pray that all who attended will remain healthy. I still believe that it was irresponsible and reckless to have this event. The COVID-19 virus is still infecting our community. It is not in remission. There is no vaccination. All of our members are in high risk categories and may contract a serious case of COVID-19. I would like everyone to rethink your priorities as the health and welfare of all of our members should be paramount.

I received support from some of our members supporting my concerns. A few disagreed and felt that "most news reports were reporting of the virus statistics is purely political." Well as of today, August 2, 2020 over 156,000 souls lost their lives to this virus. That is more than 2 ½ times the fatalities in the Vietnam War.

We had a Zoom meeting on July 9th. It worked out great! We will again have a Zoom meeting on August 13th. We hope all of our members will attend! Please try to attend.

I do not have an update for the Recognition Dinner. If there is one, we will have a raffle table at the Recognition Dinner. Please let me know if you have items for our table. All proceeds will benefit Fisher House Michigan Ann Arbor Grocery Cause.

If anyone would like to personally donate to the Fisher House Michigan grocery cause, please logon to <https://bit.ly/31hLkC5> and complete the donation form. There is a box to make your donation recurring monthly.

Email from Kate Melcher:

"Good day!

Just a reminder that the Dedication Ceremony for the [VA Ann Arbor Fisher House](#) previously scheduled for tomorrow, 19 June 2020, has been postponed. But, don't worry - the public celebration will be rescheduled when it is safe to do so. We can't wait for you to see this beautiful home that you help build!

In the meantime, take a look at the amazing map above. In just two short weeks, the first Fisher House program in Michigan has welcomed families from all over Michigan, as well as from Northern Ohio and Florida!

While we continue the [\\$20 million capital campaign to support construction near VA Detroit](#), your gifts are also helping us support the families staying in the VA Ann Arbor House.

Want to know the biggest need right now? Groceries! When your loved one is hospitalized, the kindness of someone else shopping and preparing food for you cannot be overstated. Will you consider making a recurring monthly gift to help keep the Fisher House stocked? Donors like you who pledge sustaining support of \$25/month or more are making a difference for Veteran families. Your gift will:

- Fill the refrigerator and pantry with nutritious and comforting food
- Supplement cleaning supplies now in greater demand for public health reasons
- Provide compostable single-use cups and plates to reduce exposure to germs from others, while being mindful of our planet

Won't you help us out with a

monthly donation? All you have to do is [click here](#).

It's that easy to make a difference today... because a family's love is good medicine.

With great thanks for your continued support,

Kate Melcher

Executive Director

Fisher House Michigan"

2020 AVVA 310 Chapter Election Update

I completed the election forms with proper signatures and mailed them to AVVA Michigan Association President, Penny Meinhardt. I will be our Chapter Representative for the next 2 years. We still need an Alternate Chapter Representative. This is an appointed position. Please let me know if you would like to volunteer.

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

As of today, Monday, March 30, 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. You can use this link from DAV to send your congressional representative a letter to support this bill: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>

Keep up to date with our Chapter: All AVVA and VVA 310 events are posted on our Chapter's webpage, www.vva310.org in the VVA News Flash section on the right column on the homepage.

AVVA Chapter 310 Fundraising Report

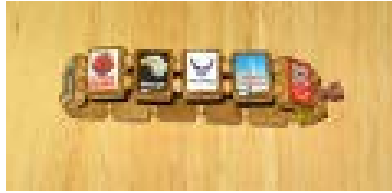
Veteran Wrist Story Bracelets

- AVVA 310 has Veteran Wrist Story Bracelets for a \$5

donation. Please contact Kathy Driscoll if you would like one.

We have 50 bracelets left.

Selling all 50 bracelets will raise \$250 to benefit Fisher House Michigan.



No Bake Bakeless Bake Sale:

- Our 2020 "No Bake Bakeless Bake Sale" fundraiser raised \$403.00. Thank you to everyone who has donated. This fundraiser benefitted our Operating and Special Projects Funds.

Lois Perrault Memorial Fund – 2020 Girls' State Update!

The fund balance is \$2,083.25. The American Legion Auxiliary Department of Michigan cancelled 2020 Girls State. Michigan State University campus is closed. I contacted the American Legion Auxiliary Post 322 and we will be receiving a refund from the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Michigan.

AVVA Michigan State Association News

The August 9th meeting is canceled.

