

Vietnam Veterans of America

Darwin J. Thomas Memorial Chapter 201

CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JANUARY 16, 2017

Holder's Country Inn
998 South DeAnza Blvd, San Jose, CA 95129

Attendees:

Gerald Arnold	(USN)	Bill McCorquadale	(USN)
Jim Barry	(USA)	Francis McVey	(USN)
Walter Carroll		Richard Paulsen	
Bill Cordray		Randall Richmond	(USA)
Cang Dong	(AVVA)	Carmen Sanders	(AVVA)
Jeff Driskill	(USA)	Dave Sanders	(USAF)
Gene Fanucchi	(USA)	Randall Sessler	USA)
Warren Finch	(USA)	Burton Smith	(USN)
Dennis Foggie	(USAF)	William Thai	(AVVA)
John Hassenplug	(USN)	Rich Veit	(USA)
Rose Herrera	(USAF)	Dennis Whittaker	USA)
Clyde Horn	(USA)	Olita Willhite	(AVVA)
Robert Kadlec	(USAF)	Ruben Willhite	(USMC)
William Lewis	(USA)		

- I. The meeting was called to order by President Dave Sanders at 7:02 PM (1902 hours) at the Holder's Country Inn. John Hassenplug led the Pledge of Allegiance and Randy Richmond provided the invocation and called for a moment of silence in respect for our POWs, MIAs, KIAs and our Brothers and Sisters with health issues or are in dire straights.
- II. Roll Call of Chapter Officers:
 - President - David Sanders
 - Vice President - Robert Kadlec
 - Secretary – Warren Finch
 - Treasurer - Dennis Foggie
 - Sergeant-at-Arms Mike Frangadakis (Absent)
 - 3-year Board Member – Randy Sessler
 - 2-year Board Member - Randy Richmond
 - 1-year Board Member - Gerald Arnold
- III. Guests:
 - Del Finch , Jack Friedman, Don Havens, Dennis Messick,
- IV. Reading of Minutes:
 - Minutes of the November 21 2016 and the holiday luncheon meeting were forwarded electronically to the membership. Copies were available.

Motion to approve the minutes as presented by John Hassenplug and Second by Dennis Foggie. The minutes were approved.

V. Correspondence:

Received an autographed calendar from Zoe Lofgren's office.

VI. Financial Report:

Treasurer Dennis Foggie reported that a copy of the Financial Reports for November and December 2016 were distributed:

Question about the difference from November close to December open balances. Difference due to deposits made after November close. Report consistent with the check register. Motion to approve Treasurers Report by Gerald Arnold and Second by Randy Richmond. Motion passed.

Dennis Foggie distributed the Income and Expense Statement for March 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016 (see attached report). This Statement was passed out to help members to vote on the upcoming budget for next year.

VII. President's Report:

During the Annual Holiday Luncheon, several Certificates of Appreciation were presented. Several individuals were not able to attend this gathering. President Dave Sanders presented certificates to William Lewis (Ride2Recovery), Gerald Arnold, and Cang Dong for participation in the color guard at the Veterans Day Parade.

VVA 201 members went to a memorial service for Vietnam veteran Jim Fife who passed away and had no family.

Earl Edwards is still at a care center. Contact President Sanders for additional info.

President Sanders reported that he had information that some of Darwin Thomas's remains may have been recovered. The family is waiting for confirmation.

President talked about an award called Legion of the Rose. More information will be forthcoming.

VIII. Board Of Directors Report:

The Board of Directors met on 12 January. The following items were discussed:

- Final Review of Chapter Bylaws Update was held and a vote recommended the changes be presented to the membership.
- The BOD Reviewed the Income and Expenses of the Chapter between March first and December 26th and voted to recommend the draft budget for the fiscal year beginning on March first 2017.

Everything passed unanimously.

IX. California State Council (CSC) Report:

The next CSC Conference will be held between 27 and 29 January 2017. Randy Sessler will represent the Chapter.

X. United Veterans Council (UVC) Report:

Time to do our closeouts for the last year parade. Need to take a look at where we are going to stage for next year.

Memorial Day is coming up at Oak Hill. This is an event that the UVC also puts on.

XI. Committee Reports:

Membership Committee Chair: Warren Finch
November VVA-210 Membership at 97 (17 individual, 77 life & 3 incarcerated).
November AVVA-201 Membership at 129 (12 individual & 117 life).

POW/MIA Committee Chair: David Sanders, Sr.

Agent Orange Committee Chair: David Sanders, Sr.

Constitution/Bylaws Chair: Robert Kadlec

By-Laws approved by the BOD for presentation to the membership. If anyone sees any changes that need to be made they need to contact Bob before 20 February.

Community Services Committee Chair: Michael Frangadakis

Several members went to Pacific Care home in Santa Clara for a service for a veteran who had passed and did not have any family to attend. A couple members went to Miller Middle School before Veterans Day for their celebration.

Government Affairs Committee Chair: Fran McVey

Our organizations need to have a working relationship with elected officials without supporting any particular person. When there is some information passed on about laws that may affect veterans we need to give our input to the appropriate representative. A lot of us represent different organizations so when we go to an event let people know each of the organizations you represent.

Finance & Fund Raising Committee Chair: Dennis Foggie

Fund Raising resulted in a donation of \$2,000 from David Sanders.

Moffett Field was very profitable. May look at going to Costco.

Public Affairs Committee Chair: Robert Kadlec

Sent in a couple articles for the next Zypher

Veterans benefits Committee Chair: Gerald Arnold

Veterans Incarcerated Committee Chair: David Sanders, Sr.

XII. Unfinished Business:

Do not forget that the Chapter annual elections will be held on 24 April. Be sure to advise members of the Chapter the Election Committee your desire to be nominated for an office and/or your recommendation for officer nominations. The Election Committee members are, Fran McVey, John Hassenplug and Randy Sessler. Let one of them know if you have a nomination for next year.

The Board of Directors approved the draft of the 2017 to 2018 fiscal year budget and recommends that it be presented to the Chapter membership. The budget is to be implemented on March first 2017. Therefore, the Chapter membership will have 30-days to review the budget and provide vote of approval during the 20 February meeting.

XIII. New Business:

The vet center at 440 N. 1st Street is having trouble with the landlord. The landlord does not want more than 7 cars parked for the vet center at any one time. The vet enter is looking to move before there is a permanent location. Gerald Arnold made a motion that we draft a resolution to present to the VA regarding the vet center in San Jose. Seconded by Randy Richmond. Motion passed 12 ayes with 9 nays. A review of the Vet Center relocation issue would be made and a resolution of the Chapter's position would be drafted. Subsequently, it was decided that any action on the issue would be inappropriate.

XIV. AVVA Report:

Cang gave a report on the visit to Palo Alto and Menlo Park. Some of the veterans are just "hanging" on. The AVVA went back after the first of the year for further visits. Randy Richmond encouraged the group to get involved in the visits to Palo Alto and Menlo Park.

XV. Good of the Order:

The American Legion District 13 will hold its Annual Four Chaplains Interfaith Memorial Service on Saturday, February 4, 2017. The Sergeant At Arms will hand out the flyer for this event. The service will be held a Saint Frances Cabrini Church at 15333 Woodard Road (between Bascom and Union on the south side of Camden). The Chapter has been asked for two of its members to carry and post the Chapters National Colors and the VVA Flag during the ceremony.

XVI. Closing Ceremony

The next scheduled VVA Chapter 201 meeting will be held on February 20, 2017.

Randy Richmond provided the closing benediction and John Hassenplug retired the Colors.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:24 PM (2024 hours).

Respectfully Submitted,

Signed

Warren Finch, Secretary
Darwin J. Thomas Chapter 201
Vietnam Veterans of America

Vietnam Veterans of America

Darwin J. Thomas Memorial Chapter 201

CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

Monday, February 20 2017

Holder's Country Inn
998 South DeAnza Blvd, San Jose, CA 95129

Attendees:

Gerald Arnold	(USN)	John Hassenplug	(USN)
Jim Barry	(USA)	Robert Kadlec	(USAF)
Gerald Cederholm	(USA)	Francis McVey	(USN)
Walter Carroll		Randall Richmond	(USA)
Cang Dong	(AVVA)	Dave Sanders	(USAF)
Gene Fanucchi	(USA)	Burton Smith	(USN)
Warren Finch	(USA)	William Thai	(AVVA)
Dennis Foggie	(USAF)	Stephen Thompson	(USN)
Dick Francis	(USN)	Jack Wells	(USMC)
Mike Frangadakis	(USA)		

I. The meeting was called to order by President Dave Sanders at 7:03 PM (1903 hours) at the Holder's Country Inn. Mike Frangadakis led the Pledge of Allegiance and Randy Richmond provided the invocation and called for a moment of silence in respect for our POWs, MIAs, KIAs and our Brothers and Sisters with health issues or are in dire straights.

II. Roll Call of Chapter Officers:

President - David Sanders
Vice President - Robert Kadlec
Secretary - Warren Finch
Treasurer - Dennis Foggie
Sergeant-at-Arms Mike Frangadakis
3-year Board Member - Randy Sessler (excused)
2-year Board Member - Randy Richmond
1-year Board Member - Gerald Arnold

III. Guests:

Nothing To Report

IV. Reading of Minutes:

Minutes of the January 16 2017 meeting were forwarded electronically to the membership. Copies were available.