AVVA Michigan Association Fundraising Report

- AVVA MI Association is looking for fundraising ideas for 2020.

AVVA Michigan Association Webpage.

AVVA Michigan Association Webpage is launched! Check out the AVVA Michigan Association tab! <http://vvamsc.org/associate/>

AVVA National

- 2020 –Leadership Conference

– Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dayton, Ohio. **Canceled.**

- 2021- National Convention – Sheraton Greensboro At Four Seasons Hotel, Greensboro, NC
- 2022 – Leadership Conference – Hyatt Hotel, Greenville, SC
- 2023 - National Convention – Orlando, FL

Upcoming Events!

- All August and September events are canceled due to the Covid-19 virus.
- Our next meeting hopefully will be via Zoom on Thursday, August 13th at 6:00 pm. I will email the Zoom link next week. I encourage all to attend.
- We decided to postpone our meetings until State of Michigan and especially Region 1 will allow us to meet safely indoors. We can meet via ZOOM.

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





Editor's Note: Being a U.S. Army man and serving far from Vietnamese rivers, I had no personal experience of the Mobile Riverine Force in Vietnam. Chief George Perrault sent me some information about that force, and I would like to invite articles by Chapter members who had that experience and would like to share them with us. They have a remarkable story.

On another note, here's a quote by Chief George Perrault:

NEVER tell a veteran what to do. Just show them what you want, and then get the hell out of the way.

Mystery Member



The taller soldier in this picture is a current VVA 310 member: guesses? (Please send suggestions for future issues.)

Random Images of the Memorial Grounds

By Vance McCrumb

I have added a new link that is under the Memorial link. You can click on an image to view a larger one. Click on your browser return to return to that page. Page two works, but I have to do some additional optioning to remove the home page look.

If you have a memorial photo or two (or three) that you would like to see on these pages, email them to me.

Click [here to access the images](#) or go to vva310.org, and click on "Random Images of the Memorial Grounds" under Memorial.

Dispatch Recipients

VVA 310 award winning newsletter reaches approximately 516 people each month with 115 mailed USPS, 52 hits off the website (www.vva310.org), and 349 emailed. With good stewardship and networking, the cost to print the Dispatch approximates \$1,380 per year. If a VVA 310 member or others receiving the Dispatch via USPS desire to assist with the printing cost, a suggested donation would be: one year at \$12.00, two years at \$22.00, and three years at \$30.00. Payment can be made payable to VVA 310 and mailed to P.O. Box 3221, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3221 indicating Dispatch on the memo line.

All other donations may be made payable to VVA 310 at the same mailing address by indicating

Donation on the memo line.

RECIPIENTS

- George F Boone ~ October 2021
- Berryman Bourne ~ August 2023
- Cynthia Calhoun ~ April 2023
- Stan and Dawn Clark ~ October 2020
- Tim Clarke ~ March 2022
- Joseph Flint ~ January 2021
- Phil and Gena Hecker ~ Feb 2021
- Ralph Henry ~ November 2020
- Steve and Shirley Hitte ~ June 2024
- Darlene Imus ~ January 2021
- Jane and John Kinzinger ~ June 2021
- Rudy and Jane Kozal ~ May 2022
- Linda Lamey-Leonard in memory of Lavern Lamey* ~ July 2021
- David Marshall ~ June 2022
- Sandy Martinez ~ September 2021
- Del Mayes ~ March 2022
- David L. Ney ~ April 2021
- Ronald Oliver ~ November 2021
- Paulo and Ann Dempsey Pereira ~ October 2021
- George Perrault ~ October 2022
- Mira and Bob Pierson ~ October 2021
- Helena Prince in memory of deceased member Tom Prince ~ April 2023
- Glenn Sakcriska ~ November 2026
- Edith L. Semark ~ June 2021
- Larry St. Antoine ~ March 2022
- Chris Wetzler ~ February 2021
- Elizabeth Wong ~ September 2023

Memorial Site Addition

By John Kinzinger

If you have visited our Memorial site lately, you may have noticed a nice addition to the site. We have a kneeling soldier remembering and honoring a fallen brother. With credit to Vance McCrumb, I

am adding a picture of the kneeling soldier.

The beautiful steel symbol of the



personal agony of combat was made and donated by Kirsty Pichla. We thank Kirsty's company, Detroit Metal Works, for such a nice donation.