Motion to approve the minutes as presented by John Hassenplug and Second by Dennis Foggie. The minutes were approved.

V. Correspondence:

A letter was received from Becky Thomas the sister of Chapter 201 namesake Darwin Thomas. Apparently the possible crash site of Darwin's plane has been located and is in process of excavation. If this is the actual crash site, and the remains of Darwin are confirmed in Hawaii, she will notify me with repatriation plans. My plan is to have Chapter 201, working with the CSC (State Council) and the City of Santa Clara, provide the proper welcome home for Darwin and his family. This should include a Darwin Thomas Day in Santa Clara, escorted remains by the riders, patriot guard, etc., along with the proper ceremonial (TBD).

VI. Financial Report:

Treasurer Dennis Foggie reported that a copy of the Financial Report was distributed.

Motion to approve Treasurers Report by Gerald Arnold and Second by Randy Richmond.
Motion passed.

VII. President's Report:

The San Jose Veterans Center is now located at the 80 Great Oaks VA Clinic. They are in cramped quarters at the south end of the clinic.

During the Annual Holiday Luncheon, several Certificates of Appreciation were presented. Several individuals were not able to attend this gathering. President Dave Sanders presented certificates to Stephen Thompson for participation in the color guard at the Veterans Day Parade.

On January 5th, a Memorial Service was held at the Pacific Gardens Assisted Living facility in Santa Clara where Vietnam Veteran Jim Fife passed away. Jim did not have any relatives and the Geriatric Care Manager, Barbara Ledig asked the Chapter to participate in the service. A Certificate of Appreciation will be presented to Barbara Ledig for the care provide to Jim Fife.

Spent half of the day with American Legion District 13 and other posts at Menlo Park. They did a fantastic job.

VIII. Board Of Directors Report: Nothing to report.

IX. California State Council (CSC) Report:

Randy Sessler represented the Chapter at the January CSC meeting.

X. United Veterans Council (UVC) Report:

Memorial Day is coming up at Oak Hill. This is an event that the UVC also puts on.

Beginning to think about this year's parade. Hoping to be able to use the bus yard again.

Need to close out the 2016 grant requests with the city. Still need a 2017 president for the UVC.

County commission had to cancel the last meeting due to lack of quorum. Have called for a special meeting.

XI. Committee Reports:

- Membership Committee Chair:** Warren Finch
November VVA-210 Membership at 97 (17 individual, 77 life & 3 incarcerated).
November AVVA-201 Membership at 128 (11 individual & 117 life).
- POW/MIA Committee Chair:** David Sanders, Sr.
- Agent Orange Committee Chair:** David Sanders, Sr.
Four more items are being considered for the list.
- Constitution/Bylaws Chair:** Robert Kadlec
Received input from two individuals with minor changes/corrections. Vote will be taken before the elections. Get input to Bob before the April 17th meeting.
- Community Services Committee Chair:** Michael Frangadakis
Los Gatos looking for veterans to participate at the July 4th parade.
- Government Affairs Committee Chair:** Fran McVey
Mayor appointed Johnny Khamis as the contact person for veterans' issues at the city.
- Finance & Fund Raising Committee Chair:** Dennis Foggie
Looking forward to going to Moffett Field at least four times this year and other locations.
- Public Affairs Committee Chair:** Robert Kadlec
- Veterans benefits Committee Chair:** Gerald Arnold
- Veterans Incarcerated Committee Chair:** David Sanders, Sr.

XII. Unfinished Business:

The Board of Directors approved proposed budget for the next fiscal year was handed out at the last meeting for membership 30-day review. To date, no comments or suggested changes have been received. The budget is to be implemented on March first 2017. A motion to approve the proposed 2017-2018 Chapter budget made by Randy Richmond and Seconded by Fran McVey. Motion carried

Do not forget that the Chapter annual elections will be held on 17 April. Be sure to advise members of the Chapter the Election Committee your desire to be nominated for an office and/or your recommendation for officer nominations. The Election Committee members are, Fran McVey, John Hassenplug and Randy Sessler.

XIII. New Business:

Marion Moses, new Santa Clara County Veterans Services Office Director, called Dave Sanders about a veteran who needed help with rent. Motion made by Dave Sanders to give the board of directors the ability to give \$500.00 to assist the veteran once he has been vetted and that it will make a difference. Seconded by Gerald Arnold. Motion passed.

XIV. AVVA Report:

XV. Good of the Order:

The 12th Annual Veterans Resource Fair will be held at the Santa Clara County Fair Grounds on Tully Road on Saturday, April 8, 2017 between 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM. Chapter 201 has reserved a table at the Fair and will be distributing information on Agent Orange, PTSD as well as brochures for membership in the VVA.

The San Jose Veterans Center has been relocated and is now operating out of the VA Clinic at 80 Great Oaks. Entrance to the Vet Center is at the south end of the clinic.

XVI. Closing Ceremony

The next scheduled VVA Chapter 201 meeting will be held on March 20, 2017.

Randy Richmond provided the closing benediction and John Hassenplug retired the Colors.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:16 PM (2016 hours).

Respectfully Submitted,

Signed

Warren Finch, Secretary
Darwin J. Thomas Chapter 201
Vietnam Veterans of America

Vietnam Veterans of America

Darwin J. Thomas Memorial Chapter 201

CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 20 2017

Holder's Country Inn
998 South DeAnza Blvd, San Jose, CA 95129

Attendees:

Gerald Arnold	(USN)	Bill McCorquodale	(USN)
Jim Barry	(USA)	Francis McVey	(USN)
Walter Carroll		Richard Paulsen	
Gerald Cederholm	(USA)	Randall Richmond	(USA)
Cang Kim Dong	(AVVA)	Dave Sanders	(USAF)
Gene Fanucchi	(USA)	Randall Sessler	(USA)
Warren Finch	(USA)	William Thai	(AVVA)
Dennis Foggie	(USAF)	Stephen Thompson	(USN)
Rose Herrera	(USAF)	Rich Viet	(USA)
Robert Kadlec	(USAF)	Dennis Whittaker	(USA)

- I. The meeting was called to order by President Dave Sanders at 7:01 PM (1901 hours) at the Holder's Country Inn. Dennis Foggie led the Pledge of Allegiance and Randy Richmond provided the invocation and called for a moment of silence in respect for our POWs, MIAs, KIAs and our Brothers and Sisters with health issues or are in dire straights.

II. Roll Call of Chapter Officers:

President - David Sanders
Vice President - Robert Kadlec
Secretary - Warren Finch
Treasurer - Dennis Foggie
Sergeant-at-Arms Mike Frangadakis (absent)
3-year Board Member - Randy Sessler
2-year Board Member - Randy Richmond
1-year Board Member - Gerald Arnold

III. Guests:

IV. Reading of Minutes:

Minutes of the February 20 2017 meeting were forwarded electronically to the membership. Copies were available.

Motion to approve the minutes as presented by Rose Herrera and Second by Steve Thompson. The minutes were approved.

V. Correspondence:

Received a thank you letter from VSSA for our donation to their organization last year.

VI. Financial Report:

Treasurer Dennis Foggie reported that a copy of the Financial Report was distributed:

Motion to approve Treasurers Report by Randy Richmond and Second by Rose Herrera.

Motion passed.

VII. President's Report:

Memorial Day event at Oak Hill Cemetery at the Field of Honor at 1330. We will be holding that event with the AVVA. Hoping that the General will join us at the event.

VVA is only one of two organizations who was selected to receive funds from the estate of a veteran who passed recently.

Waiting on information on the location of the possible crash site of the crash site, and the recovery of Darwin J Thomas' remains. Chapter 201 will be working with the CSC (State Council) and the City of Santa Clara to provide the proper welcome home for Darwin and his family.

VIII. Board Of Directors Report:

Nothing to report.

IX. California State Council (CSC) Report:

Randy Sessler represented the Chapter at the January CSC meeting.

X. United Veterans Council (UVC) Report

Memorial Day is coming up at Oak Hill. This is an event that the UVC also puts on. Fran will be speaking at the main event.

Veterans Fair on April 8 at the Fair Grounds. There are about 73 organizations signed up to be there.

Fran has a contact at VA who will email, print flyers and send information to others about events involving veterans.

KD is working on corporate sponsorships.

XI. Committee Reports:

Membership Committee Chair: Warren Finch

December VVA-210 Membership remains at 97 (17 individual, 77 life & 3 incarcerated).

December AVVA-201 Membership at 128 (11 individual & 117 life).

POW/MIA Committee Chair: David Sanders, Sr.

Agent Orange Committee Chair: David Sanders, Sr.

Constitution/Bylaws Chair: Robert Kadlec

By-Laws approval will be on April 17, 2017.

Community Services Committee Chair: Michael Frangadakis

Government Affairs Committee Chair: Fran McVey

Finance & Fund Raising Committee Chair: Dennis Foggie

Public Affairs Committee Chair: Robert Kadlec

An article describing recent Certificates of Appreciation along with an item on participating in the American Legion Four Chaplains Service has been submitted for the next issue of the Zephyr.

Veterans benefits Committee Chair: Gerald Arnold

The Monterey Fishing trip is coming up. You must sign up ahead of time. The application is on their web site

Veterans Incarcerated Committee Chair: David Sanders, Sr.