Who is Kirsty? She is the wonderful daughter of our long time Chapter member Jim "Animal" Sharp.

I had planned to write about Jim and some of the many things I have experienced with my good Ford Motor Company Friend over the years. He said I better not write about him. So, to honor his request, I will not mention his being our all-time biggest raffle ticket seller, and I will not mention what he did at World Headquarters, or his passing out F-bomb magnets to patients at the VA, or his wonderful work with St. Jude's. Let us just say he is one of our quiet, silent, active members who wishes no spotlight. Thank you, Jim, for all you do for us.



Jocosity

By Ken Rogge

An elderly Floridian calls 911 on his cell phone to report that his car has been broken into. He is hysterical as he explains his situation to the dispatcher: *"They've stolen the stereo, the steering wheel, the brake pedal, and even the accelerator!"* he cried. The dispatcher says, *"Stay calm. . . . An officer is on the way."*

A few minutes later, the officer radios in: *"Disregard,"* he says. *"He got in the back seat by mistake."*

Current Events

By Ann Dempsey-Pereira



2020-21 Officers and Board of Directors

Front Row, left to right

Sandie Wilson, 2 Yr. Board
Martha Cothorn, 2 Yr. Board
Jon Luker, Secretary
Stan Harrison, President

Back Row, left to right

Steve Hitte, 2 Yr. Board
Marv Rivers, VP
Larry St. Antoine, 2 Yr. Board
Bob Bull, 2 Yr. Board.
Berry Bourne, Treasurer

Welcome all office holders!

Upcoming Events

- 04 Aug: Coast Guard Birthday (1790)
- 07 Aug: Purple Heart Day (1782)
- 11 Aug: Merchandising at the Ann Arbor VA Medical Center, TBD
- 13 Aug: 1730 VVA Board Mtg, 1900 VVA General Meeting
- 17 Aug: WCCV Meeting, 1930 hrs
- 26 Aug: Veterans Radio "There I Was" Open Mic, TBD
- 29 Aug: Marine Corps Reserve Birthday (1916)
- 4-6 Sept: Heritage Festival ??, Ypsilanti
- Team RedWhite & Blue: Saturdays @ 0930 meet at the Southeast parking lot of Gallup Park for their walk and run
- ** Visit Veterans Radio online (veteransradio.net - [click here](#)) and make a contribution to help keep this vital program on the air.
- View Our VVA310 Calendar by [Clicking HERE](#)

News of Interest

From Kate Melcher: Mitchell Wymer of the Morello Law Group in Northville has clients who are looking to donate (rather than liquidate for cash) household goods to Veterans in need. If you are presently working with any Veterans who need kitchen items, clothing, etc, please contact him directly at Morello Law Group.



Renaming Bases

By Vance McCrumb



I had coffee the other day with Dale Throneberry, and he mentioned that a recent program on Veterans Radio (WAAM Radio, 1600 am) focused on the renaming of the military bases in the South and Southern Generals statues removal that have been taking place around the country. This could be an interesting program. Give Dale a call (734.971.1600) during Sunday's show to express your point of view, or listen to the live broadcast on veteransradio.net.



Renaming Ann Arbor VA Facility

Multiple Sources

Our deceased friend and fellow Vietnam veteran LTC Charles S. Kettles has been honored yet again with the renaming of the Ann Arbor VA facility, as indicated in the article mentioned below. The Kettles story surely will be remembered and honored.

Article reference

Here's part of the article (see link below):

WASHINGTON, DC – U. S. Senators Gary Peters (MI) and Debbie Stabenow (MI) and U. S. Representative Debbie Dingell (MI - 12) today introduced bicameral legislation that would rename the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) in Ann Arbor after Lieutenant Colonel Charles S. Kettles. Lieutenant Colonel Kettles, a lifelong resident of Ypsilanti who passed away in January of 2019, served in the Vietnam War as an Army helicopter commander and was awarded the Medal of Honor in 2016 for leading a rescue operation that saved 44 soldiers.

For further details about this article, please [click here](#).

Important Facts of UVA310's History, Continued, Part U

Shortly after having our request denied, our Memorial committee met to discuss our next step. Mrs. Lois Brown and Mrs. Della McIntire, along with KIA father Mr. Chester Brown, joined our discussion at a nearby restaurant. We discussed whether we should proceed with an attempt to get the Ann Arbor City Council to override the Park Advisory Commission's decision.

Our committee knew that if we succeeded with that, we would have to go back and deal with the same anti-Memorial Parks Advisory Commission. Because of that, we voted to look for another location for our beloved Memorial. Mr. Brown, retired Ann Arbor fireman and father of Ann Arbor KIA Charles "Chuckie" Brown, supported our looking elsewhere. He certainly opened our eyes when he said, "You would not want to have the Memorial defaced by some Ann Arbor anti-war radicals. Can you imagine how you would feel if you drove by it and noticed that it had been all painted up?" For the next few weeks in the newspaper and on local radio programs, people criticized the decision of the Parks Advisory Commission and the City of Ann Arbor. We Memorial Committee members decided not to get involved and let the general public make their feelings known. We had scratched Ann Arbor off our list. We received several notes like the following from Mrs. Esther Bihlmeyer, mother of KIA Jim Bihlmeyer. I read that the Parks Advisory Commission turned you down. How selfish of them! I can imagine you fellows disappointment and bitterness. I am sure with your ability and effort things will turn out for the better. It is impossible to know how terrible the county KIA family members must have felt about the Parks Advisory Commission rejection. For the two Ann Arbor mothers who witnessed the rejection, it was obvious how terribly hurt they felt. Mrs. Lois Brown, mother of Charles Brown, wrote the following:

The time has come that I can no longer stand back and say nothing, while a very special group of young men try to get a memorial built honoring the boys of Washtenaw County who died or are still missing in Vietnam.

As I understand it, what the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Committee are asking of the Ann Arbor Parks Advisory Commission is a spot of land in Veterans Memorial Park to build a memorial. They are not asking for money to build with, nor are they asking for the Commission to maintain it. They have only asked for permission to build a memorial in an appropriate place, "Veterans Memorial Park."

The reason it has been refused (to me it is no reason at all) "Veterans Park was dedicated to all Veterans; we can't have special groups putting up memorials or others may want to build." So be it! If others are interested in working and raising money for a memorial, let there be monuments in Veterans Memorial Park!

I am sure the baseball players and the winter sledgers wouldn't mind sharing some space with memorials dedicated to the people whom have gone to war to fight for our way of life.

I would like to respond to a letter which appeared in the Reader's Viewpoint last week. It was very nice of him to defend his mother's (the Chairperson) position. I will never be able to enjoy my son defending me again, as he was killed in Vietnam in defense of all of us Americans. He was 20 years old.

You say you were a spectator at the Parks Advisory

Commission meeting and was impressed with the dignity, compassion, respect, etc., at that meeting. What I saw was very different from your view. I don't intend to lump everyone in the same category as the Acting Chairperson, whom was very rude to Mr. Adam Banner when he asked to read a letter from Mayor Jernigan. The Acting Chairperson said in effect "they would deal with the issue as the Chairperson (ed.) would expect.

It was announced that only one person from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Committee would be allowed to speak. The meeting was late starting. While Mr. Kinzinger was presenting his case and answering point by point every issue that had been raised by the commission, it seemed to me that the acting chairperson was mentally humming and snapping his fingers; at some time the chair told a long rambling story that if there was a point to it even the teller seemed to have forgotten by the end. It may have been to KILL TIME until the LATE TIE BREAKING VOTER ARRIVED, who then CAST his NO VOTE WITHOUT HEARING the presentation from the Vietnam Veterans Committee. IS THIS WHAT IS CALLED DIGNITY, COMPASSION and RESPECT?

In conclusion, I still do not have a reasonable answer for all the people who have asked me "WHY A PLOT OF GROUND IN VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK HAS BEEN DENIED Charlie Brown and all his fellow brothers" by the Ann Arbor Parks Advisory Commission. (Signed) Lois W. Brown Mrs. Della McIntire, Ann Arborite and Walter McIntire's mother, was another strong supporter of

our Washtenaw County Memorial committee. She was a lady with great passion for what we were trying to do. (With her umbrella in hand, WWII acting chairman, Mr. Sexton, after his negative deciding vote, almost found out how passionate she was.)

In a letter to the Parks Advisory Committee, she wrote, At the age of 22 our son lost his life in Vietnam. We are writing to let you know we support the Vietnam Veterans in building the Memorial to honor all young men who, when their lives were just beginning, lost it for their country. Let's not forget them. We never will!