XII. Unfinished Business:

Do not forget that the Chapter annual elections will be held on 17 April. Be sure to advise members of the Chapter the Election Committee your desire to be nominated for an office and/or your recommendation for officer nominations. The Election Committee members are, Fran McVey, John Hassenplug and Randy Sessler.

XIII. New Business:

Planning is underway for Chapter 201s participation in the UVC Memorial Day Service as well as the Chapter's Vietnam Memorial Service at the Oak Hill Field of Honor. Retired Marine Corps Major General James Livingston will be the UVC Memorial Day keynote speaker. MG Livingston is the recipient of the Medal of Honor for his action in Vietnam in 1968 and there is a possibility that he might be able to participate with the Chapter during the Field of Honor ceremony.

Kadlec reminded everyone about our fund raising that we do at Moffett and other locations. We usually hand out orange poppies when folks donate. Kadlec made a motion to spend \$136 to buy more poppies, seconded by Randy Richmond. Motion passed.

XIV. AVVA Report:

There is a welcome home/car show on April 1st that AVAA will be attending.

XV. Good of the Order:

The 12th Annual Veterans Resource Fair will be held at the Santa Clara County Fair Grounds on Tully Road on Saturday, April 8, 2017 between 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM. Chapter 201 has reserved a table at the Fair and will be distributing information on Agent Orange, PTSD as well as brochures for membership in the VVA.

Beginning on November 11th this year, any honorably discharged veteran will be allowed to shop on line for discounted military exchange products. This is in addition to those who have current exchange privileges and is valid for online purchases only. The Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) is creating software to verify veteran status using VA records. With the DMDC verifying shoppers identities electronically, the department will not have to produce special ID cards. It is estimated that 13-percent of eligible veterans, primarily those who served before 1981, might not be in the database. It is unclear at this time how that issue will be resolved. Guidance should be issued before November for veterans to verify their access eligibility.

Dignity Memorial (Oak Hill) will hold an event to honor Vietnam Veterans on June 10, 2017. They will host a dinner and a short program at Mariani's Restaurant in Santa Clara. Entertainment will be provided by the "Swingin' Blue Stars." There is a flyer available on the display table in the back of the room. More information will be provided as we get closer to June.

The San Jose Vietnam War Memorial Foundation will hold its fourth annual Sons of San Jose Vietnam Veterans Memorial Ceremony on Thursday, March 30, 2017. The ceremony will take place at the memorial at Guadalupe River Park on West Santa Clara Street at Delmas Avenue beginning at 6:30PM on March 30th.

Wreaths Across America at Gate of Heaven Cemetery, Los Altos on 16 December. President Sanders made a motion to donate \$201 to purchase wreaths. Seconded by Randy Richmond. Motion passed

Motion by Dave Sanders to donate \$500 to Grace Whitt for Adopt a Mother. Seconded by Rose Herrera. Motion passed.

Motion by Dave Sanders to donate \$500 to the Monterey Fishing . Seconded by Gerald Arnold. Motion passed.

Rose Herrera reported that there will be a proclamation at the City council meeting on 28 March. Information will be sent to the membership by Kadlec.

XVI. Closing Ceremony

The next scheduled VVA Chapter 201 meeting will be held on April 17, 2017.

Randy Richmond provided the closing benediction and John Hassenplug retired the Colors.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:57 PM (2057 hours).

Respectfully Submitted,

Signed

Warren Finch, Secretary
Darwin J. Thomas Chapter 201
Vietnam Veterans of America

Vietnam Veterans of America

Darwin J. Thomas Memorial Chapter 201

CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

Monday, April 17 2017

Attendees:

Gerald Arnold	(USN)	Larry Lisser	
Jim Barry	(USA)	Bill McCorquodale	(USN)
Bill Briggs	(USN)	Francis McVey	(USN)
Walter Carroll		James Medeiros	(USA)
Thomas Caughey		Casimiro Morin	(AVVA)
Gerald Cederholm	(USA)	Richard Paulsen	(USA)
Cang Kim Dong	(AVVA)	K D Poynter	(USAF)
Larry Doutherd	(USA)	Carmen Sanders	(AVVA)
Gene Fanucchi	(USA)	Dave Sanders	(USAF)
Warren Finch	(USA)	Randy Sessler	(USA)
Dennis Foggie	(USAF)	Burton Smith	(USN)
Richard Francis	(USN)	William Thai	(AVVA)
Michael Frangadakis	(USA)	Stephen Thompson	(USN)
John Hassenplug	(USN)	Rich Veit	(USA)
Rose Herrera	(USAF)	Jack Wells	(USMC)
Robert Kadlec	(USAF)	Dennis Whittaker	(USA)

- I. The meeting was called to order by President David Sanders at 7:02 PM (1902 hours) at the Holder's Country Inn. Sergeant-At-Arms Michael Frangadakis led the Pledge of Allegiance and Bill McCorquodale provided the invocation.

II. Roll Call of Chapter Officers:

President - David Sanders
Vice President - Robert Kadlec
Secretary - Warren Finch
Treasurer - Dennis Foggie
1-year Board Member - Gerald Arnold
2-year Board Member - Randy Richmond (excused)
3-year Board Member - Randy Sessler

- III. Guests: Introduction of Al Sickle VVA California State Council Central District Director

IV. Reading of Minutes:

Minutes of the March 2017 meeting were forwarded electronically to the membership. Motion to approve the minutes as corrected by John Hassenplug and Second by Randy Sessler. The minutes were approved.

V. Correspondence:

Letter from VVA Membership Affairs stating that we currently have 101 members and are authorized three (3) delegates at the National Convention.

VI. Financial Report:

Treasurer Dennis Foggie reported that a copy of the Financial Report was distributed:

Motion to approve Treasurers Report by Mike Frangadakis and Second by John Hessenplug.
Motion passed.

VII. Officer Reports:

San Jose City Council presented a "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" Proclamation on March 28, 2017.

The Chapter delivered 40 (forty) lap mats to VA Hospital in Palo Alto for wheelchair bound.

Dave Sanders thanked everyone present for their support while he was president.

VIII. Board Of Directors Report:

Nothing to report

IX. California State Council (CSC) Report:

The next CSC Conference will be held in Fresno Between 21 and 23 April 2017.

The 18th National Convention of the Vietnam Veterans of America will be held between August 8-12, 2017, in New Orleans. John Hassenplug and Randy Sessler have volunteered to represent the chapter as our delegates to the National Convention this year.

X. United Veterans Council (UVC) Report:

Next on agenda is the Memorial Day Event at Oak Hill.

Already working on the parade for this year. Have let the city know that we will start working on the parade for next year since it will be the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day.

Fran McVey has had a meeting with Basim Jaber, Historian/ Archivist - Almaden Air Force Station (Mt. Umunhum, CA) and they are starting to help plan the opening ceremony for the radar tower.

XI. Committee Reports:

Committee Reports were postponed until the May 15th meeting

XII. Unfinished Business:

BYLAWS APPROVAL: "The Board of Directors approved Amended Bylaws were distributed during the January 16th Chapter meeting. In accordance with Article X, Amendments, to the Chapter 201 Bylaws (nee Constitution), amendments must be approved by the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the membership present and voting at the Annual Chapter Meeting. Several suggested changes have been received during the 90-day review period. These changes were minor and consisted of such things as corrections of typos, formatting errors and uses of abbreviations (i.e., CSC for California State Council). These recommendations have been incorporated as appropriate and do not require membership vote of approval. Therefore, may I have a motion for approval of the Amended Chapter 201 Bylaws?"

Motion to approve the Bylaws by Steve Thompson and Second by Rose Herrera The Chapter 201 Bylaws, as amended are approved.

XIII. New Business:

The annual election of officers for the coming year was held with the membership voting on the individuals nominated by the Election Committee as well as additional nominations from the floor. The results of the voting are as follows:

President	Warren Finch
Vice President	Gene Fanucchi
Secretary	Stephen Thompson
Treasurer	Dennis Foggie (reelected)
Three-year Board Director	Dennis Whittaker
CSC Convention Delegate	John Hassenplug
CSC Convention Delegate	Randell Sessler
CSC Convention Delegate	Warren Finch

Election Committee: Larry Doutherd, John Hassenplug and Dennis Whittaker

VVA California State Council Central District Director Al Sickle officially installed the newly elected officers. Position and committee appointments will be announced at the May 15th meeting. Following the installation, President Warren Finch presented Al Sickle with a certificate of appreciation for his services on behalf of the membership of Chapter 201.

President Warren Finch presented Past President Dave Sanders with a Chapter 201 Gavel Plaque in recognition of his outstanding service as president from 2015 to 2017.

Request made for two volunteers to post the chapter's colors at the Memorial Day event at Oak Hill Cemetery. I will be at a different event so Dave Sanders will represent VVA Chapter 201 at the Field of Honors event on Memorial Day.

XIV. AVVA Report:

Attended the Welcome home on April 1st and the Vet Fair on April 8th.

XV. Good of the Order:

Jack Wells talked about newly elected Chapter 201 Secretary Stephen Thompson, who won Jack's book at one of our raffles. Steve's Platoon Leader in Vietnam, Lt. Terrance Graves, was one of Jack's Marine Corps classmates described in the book that Jack had written (Class of 67).

Need confirmation of who will be able to participate in the Memorial Day Ceremony at the next meeting.

Have not heard back from Becky Thomas yet about an update on the discovery of the Darwin J. Thomas crash site.

Reminder about the dinner being hosted by Oak Hill on June 10th at Marianni's Restaurant for Vietnam Veterans.

Reminder about the Monterey Bay fishing trip.

XVI. Closing Ceremony

The next scheduled VVA Chapter 201 meeting will be held on Monday May 15, 2017 at Holder's Country Inn. Social hour and dinner begins at 6:00 PM with the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Bill McQuoradale provided the closing benediction and Sergeant At Arms Michael Frangadakis retired the Colors.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:14 PM (2014 hours).

Respectfully Submitted,

Signed

Warren Finch, Former Secretary
Darwin J. Thomas Chapter 201
Vietnam Veterans of America

Vietnam Veterans of America

Darwin J. Thomas Memorial Chapter 201

CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

Monday, May 15, 2017

Attendees:

Edward Aki	USMC	Bill McCorquadale	USN
Gerald Arnold	USN	Richard McCoy	USA
Walter S Carroll	USAF	James Medeiros	USA
Cang Kim Dong	AVVA	Richard Paulsen	
Larry Doutherd	USA	K.D. Poynter	USAF
Gene Fanucchi	USA	Randall Richmond	USA
Warren Finch	USA	Mary Sessler	AVVA
Dennis Foggie	USAF	Randall Sessler	USA
John Hassenplug	USN	William Thai	AVVA
Rose Herrera	USAF	Stephen Thompson	USN
Lu-Mont Hicks	USMC/USAF	Oleta Wilhite	AVVA
Robert Kadlec	USAF	Reuben Wilhite	USMA
Donald Mac Dougall	USA		

I. The meeting was called to order by President Warren Finch at 7:02 PM (1902 hours) at Holder's Country Inn. Sergeant-At-Arms Dennis Foggie led the Pledge of Allegiance and Chaplain Randy Richmond provided the invocation. Chaplain Randy Richmond also read the obituary of Paul DeCillis, a member of VVA 201, passed away in December 2016.

II. Roll Call of Chapter Officers:

President – Warren Finch
Vice President – Gene Fanucchi
Secretary – Stephen Thompson
Treasurer - Dennis Foggie
3-year Board Member - Dennis Whittaker (excused)
2-year Board Member - Randy Sessler
1-year Board Member - Randy Richmond

III. Guests:

Alexa Aki, Jennifer Fanucchi, Matt Wahlin

IV. Reading of Minutes:

Minutes of the April 2017 meeting were forwarded electronically to the membership. Motion to approve the minutes as submitted by Randy Richmond and Second by Rose Herrera. The minutes were approved.

V. Correspondence:

Santa Clara County Veteran Services Office on May 26, 2017 POW/MIA flag raising ceremony invitation.

VI. Financial Report:

Treasurer Dennis Foggie reported that a copy of the Financial Report was distributed:

Motion to approve Treasurers Report by **Randy Richmond** and Second by **John Hassenplug**.
Motion passed.

VII. Officer Reports:

Warren Finch will be out of town for the June meeting and Vice President Gene Fanucchi will chair this meeting.

VIII. Board Of Directors Report:

Board of Directors to meet on May 16, 2017 to review the 2017/2018 budget due to possible changes in income for the year.

IX. California State Council (CSC) Report:

The 18th National Convention of the Vietnam Veterans of America will be held between August 8 and 12, 2017, in New Orleans. John Hassenplug and Randy Sessler have volunteered to represent the chapter as our delegates to the National Convention this year.

X. United Veterans Council (UVC) Report:

Nothing to report

XI. Committee Reports:

Membership Committee: April VVA-201 Membership changed to 100 due to death of a member Paul DeCillis, who passed away on December 19, 2016 (18 individual, 79 life & 3 incarcerated). April AVVA-201 Membership at 128 (11 individual & 117 life).

Constitution/Bylaws: Amended Bylaws approved during April 2017 meeting and have been forwarded to Web Master for inclusion on the web site

Finance and Fund Raising: Moffett Field fundraiser netted a total of \$321.87. This is less than budgeted, which may have been influenced by the fact this was Mother's Day weekend. Dennis did have additional poppies for sale to all that were interested.

Public Affairs: Article for the July Zephyr will be sent noting results of the Chapter election.

Veterans Benefits: VA Palo Alto Health Care System continues to recruit a new Director.

XII. Unfinished Business:

Nothing to report

XIII. New Business:

Chapter Order #2 – Appointment of officers signed:

Randall Richmond	Chaplain
William McCorquadale	Assistant Chaplain
Dennis Foggie	Sergeant-At-Arms
Gerald Arnold	VSO & Palo Alto VAVS Representative.
Randall Richmond	Liaison Officer to the Chapter 201 AVVA

Chapter Order #3 – Committee and Delegate Appointments:

Chaplain	Randall Richmond
Assistant Chaplain	William McCorquadale
Membership Committee Chair:	Steve Thompson
POW/MIA Committee Chair:	David W. Sanders, Sr.
Agent Orange Committee Chair:	David W. Sanders, Sr.
Constitution/Bylaws Chair:	Robert Kadlec
Community Services Committee Chair:	Michael Frangadakis
Government Affairs Committee Chair:	Fran McVey
Finance & Fund Raising Committee Chair:	Dennis Foggie
Public Affairs Committee Chair:	Robert Kadlec
Veterans benefits Committee Chair:	Gerald Arnold
Veterans Incarcerated Committee Chair:	Jack Wells
Delegates to The United Veterans Council of Santa Clara County	
Rose Herrera	
Randal Sessler	
Jack Wells	

XIV. AVVA Report:

Announced the Former Vietnam Armed Forces Day Event June 19, 2017.

XV. Good of the Order:

Memorial Day is May 29 and need to have volunteers for wreath carriers and flag bearers. Warren Finch requested volunteers for this event and received acknowledgement from members that were present. Main event starts at 11:00 AM at Oak Hill Cemetery.

President Finch will not be able to attend due to a conflicting engagement as a part of a singing group that sings for the Menlo Park VA.

Vietnam Veterans Dinner at Mariani's Inn & Restaurant on June 10. RSVP to Karen Carter at Oak Hill (Karen.Carter@DignityMemorial.com) by June 2.

Flag Day Tuesday June 13th from 1:30 to 3:00 at Menlo Park VA.

Fisher House Fund Raiser from 11:00 to 3:00 in Redwood City. Car Show and other attractions.

Discussion regarding the issue of Vietnam Vets who die while hospitalized and have no family. Warren Finch requested additional information be sent to him to forward to Bob Kadlec for review.

VVA Chapter 500 18th annual "Reading Of The Names" (remembering the 5,866+ Californians inscribed on the Vietnam Memorial) will take place on Sunday, May 29, 2017, at Capitol Park in Sacramento.

XVI. Closing Ceremony

The next scheduled VVA Chapter 201 meeting will be held on Monday June 19, 2017 at Holder's Country Inn. Social hour and dinner begins at 6:00 PM with the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Chaplain Randy Richmond provided the closing benediction and Sergeant at Arms Dennis Foggie retired the Colors.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:14 PM (2014 hours).

Respectfully Submitted,

Signed

Stephen Thompson, Secretary
Darwin J. Thomas Chapter 201
Vietnam Veterans of America

Vietnam Veterans of America

Darwin J. Thomas Memorial Chapter 201

Chapter Meeting Minutes

Monday June 19, 2017

Attendees:

Gerald Arnold	USN	Robert Kadlec	USAF
Jim Barry	USA	Bill McCorquadale	USN
Gerald Cederholm	USA	Richard McCoy	USA
Jeff Driskell	USAF	Fran McVey	USN
Gene Fanucchi	USA	James Medeiros	USA
Richard Francis	USN	K.D. Poynter	USAF
Michael Frangadakis	USA	Randall Richmond	USA
John Hassenplug	USN	William Thai	AVVA
Rose Herrera	USAF	Stephen Thompson	USN
Clyde R Horn	USA		

I. The meeting was called to order by Vice President Gene Fanucchi at 7:02 PM (1902 hours) at Holder's Country Inn. Sergeant-At-Arms absent and the Pledge of Allegiance was conducted and Chaplain Randy Richmond provided the invocation.

II. Roll Call of Chapter Officers:

President – Warren Finch (excused)
Vice President – Gene Fanucchi
Secretary – Stephen Thompson
Treasurer - Dennis Foggie (excused)
3-year Board Member – Dennis Whittaker (excused)
2-year Board Member - Randy Sessler
1-year Board Member –Randy Richmond

III. Guests:

Dan Heckerman (USA), Robert Ramirez (USA), Audrey Li (guest), Rosnee Joshi (guest).

Dan Heckerman and Robert Ramirez, both Vietnam Veterans, interested in membership.

Audrey Li Student Partners seeking veterans to be interviewed and taped by students as part of a compilation of veteran stories. Web Site information www.students-veterans.com and Email address is info#students-veterans.com.

Rosnee Joshi – SAP Center – Looking for volunteers to assist in events at SAP Center. This is a paying position with union wages starting at \$14 per hour. Employment website: www.sapcenter.com/employmentJob. Hot line is 408-999-5698.

IV. Reading of Minutes:

Minutes of the May 2017 meeting were forwarded electronically to the membership. Motion to approve the minutes as submitted by Richard McCoy and Second by Randall Richmond. The minutes were approved.