The following is another related letter written by Ann Arborites Mr. Dayle and Mrs. Grace McKenzie, parents of Ann Arbor U.S. Marine David Dayle McKenzie killed July 12, 1965. The McKenzies were also very strong supporters of our Memorial.

To: Ann Arbor Parks Advisory Commission
From: Dayle and Grace McKenzie
July 16, 1990

I am writing as a wife of a World War II Veteran who was a Prisoner of War in Germany in 1945. A son was born when he was missing in action. That son, a Marine twenty years later died in Viet Nam, July 12, 1965. For many years no one wanted to even mention this strange place let alone talk about a Memorial for these young men who could have ran off to Canada – lived a nice normal life. A Memorial would not only remember our son but would help all the young men who survived the shame of fighting for their country where most people couldn't find on a map.

We need this Memorial in plain view – Remind everyone what all these young men – dead and even more important the living – tried to do. We have all failed in all these years to help the survivors.

My husband and I want all of these men to know we care!

We want to remember Viet Nam!

(Signed) Dayle F. McKenzie and Grace F. McKenzie

The following letter is from the Army Chief of Staff. It was written on April 27, 1967, to Joyce Mosier, the young wife of Ann Arbor soldier Clive Mosier. It expresses the Army's sincere respect and feelings for his and her sacrifice. It shows much more compassion than the anti-war demonstrators back then, and the Ann Arbor Parks Advisory Commission rejection.

"Dear Mrs. Mosier:

It was with sadness that I learned of the passing of your husband, Private First Class Clive V. Mosier, on 24 April, in Vietnam.

I know that the loss of a loved one is one of the most difficult things a person has to face, but perhaps you may find some measure of comfort in knowing that he served his God and his Nation with courage and honor at a time of great need.

The memory of his service will be treasured by a grateful Nation because he has joined the long line of American soldiers who in times of national peril have given their lives for freedom and for peace. In Vietnam today, as on other fields in earlier days, we are defending the right of men to choose their own destiny, the right of men to live in dignity and freedom.

You can cherish the thought that your husband was noble in giving his life to safeguard these

blessings for his loved ones and his Nation.

On behalf of the United States Army, I express heartfelt sympathy to you.

Most sincerely,

Harold K. Johnson, General, Chief of Staff of the United States Army."

Not much more could have been said at the time to the wife of a soldier killed-in-action. Then many years later showing virtually no compassion, the Parks Advisory Committee voted against recognizing his sacrifice in a small part of Veterans Memorial Park. After the Ann Arbor Parks Advisory Commission denied our request, our committee was approached with several offers to locate our Memorial at other locations around the county. County Commissioner Roy Smith even offered us property to develop a park of our own in Ypsilanti Township. Our committee discussed and investigated all the offers.

A couple weeks after the rejection by the Parks Commission and no response from the Ann Arbor City Council, we met with Ypsilanti Township Supervisor, Wes Prater. He made a wonderful offer our Committee had to consider.

At the next Ypsilanti Township Board meeting, our Committee presented the same request we did in Ann Arbor. We requested to have our Memorial located at the Ypsilanti Township Civic Center. At the end of our presentation, every person in attendance gave our Memorial committee a loud long standing ovation. Our Memorial was unanimously greeted with a tremendous "Red, White and Blue Welcome Home" by Ypsilanti Township Board officers and everyone in attendance. The

contrast between the Ypsilanti Township reception and that of the Ann Arbor Parks Commission could not have been greater. Thank you Ypsilanti Township!

The Township officers and trustees included: Wesley Prater, J.D. Hall, Ethel Howard, Ruth Ann Jamnick, David Ostrowski, Karen Lovejoy-Roe, and Brenda Stumbo. The memory of that moment will live forever in the hearts of our Committee members and everyone who was in attendance.

Ypsilanti Press reporter Jim Kise in his October 17, 1990 article wrote, "Ann Arbor's loss is Ypsilanti Township's gain, one official said, in the form of a Vietnam Veterans Memorial officially approved by the Board of Trustees Tuesday night." He continues, "Applause broke out three times during the emotional presentation of an artist's rendition of the memorial to the Township officials."

Ypsilanti Township gave us a 99-year lease to the property around the Memorial on the Township grounds. From that moment on our Committee did not look back.

THE END



Thanks to all Dispatch contributors for excellent articles and on time submissions.

Be well, be healthy!

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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**VVA 310 Dispatch
August 2020**

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Please Forward. Thank You!