V. Correspondence:

Nothing to report

VI. Financial Report:

Treasurer Dennis Foggie reported that a copy of the Financial Report was distributed:

Motion to approve Treasurers Report by Randy Richmond and Second by Rose Herrera.

Motion passed.

VII. Officer Reports:

VIII. Board Of Directors Report:

Presented revised budget to be approved at the next meeting.

IX. California State Council (CSC) Report:

Next CSC Conference is 21 to 23 July 2017 in Fresno.

X. United Veterans Council (UVC) Report:

Nothing to report

XI. Committee Reports:

Membership Committee: May VVA Membership 103 members; 81 Life; 19 Individual; 3 Incarcerated; 1 deceased.

May AVVA Membership 128 members; 117 Life; 11 Individual.

Government Affairs: County commissioner reviewing annual budget and work commission looking to revise Goals and Objectives.

Santa Clara County Veterans Council meets monthly and vote due August 15.

Gold Star Memorial – Dave Cortese working on design of two panels with a dedication date of September 24.

Official opening of Mt. Umunhum Conservancy weekend of September 15 – 18. Invitation only for county officials and Saturday September 15. Need volunteers to assist on Sunday and Monday, but once again invitation only and all guests will be bused to the top of the mountain. Steve Thompson to volunteer for assistance on Sunday and Monday. Need at least 2 people from VVA 201 at a minimum.

Public Affairs: Working to get Memorial Day pictures to web site. By Laws have been published on the website.

Veterans Benefits: VA Palo Alto Health Care System continues to recruit a new Director and may have a candidate hired soon.

Individual Unemployability was removed from the 2017/2018 budget initially, but appears this has been placed back in the budget. This is an area of vulnerability and all veterans are encouraged to work with their individual associations and elected officials to assure this is ongoing

Questions regarding burial for Homeless Veterans was discussed and noted that Oak Hill will assist in covering the costs and the VA does have a program

Community Service: Oak Hill hosted a dinner for veterans. Motion made for the President to send a letter of appreciation to Oak Hill. Motion to approve Randall Richmond and seconded by Gerald Arnold. Richard McCoy to work with Warren Finch on wording.

XII. Unfinished Business:

Discussed resurrecting the speaker bureau. People still interested are Dennis Whittaker, Jack Wells, Steve Thompson, Fran McVey and Randall Richmond. Possibly create an ad hoc committee.

XIII. New Business:

Presentation of revised 2017 – 2018 budget reduction from of approximately \$2,500.00 as a result of reduction in expected HGDP income. Will need membership approval during the next chapter meeting.

Request to invite Robyn Grieve Chapter Captain Red White and Blue to the next VVA meeting.

XIV. AVVA Report:

Cang excused due to illness and nothing to report.

XV. Good of the Order:

Memorial Day Event well attended and guest of honor was Major General Livingston, Medal of Honor Recipient.

Moffett Field Fundraiser – Saturday and Sunday July 15 and July 16. Volunteers are always welcomed.

Former RVN Celebration June 25

8th Annual Golf Tournament August 7

Fisher House Fundraiser August 26

Army helicopter nose art sale

Cell Phone plans discounted 40% are available for veterans

XVI. Closing Ceremony

The next scheduled VVA Chapter 201 meeting will be held on Monday July, 17 2017 at Holder's Country Inn. Social hour and dinner begins at 6:00 PM with the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Chaplain Randy Richmond provided the closing benediction and colors were retired.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:14 PM (2014 hours).

Respectfully Submitted,

Signed

Stephen Thompson, Secretary
Darwin J. Thomas Chapter 201
Vietnam Veterans of America

Vietnam Veterans of America
Darwin J. Thomas Memorial Chapter 201
CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

Monday July 17, 2017

Attendees:

Gerald Arnold	USN	Fran McVey	USN
Jim Barry	USA	Casimiro Morin	AVVA
Walter Carroll	USAF	Richard Paulsen	USA
Tito Cortez	USA	Randall Richmond	USA
Kang Kim Dong	AVVA	David Sanders	USAF
Larry Doutherd	USA	Mary Sessler	AVVA
Gene Fanucchi	USA	Randy Sessler	USA
Warren`	USA	Burton Smith	USN
Richard Francis	USN	William Thai	AVVA
Dennis Foggie	USAF	Stephen Thompson	USN
John Hassenplug	USN	Rich Veit	USA
Dan Heckerman	USA	Jack Wells	USMC
Robert Kadlec	USAF	Dennis Whittaker	USA
Richard McCoy	USA		

I. The meeting was called to order by President Warren Finch at 7:02 PM (1902 hours) at Holder's Country Inn. Sergeant-At-Arms John Hassenplug presented the colors and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chaplain Randy Richmond provided the invocation.

II. Roll Call of Chapter Officers:

President – Warren Finch
 Vice President – Gene Fanucchi
 Secretary – Stephen Thompson
 Treasurer - Dennis Foggie
 3-year Board Member – Dennis Whittaker
 2-year Board Member - Randy Sessler
 1-year Board Member –Randy Richmond

III. Guests:

Carol Fanucchi, Tiara Cortez-Miller, Lucia Carroll

Nandini K. Narayan – Field Representative for Congressman Ro Khanna. Introduced and shared regards from Congressman Ro Khanna and to contact her if they can be of assistance, E Mail Nandini.narayan@mail.house.gov.

Barry Bamford – Sacred Place Memorial Burial sites for veterans. Currently have availability in San Joaquin, Dixon, California Central Coast and projected for Alameda in 2021. Phone 408-863-2513. E Mail info@sacredspacememorial.com

IV. Reading of Minutes:

Minutes of the June 2017 meeting were forwarded electronically to the membership. Motion to approve the minutes as submitted by Richard McCoy and Second by Randall Richmond.

The finance report for June was noted as incorrect and the Secretary indicated a clerical error to be corrected on the master minutes.

Richard Mc Coy amended his motion to approve the minutes as modified and the modified minutes were approved.

V. Correspondence:

Monthly Rebate report received from VVA and noted Rebate amount of \$45.00

Notice of Consent from Superior Court, County of Santa Clara regarding estate of James Samuel Fife and assigning consent to Jennifer Johnson.

VI. Financial Report:

Treasurer Dennis Foggie reported that a copy of the Financial Report was distributed:

Motion to approve Treasurers Report by Dennis Whittaker and seconded by Fran McVey.

VII. Officer Reports:

President Report: Working to see if we can get the SJ City Hall rotunda for use to raise funds for homeless veterans at no cost.

Chorus open to all and practice is Sunday nights from 6:30 – 8:30. Paramount Drive (SJ Opera)

VIII. Board Of Directors Report:

Reviewed revised budget for 2017/2018 and additional revenue from the HGDP Program. Final budget to be approved during the August meeting.

IX. California State Council (CSC) Report:

Nothing to report

X. United Veterans Council (UVC) Report:

Delivered 200 Cashmere blankets to the homeless veterans interim facility, Dave Sanders requested group bring pillows to the next meeting and he will take to the facility.

5 new members have joined the VVC

VFW # 39 looking to recruit combat veterans. Meetings are the 2nd Monday of the month and if interested, contact Dave Sanders.

American Legion Post 564 will provide bus transportation to the Yountville BBQ on July 30.

Veterans' Day Parade – Need to move up by 1 hour to allow for better staging. Looking to get a Parade Committee together and hoping to have better participation by the SJ Sharks.

XI. Committee Reports:

Membership Committee: June Membership:

May AVVA Membership, 128 members, 117 Life Time, 11 Individual.

Public Affairs:

By laws are now posted to the Website and articles and pictures were noted in the current Zephyr.

Veterans Benefits:

Nothing To Report

Community Service:

Nothing To Report

XII. Unfinished Business:

Budget for 2017/2018 revised as noted above and to be approved at next meeting.

XIII. New Business:

King Library is looking to show the Ken Burns movie "Vietnam" in September. More information next meeting.

County Veterans Commission working to re-invent themselves to be more effective. Fran McVey working with the council and will keep us updated.

XIV. Good of the Order:

Moffett Field Fundraiser: Collected \$131.00 on Saturday (July 15) and \$191.00 on Sunday (July 16) for a total of **\$322.00.**

Mount Umuhnum opening in September (Sunday September 17 and Monday September 18). Will need volunteers and more information to be available during August meeting.

American Legion Post 564 will have fireworks on September 15.

VFW post 344 meets first Thursday at 7 PM.

Veterans Affairs Palo Alto Health Care System has hired new Director (Tony Fitzgerald).

XVI. Closing Ceremony

The next scheduled VVA Chapter 201 meeting will be held on Monday August 21, 2017 at Holder's Country Inn. Social hour and dinner begins at 6:00 PM with the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Chaplain Randy Richmond provided the closing benediction and Sergeant at Arms John Hassenplug retired the Colors.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:14 PM (2014 hours).

Respectfully Submitted,



Stephen Thompson, Secretary
Darwin J. Thomas Chapter 201
Vietnam Veterans of America

Vietnam Veterans of America
Darwin J. Thomas Memorial Chapter 201

CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

Monday August 21, 2017

Attendees:

Gerald Arnold	USN	Robert Kadlec	USAF
Jim Barry	USA	Larry Lisser	USN
Jay Bacon	USMC	Fran McVey	USN
Walter Carroll	USAF	James Medeiros	USA
Gerald Cederholm	USA	Casimiro Morin	AVVA
Larry Doutherd	USA	K.D. Poynter	USAF
Gene Fanucchi	USA	David Sanders	USAF
Warren Finch	USA	Burton Smith	USN
Dennis Foggie	USAF	William Thai	AVVA
Richard Francis	USN	Stephen Thompson	USN
Michael Frangadakis	USA	Dennis Whittaker	USA
John Hassenplug	USN	Ruben Wilhite	USMC
Clyde Horn	USA	Olita Wilhite	AVVA

I. The meeting was called to order by President Warren Finch at 7:02 PM (1902 hours) at Holder's Country Inn. Sergeant-At-Arms John Hassenplug presented the colors and led the Pledge of Allegiance and Secretary Stephen Thompson provided the invocation.

II. Roll Call of Chapter Officers:

President – Warren Finch
Vice President – Gene Fanucchi
Secretary – Stephen Thompson
Treasurer - Dennis Foggie
Sergeant at Arms – John Hassenplug
3-year Board Member – Dennis Whittaker
2-year Board Member - Randy Sessler - Excused
1-year Board Member –Randy Richmond - Excused

III. Guests:

Gwen Arnold

Diane Chandler

Guest of Mike Frangadakis. Working with the Los Gatos Veterans Support Meetings.

Ponce Gonzales – VVA Chapter 464

Robyn Grieve – Chapter Captain Red White and Blue

Presented overview of what Red White and Blue performs in service to the veterans.

Activities such as bowling, painting, kayaking, yoga, etc., for all veterans and open to all to be active and participate. For more information, please go to RWB.org

Neil Lichtman – Founder, Know a Vet.

Working with the San Jose Vet Center to develop an advocate program to work with recently discharged veterans one on one. All parties interested are encouraged to contact Neil Lichtman at Neil@knowavet.com or 833-566-9283, ext. 702

Tom Pyke – Director of Constituent Services, Ro Khanna office.

408-436-2720 or tom.pyke@mail.house.gov.

IV. Reading of Minutes:

Minutes of the July 2017 meeting were forwarded electronically to the membership.

Motion to approve the minutes as submitted by Walter Carroll and Second by Richard Francis.

V. Correspondence:

Flyer advertising a new book “Long Daze at Long Binh” written by two Vietnam Army Medics Steve Donovan and Fred Borchardt. If interested, can be obtained on Amazon or WWW.Longbindaze.com.

Catalogue Glendale Parade Store.com

VVA Santa Rosa News and Views Newsletter

Events Catalogue, The military reunion network.com

Notice of Creditors Claim from Attorneys GCA Law Firm for expenses incurred by Barbara Ledig work with the Estate of James Samuel Fife. Approved by Warren Finch and mailed back to law firm.

Treasurer Dennis Foggie reported that a copy of the Financial Report was distributed:

July 1, 2017 Balance:	=	\$ 7,683.78
Plus Income	=	\$ 442.00
Sub-Total	=	\$ 8,125.78
Minus Expenses	=	\$ 227.00
Balance	=	\$ 7,898.78 (07/31/17)

Motion to approve Treasurers Report by Dennis Whittaker and seconded by Gerald Arnold.

VII. Officer Reports:

President Report: Agreed to place a full-page ad in the Veterans Support Service Association 5th Annual Silicon Valley Charity Ball newsletter. The ad was paid for by a VVA-201 member and there is no cost to the chapter. Requested ad be placed on the inside cover of the VSSA Program.

National Vietnam Veterans Association posted a CONDEMNATION of racist groups such as Neo Nazi's, Ku Klux Klan, White Supremacy or any other related group. There is no room in the VVA for any person that supports these types of positions.

VIII. Board Of Directors Report: Nothing to report

IX. VVA National Convention Report:

John Hassenplug and Randy Sessler attended the National VVA Convention in New Orleans. John Hassenplug reported that the convention was well attended and the full National Slate of Officers were approved as submitted. A number of constitutional By Laws were discussed and voted with most receiving approval. Additional convention information can be found on the VVA National Website.

IX. California State Council (CSC) Report:

CSC Meeting to be held in Fresno October 27th through October 29th. Randy Sessler and his wife Mary (AVVA) will be attending for Chapter 201.

XI. United Veterans Council (UVC) Report:

Veterans' Day Parade – Still looking for an MC and need to confirm members to be a part of the Color Guard for VVA201. KD advised that Santana Row arrangements are almost complete

XII. Committee Reports:

Membership Committee:

July Membership VVA-201 – dropped to 98 (15 individual, 80 life & 3 incarcerated).6 members have become inactivated over the past 90 days due to either nonpayment of dues or other factors. December 2016 AVVA-201 Membership at 128 (11 individual & 117 life).

Government Affairs Committee:

Francis McVey re-elected as Chair County Commission

Public Affairs:

Website updated and articles have been submitted to the Zephyr.

Veterans Benefits:

Forever GI Bill was signed for Veterans discharged after 01/01/2013

Community Service:

Mike Frangadakis updated meeting on the progress of the Veteran Memorial Foundation in Los Gatos and the memorial to be completed.

Mt. Umunhum update – VIP Day Saturday September 16. Information tent will be available for Sunday and Monday September 17 and 18. More details to come and appears there are sufficient volunteers for the tent.

XIII. Unfinished Business:

Approval of 2017/2018 Budget, Motion by Mike Frangadakis and second by Dennis Whittaker. Approved unanimously.

XIV. New Business:

Request made for the following disbursements:

- \$39.95 – Robert Kadlec
- \$204.30 – Dennis Foggie
- \$147.44 – Dennis Foggie

Motion by Dave Sanders, second by Dennis Whittaker. Approved

XV. Good of the Order:

Dennis Whittaker requested veteran participation with the Joacquin Miller Middle School on September 9 to work with the students one on one. Please contact Dennis at Dennis.whittaker.b826@statefarm.com

Dennis Whittaker also noted he is attempting to raise \$13,000 for the "Race across America event on December 16 and it is a nationwide event. Please contact Dennis at Dennis.whittaker.b826@statefarm.com for more information.

Ponce Gonzalez, VVA Chapter 464, addressed the meeting with the following:

POW/MIA Services in San Bruno and requesting assistance from VVA Chapter 201.

VVA Chapter 464 is looking at possibility of having a joint meeting of select individuals from all of the Northern California VVA chapters to discuss what each chapter is doing and how we can all work together.

Celebrate Welcome Home Veterans Day on March 28. Car Show, Bar b que and more.

Ponce will forward additional information regarding the above to Robert Kadlec and Steve Thompson.

Dave Sanders thanked the group for the pillows and requested twin comforters for the Homeless Vets Center.

October 29, VVA-201 and AVVA-201 will conduct the UVC Flag Lowering at Oak Hill Cemetery

XVI. Closing Ceremony

The next scheduled VVA Chapter 201 meeting will be held on Monday September 18, 2017 at Holder's Country Inn. Social hour and dinner begins at 6:00 PM with the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Secretary Stephen Thompson provided the closing benediction and Sergeant At Arms, John Hassenplug, retired the colors.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM (2040 hours).

Respectfully Submitted,



Stephen R. Thompson
Secretary
Darwin J. Thomas Chapter 201
Vietnam Veterans of America

Vietnam Veterans of America
Darwin J. Thomas Memorial Chapter 201

CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

Monday September 18, 2017

Attendees:

Gerald Arnold	USN	Fran McVey	USN
Jay Bacon	USMC	Casimiro Morin	AVVA
Walter Carroll	USAF	Richard Paulsen	USA
Cang Kim Dong	AVVA	K.D. Poynter	USAF
Jeff Driskell	USA	Randall Richmond	USAF
Gene Fanucchi	USA	David Sanders	USAF
Warren Finch	USA	Carmen Sanders	AVVA
Dennis Foggie	USAF	Randall Sessler	USA
Richard Francis	USN	Mary Sessler	AVVA
John Hassenplug	USN	Burton Smith	USN
Dennis Heckerman	USA	William Thai	AVVA
Rose Herrera	USAF	Stephen Thompson	USN
Robert Kadlec	USAF	Rich Veit	USA
Richard McCoy	USA	Jack Wells	USMC
Bill McCorquadale	USN	Dennis Whittaker	USA

I. The meeting was called to order by President Warren Finch at 7:02 PM (1902 hours) at Holder's Country Inn. Sergeant-At-Arms John Hassenplug presented the colors and led the Pledge of Allegiance and Chaplain Randy Richmond provided the invocation.

II. Roll Call of Chapter Officers:

President – Warren Finch
Vice President – Gene Fanucchi
Secretary – Stephen Thompson
Treasurer - Dennis Foggie
Sergeant at Arms – John Hassenplug
3-year Board Member – Dennis Whittaker
2-year Board Member - Randy Sessler
1-year Board Member –Randy Richmond

III. Guests:

Gwen Arnold
Sherry Oppenheim

IV. Reading of Minutes:

Minutes of the August2017 meeting were forwarded electronically to the membership. Motion to approve the minutes as submitted by John Hassenplug and seconded by Dennis Whittaker. Approved as submitted.

V. Correspondence:

VVA Newsletter from Empire Chapter

VVA Information sheet and talking points regarding how to talk to representatives re: Agent Orange coverage for Blue Water Navy.

Santa Clara Foundation having a dinner at The Table.

VI. Finance Report:

Treasurer Dennis Foggie reported that a copy of the Financial Report was distributed.

Motion to approve Treasurers Report by Richard Paulsen and seconded by Randy Richmond. Approved subject to audit

VII. Officer Reports:

Reminder to members regarding need to contact State Representatives regarding Blue Water navy eligibility for Agent Orange Consideration.

VIII. Board Of Directors Report:

Nothing to report

IX. California State Council (CSC) Report:

Nothing to report until after October CSC meeting.

XI. United Veterans Council (UVC) Report:

Dennis Heckerman has volunteered his truck and low boy trailer for use in the Veterans Day Parade. Dave Sanders to work with city to assure all in compliance.

Four buses compliments of the VTA and Rosa Parks will pick up VIP's from viewing stands and transport to start of the parade.

UVC will be holding an election for a new President.

XII. Committee Reports:

Membership Committee: August Membership VVA-201 increased by 3 to 101 (17 individual, 81 life & 3 incarcerated). 5 members have become inactivated over the past 90 days due to either nonpayment of dues or other factors.

December AVVA-201 Membership at 128 (11 individual & 117 life).

POW/MIA POW/MIA coins are available at cost of \$12 in advance. Contact Dave Sanders.

Cang represented AVVA at raising of flag event.

Agent Orange: Updates can be located at WWW.VA.ORG under tab for Agent Orange.

Constitution/Bylaws: Nothing to Report

Government Affairs: Seeking name change to "Veterans Commission of Santa Clara County". Forwarded to Board of Supervisors and approval is expected.

Finance and Fund Raising: Nothing to report

Public Affairs: Website updated with August meeting minutes

Veteran Affairs: Construction for Building 500 (Rehab) scheduled for completion October 24 Fishing Trip scheduled for Sept 30.

Incarcerated Veterans: Nothing to report

XIII. Unfinished Business:

Nothing to Report

XIV. New Business:

Volunteers are needed for the Color Guard and other assistance for the Veterans Day Parade. Interested members should contact Warren Finch and Steve Thompson.

Motion made by Rich McCoy and seconded by Randy Richmond for VVA to donate \$100 to the Salvation Army for Hurricane Relief Fund. Approved as amended.

XV. Good of the Order:

Veterans Chorus will be performing on Veterans Day at Santana Row in the plaza in front of Maggianos at 3:30 PM.

K.D.is looking for other music at Santana Row on Veterans Day

September 18th marks the 70th anniversary of the USAF.

VVA Chapter 201 to sponsor four Vietnam students. Motion made by Dennis Whittaker and second by Randy Sessler. Approved.

Dennis Whittaker discussed the students with Joaquin Miller Middle School. More information at next meeting

XVI. Closing Ceremony

The next scheduled VVA Chapter 201 meeting will be held on Monday October 16 at Holder's Country Inn. Social hour and dinner begins at 6:00 PM with the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM (2000 hours).

Respectfully Submitted,



Stephen R. Thompson
Secretary
Darwin J. Thomas Chapter 201
Vietnam Veterans of America

Vietnam Veterans of America
Darwin J. Thomas Memorial Chapter 201
CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES
Monday October 16, 2017

Attendees:

Jim Barry	USA	K.D. Poynter	USAF
Cang Kim Dong	AVVA	Randall Richmond	USA
Larry Douthard	USA	Carmen Sanders	AVVA
Gene Fanucchi	USA	David Sanders	USAF
Warren Finch	USA	Mary Sessler	AVVA
Dennis Foggie	USAF	Randall Sessler	USA
Richard Francis	USN	Burton Smith	USN
Michael Frangadakis	USA	William Thai	AVVA
John Hassenplug	USN	Stephen Thompson	USN
Dan Heckerman	USA	Dennis Uram	
Robert Kadlec	USAF	Rich Veit	USA
Bill McCorquadale	USN	Jack Wells	USMC
Fran McVey	USN	Dennis Whittaker	USA
Richard Paulsen	USA		

- I.** The meeting was called to order by President Warren Finch at 7:00 PM (1900 hours) at Holder's Country Inn. Sergeant-At-Arms John Hassenplug presented the colors and led the Pledge of Allegiance and Chaplain Randy Richmond provided the invocation.

II. Roll Call of Chapter Officers:

President – Warren Finch
 Vice President – Gene Fanucchi
 Secretary – Stephen Thompson
 Treasurer - Dennis Foggie
 Sergeant at Arms – John Hassenplug
 3-year Board Member – Dennis Whittaker
 2-year Board Member - Randy Sessler
 1-year Board Member –Randy Richmond

III. Guests:

Trudy Uram
 Kari Kastle
 Andy Benkert

IV. Reading of Minutes:

Minutes of the September 2017 meeting were forwarded electronically to the membership. One modification to correct name for Randy Sessler from Sandy Sessler. Motion to approve the minutes as submitted by Dennis Whittaker and seconded by Randy Richmond. Approved as amended.

V. Correspondence:

Creditors Claim information from James Fife estate
Employment opportunities from Apria Health

VI. Finance Report:

Treasurer Dennis Foggie reported that a copy of the Financial Report was distributed:
Motion to approve Treasurers Report by Rich Veit and seconded by Randy Richmond. Approved subject to audit

VII. Officer Reports:

Veterans Day Parade, Honor on the row

VIII. Board Of Directors Report:

Nothing to report

IX. California State Council (CSC) Report:

Nothing to report until after meeting in November.

XI. United Veterans Council (UVC) Report:

Dan Heckerman has volunteered his truck and low boy trailer for use in the Veterans Day Parade.
Dave Sanders to work with city to assure all in compliance.
UVC will be holding an election for a new President.

XII. Committee Reports:

Membership Committee: September Membership VVA-201 decreased by 2 to 99 (16 individual, 80 life & 3 incarcerated). 5 members have become inactivated over the past 90 days due to either nonpayment of dues and 2 have passed away

September AVVA-201 Membership at 128 (11 individual & 117 life).

POW/MIA: Cang represented AVVA at raising of flag event and presented a very moving presentation. Warren Finch and Rose Herrera were also in attendance

Agent Orange: Updates can be located at WWW.VA.ORG under tab for Agent Orange. State of California is adding names of veterans who have died from an Agent Orange condition to the memorial wall.

Constitution/Bylaws: Nothing to Report

Government Affairs: Name change to “Veterans Commission of Santa Clara County”. Forwarded to Board of Supervisors and approval is expected.

Finance and Fund Raising: Nothing to report

Public Affairs: Nothing to Report

Community Services: Veteran memorial in Los Gatos is moving forward and support event to be held October 26 from 3 PM – 8PM. All members encouraged to attend to show support.

Veteran Affairs: Construction for Building 500 (Rehab) scheduled for completion October 24
Fishing Trip scheduled for Sept 30.

Incarcerated Veterans: Jack will be talking to the District Attorney regarding status of any incarcerated member.

XIII. Unfinished Business:

Call for at least 4 people to carry flags on Veterans Day. 4 members to date have volunteered. Interested members need to meet at Santa Clara and Delmas prior to the 10 AM start time.

XIV. New Business:

Holiday Meal was discussed and agreed that the dinner could be held at Holders Country Inn on Monday December 18, 2017. Chapter to pay for the cost of a meal for the member and one guest. Motion made by Randy Richmond and seconded by Dave Sanders, unanimously approved. Tentative start time of 5 PM, but will know more by next meeting.

Discussion regarding the Ken Burns 18-hour movie re: Vietnam. General agreement was that the series was slanted and did not accurately represent the actual events.

XV. Good of the Order:

Dennis Whittaker discussed the students with Joaquin Miller Middle School and encouraged members to attend.

XVI. Closing Ceremony

The next scheduled VVA Chapter 201 meeting will be held on Monday November 20 at Holder's Country Inn. Social hour and dinner begins at 6:00 PM with the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM (2000 hours).

Respectfully Submitted,



Stephen R. Thompson
Secretary
Darwin J. Thomas Chapter 201
Vietnam Veterans of America

Vietnam Veterans of America

Darwin J. Thomas Memorial Chapter 201

CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

Monday November 20, 2017

Attendees:

Jim Barry	USA	Fran McVey	USN
Gerald Cederholm	USA	James Medeiros	USA
Larry Douthard	USA	Richard Paulsen	USA
Jeff Driskell	USA	K.D. Poynter	USAF
Cang Kim Dong	AVVA	Randall Richmond	USAF
Gene Fanucchi	USA	David Sanders	USAF
Warren Finch	USA	Randall Sessler	USA
Dennis Foggie	USAF	Mary Sessler	AVVA
Richard Francis	USN	Burton Smith	USN
John Hassenplug	USN	William Thai	AVVA
Michael Frangadakis	USA	Stephen Thompson	USN
Dan Heckerman	USA	Jack Wells	USMC
Clyde Horn	USA	Dennis Whittaker	USA
Robert Kadlec	USAF		

I. The meeting was called to order by President Warren Finch at 7:00 PM (1900 hours) at Holder's Country Inn. Sergeant-At-Arms John Hassenplug presented the colors and led the Pledge of Allegiance and Chaplain Randy Richmond provided the invocation.

II. Roll Call of Chapter Officers:

President – Warren Finch
Vice President – Gene Fanucchi
Secretary – Stephen Thompson
Treasurer - Dennis Foggie
Sergeant at Arms – John Hassenplug
3-year Board Member – Dennis Whittaker
2-year Board Member - Randy Sessler
1-year Board Member –Randy Richmond

III. Guests:

Paul Davis – Vet Center
Mike O'Mcan
Amy Nhon Philips
Nicole Gastric

IV. Reading of Minutes:

Minutes of the October 2017 meeting were forwarded electronically to the membership. Motion to approve the minutes as submitted by John Hassenplug and seconded by Dennis Whittaker.

V. Correspondence:

Withdrawal of membership letter from Jay Bacon.
Request for donation from Gulf War memorial.

VI Finance Report:

Treasurer Dennis Foggie reported that a copy of the Financial Report was distributed:
Motion to approve Treasurers Report by **Randy Richmond** and seconded by **John Hassenplug**. Approved subject to audit

VII. Officer Reports:

Veterans Day Parade was a success. Honor on the row was well attended and well received.

VIII. Board Of Directors Report:

BOD met and reviewed Finances.

Changed Holiday Luncheon day and venue to Spaghetti Factory on Sunday December 17. Member and 1 guest paid by chapter. Additional guests are \$10 each to be collected at the door. Guest speaker is Richard Botkin, author of "Ride the Thunder".

IX. California State Council (CSC) Report:

Met in Fresno 10/27 – 10/28. Summary prepared by Randy Sessler attached.

X. United Veterans Council (UVC) Report:

99th year celebrating Veterans Day (Originally Armistice Day).

This also marks the 95th year since the establishment of the UVC.

KD reported that there were 32,618 cars parked at Santana Row for Honor on the Row. We will be invited back next year. KD will not be able to manage, so Gene Fanucchi will assume responsibility.

XI. Committee Reports:

Membership Committee: October Membership VVA-201 increased by 2 to 101 (16 individual, 82 life & 3 incarcerated). 5 members have become inactivated over the past 90 days due to either nonpayment of dues and 2 have passed away.

September AVVA-201 Membership at 128 (11 individual & 117 life).

POW/MIA: - Nothing to Report

Agent Orange: Updates can be located at WWW.VA.ORG under tab for Agent Orange.

Constitution/Bylaws: Nothing to Report.

Government Affairs: Name change to "Veterans Commission of Santa Clara County". Fran to attend meeting in Fresno in November and take agenda items to Dick Southern. Fran to work with County Board 12/21 to receive a blanket approval for a series of events that can be noted under the Veterans Commission of Santa Clara County. Also looking to receive approval for Veteran of the Year award.

Finance a5nd Fund Raising: Nothing to report.

Public Affairs: Nothing to report.

Community Services: Veteran memorial in Los Gatos to go before council December 5. Fisher

House and Polly Trauma Center visit to provide guests and families with 75 gift cards.

Veteran Affairs: Construction for Building 500 (Rehab) scheduled for completion October 24.
Fishing Trip scheduled for Sept 30.

Incarcerated Veterans: Jack will be talking to the District Attorney after the Thanksgiving holiday.

XII. Unfinished Business:

Nothing To Report

XIII. New Business:

Motion by **Randy Richmond** and second by **Dave Sanders** to approve \$150 donation for Target gift cards to be used for the Fisher House and Polly Trauma visits. Approved
2nd Tuesday of December, the Palo Alto VA Medical Center "Women in Service" 2 – 6 PM.
Help women understand how to seek care within the VA system.

Dennis Whitaker noted that Wreaths Across America requested a donation of \$299 to buy wreaths. Motion by **Dennis Whitaker** and second by **Mike Frangadakis**. Approved.

XIV. AVVA Report:

Cang introduced guests from AVVA in Sacramento and wanted to have them be a part of the AVVA 201 Chapter. There does not appear to be any restriction to this request and the guests were welcomed.

XV. Good of the Order:

Note received thanking the Chapter for the \$500 donation to the Dragoon Fund for scholarships for Children of Vietnam.

Mike Frangadakis thanked Nicole Gastric for her continued support and assistance with the Joaquin Miller Middle school and volunteered to sponsor her as a member for AVVA 201.

Bob Kadlec noted that Medals of America now carries VVA clothing, hats and other items.

XVI. Closing Ceremony

The next scheduled VVA Chapter 201 meeting will be held on Monday January 15, 2018 at Holder's Country Inn. Social hour and dinner begins at 6:00 PM with the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM (2015 hours).

Respectfully Submitted,



Stephen R. Thompson
Secretary
Darwin J. Thomas Chapter 201
Vietnam Veterans of America

October 2017 CSC Report

(27 – 29 October 2017)

President wants all to read the poem by combat vet Lief Thurston in this month's publication. Also, a new movie "Thank You For Your Service" is awesome, but hits close to home, so anyone with any PTSD issues should be careful for any triggers.

TREASURERS REPORT: CSC has as of 10/23/17 = \$204,264.00 in assets and liabilities.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Legislative: VVA legacy is legislative – all vet's lives have been changed, not just Vietnam vets. Copy of the Veterans Legislation, 36 total bills, sent to Governor in 2017.

National Legislative: Military Care Improvement Act (Senate 591) includes Vietnam in this bill and Blue Water Navy. Need to get it out of committee and pass it.

Victims Benefits: Number one concern is that examiners are reading file while you are having exam. This is all VVMS (should be read ahead of time).

Finance: Motion to recommend that CSC Board purchase \$30,000 Certificate of Deposit from bank at higher interest rate than checking account and revisit in a year. Only a recommendation, no motion required.

AVVA: Nina Schoffel – There were 15 people in her meeting. Talked about upcoming elections on 01/15/18. Will send out letters and ballots to AVVA members. Also State and Chapter elections in June 2018. All positions open, so if anyone interested, let her know.

Membership recruitment for AVVAS was discussed. California had always been number one but now Michigan is number one.

Product sales needs a new leader. Will actively be looking for a replacement. Shelia will be taking this over.

National Board: Project Friendship – Will be looking for a new charity in the Palm Springs area to fund, while at the Leadership Conference in July. Upcoming: VVA 40th Anniversary next year. AVVA also getting ready for 2019 for their 20th Anniversary. Looking to develop booklet regarding the last 20 years.

Veterans Incarcerated: SB776 signed into law. This allows up to seven people to be trained to go into prisons and have them fill out paperwork to submit claims for incarcerated. Also, National Convention to rename Veteran Incarcerated Program to add "in Justice System,"

Public Affairs: Membership – Information on the web. Also reach more people on Facebook/Instagram/etc. Will be trying to get more people involved and interested with personal stories. Learn how to present VVA in a clear, concise and to the point manner. Picture for Wall of Faces – There are about 10-percent still needing photos. Need to get the word out to the public.

POW/MIA: Discussed recent remains found. There is a lack of funding for the Missing in America Project (MIAP).

Household Goods Program: Major funding for the VVA. Receives \$6 to \$8 million per year from this program.

NEW BUSINESS:

Legislature of the year: Board approved Senator Janet Win who has done tremendous work for vets.

Fresno: Hotel rate increased \$5 for conventions. CSC has done an extensive search in the surrounding area that may or may not be more convenient and less expensive. Nothing in any surrounding area was less. Others want \$149 per night plus \$15 to \$20 for parking. Best option is to stay in Fresno for \$95 and a three week cancel notice of reservations (up from two weeks).

Convention Dates: CSC Conference – 26-28 January; 27-29 April; 24-26 August; 26-28 October. CSC State Convention – 21-24 June. National Leadership – 24-29 July (Palm Springs).

Respectfully,

Signed

Randall J. Sessler

Vietnam Veterans of America

Darwin J. Thomas Memorial Chapter 201

CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES

Sunday, December 17, 2017

The Spaghetti Factory • 51 North San Pedro, San Jose, California

In lieu of the December Chapter 201 social and business meeting, eighty-three (83) VVA and AVVA members, and guests gathered at The Spaghetti Factory Restaurant in San Jose at 2:30PM on Sunday, 17 December for a Holiday luncheon. This being our annual luncheon, all routine business was suspended until our next meeting.

- I. **President Warren Finch** called on member MG Kent Hillhouse (USA, ret) to introduce his guest, the Honorable William Peacock (Colonel, USMC, ret), former Under Secretary of the Army, and his wife Nancy.
- II. **Chapter member Jack Wells** introduced **Richard Botkin**, a former Marine infantry officer and author of "Ride the Thunder: A Vietnam War Story of Honor and Triumph." Richard Botkin gave an illuminating presentation on the Vietnam War, performance of the South Vietnamese military, and an evaluation of the Ken Burns "documentary" of the War.
- III. **President Warren Finch** presented Richard Botkin with a Chapter Certificate of Appreciation for his outstanding presentation to the luncheon gathering. **Warren Finch**, also presented Certificates of Appreciation to the following individuals for their participation in the United Veterans Council Veterans' Day Parade in San Jose on November 11, 2017:
 - Gerald Arnold
 - Richard Francis
 - Randall Richmond
 - Randall Sessler
 - Stephen Thompson
 - Jack Wells
 - Cang Kim Dong (AVVA)
 - Alexander Cao (AVVA)
 - Duy Nguyen (AVVA)
- IV. **President Warren Finch** adjourned the Luncheon and reminded all that the next gathering will be the monthly social and business meeting on the third Monday of the month on January 15, 2018 at Holder's Country Inn.

Respectfully Submitted,



Stephen Thompson
Secretary,
Darwin J. Thomas Chapter 201
Vietnam Veterans of America