

2015–2017 PRESIDENT’S COMPREHENSIVE REPORT

My final report will be divided into two segments: the first will be just a synopsis of the actions of the organization; the second will be my personal work as your national president. Keep in mind that the written information here reflects data as of July 25, 2017, and that I believe it to be accurate. However, I cannot guarantee that it is complete. So, please forgive me if I have omitted something.

1. ORGANIZATIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS/ENDEAVORS/ EVENTS:

- Suffered the unexpected loss of the National Vice President.
- Elected a new Vice President to fulfill the unexpired term
- Reduced life membership dues permanently to \$100 age 60 and above; \$175 age 59 and younger.
- **SECONDARY PTSD (PTSD ‘2) PROGRAM:** Our newest peer-support program was launched during the 2016 Leadership Conference in Tucson, AZ; facilitators currently in training.
- **PROJECT FRIENDSHIP:** 2016 *Esperanza En Escalante (EEE)*, Tucson, AZ \$11,000+, *Volunteers of America Greater New Orleans* (collections still in progress)
- **CONDOLENCE CARD PROGRAM:** AVVA’s Chaplain worked with Father Phil in sending sympathy cards to the families of all reported deceased members of VVA and AVVA. We averaged 70/month. AVVA now includes a small card in each envelope that encourages loved ones to submit their veteran’s name to the *In Memory Registry* if eligible.
- **SERVICE OFFICER PROGRAM:** Currently we have eighteen (18) active Service Officers working in ten (10) states; three (3) in the training phase.
- **PAPER SAFE PROGRAM:** We are currently in our fourth (4) printing of the Paper Safe; AVVA continues to give them without charge to our members and to all veterans.
- **HELPING HANDS GRANT:** (formally Homeless Grant) Although no applications were accepted this term, our program remains active and funded.
- **TWO PARTNERSHIPS:** (1) Military and Veteran Caregiver Network (MVCN) to provide online peer support services to caregiving members. (2) Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) in the repair of the In Memory Plaque.
- **IN MEMORY PLAQUE PROJECT:** After six long years, a design has been accepted by all three governmental agencies; we move on to the fundraising phase
- **INCORPORATIONS:** New incorporated chapters this term. AVVA Chapters 240 & 1004 in TN; AVVA Chapter 975 in AZ; AVVA Chapter 1079 in Utah; AVVA Chapter 805 in OR; and AVVA Chapter 415 in Pennsylvania.

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- **TOXIC EXPOSURE COMMITTEE:** Participated in 52 Faces of Agent Orange Town Hall meetings across the US.
- **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:**
 - 2-hour Board Orientation during the October 2015 & 2016 meetings in Silver Spring, MD.
 - “At-large Elections” (classroom)
 - “Budgets & Finance” (online)
 - “PTSD ‘2” (classroom)
 - “Legislative Advocacy” (classroom)
 - “More Than a Name Badge” (classroom)
 - “Electronic Motions” (classroom)
 - Pre-planning for the 2017 National Convention (online)
- **MEMBERSHIP:** Over 9,200 members; and all-time high.
- **UPDATES** (e-newsletter): Seven (7) issues posted on the AVVA website
- **PAPER SAFE GRANT:** AVVA received a \$10,000 grant from the National Foundation for Veterans & Families (NFVF) for the fourth printing of the Paper Safe. NFVF is a 501(c)(3) foundation and is the fundraising arm of AVVA.
- **FOUR EDUCATIONAL BROCHURES:** added PTSD ‘2 and Legislative Priorities. Continue supplying Spousal Benefits and Agent Orange to our membership.
- **DONATIONS:** \$1,000 to the *Veterans Voice Writing Project*; \$2,000 to *Esperanza En Escalante* (Project Friendship- Tucson, AZ); \$1,000 to the *In Memory Plaque*; \$2,000 to *Volunteers of America* (Project Friendship- New Orleans, LA)
- **LEGISLATIVE ACTION:** Actively participated in “call-in” to Congress Days supporting S901 & HR1769 (Toxic Exposure & Research Act of 2015)
- **SPONSORED SEMINARS DURING 2016 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE** (Tucson, AZ): “*Recognizing and Living with Secondary PTSD*” and “*Proud of our Past; Poised for our Future*”.
- **WEBSITE:** Over 140,000 visits since its debut in 2013.
- **VENDORS:** Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with (1) **Ideal Images** for women’s clothing. And, (2) **Military Best** added the AVVA logo patch, Life member patch, the AVVA Membership pin, the AVVA Life Member pin and the AVVA challenge coins
- Member of the Year Recipients Plaque hung in the national office for all to see.
- The Commendation Medal Recipients Plaque hung in the national office for all to see.
- **POLICIES & PROCEDURES:** Numerous policy revisions and the Section 11 addition. (program and committee descriptions)

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- **WEB ROSTERS:** National Membership Department & AVVA introduced real-time roster to our members.
- **DIRECT DEPOSIT:** Implemented in 2016 by the VVA Finance Department. All reimbursements to AVVA Board members are now paperless.
- **VISTA PROGRAM:** Continues to thrive. Over 53,000 reported since its inception in 2014.
- **NEW AWARD:** Cathy Keister *SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE* Award created and first recipient chosen. Plaque to be hung in National Office after 2017 Convention.
- **MOU with VVA:** Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Vietnam Veterans of America revisited and passed by both organizations in April of 2017.

2. President’s Report encompassing the 2015 – 2017 term:

- Sent thank you letters to every individual, chapter and state-level groups that donated to Project Friendship in 2015 & 2016. (75 letters total). Two letters of recommendation; assisted with the creation a fundraising letter for the National Foundation for Veterans & Families. Wrote and distributed to the Board the introduction and information letter of Military Veterans & Caregiving Network to be forwarded to our membership.
- Wrote a comprehensive report of the 2015 Convention and the 2016 Conference report to the membership.
- Reviewed and revised the Membership Application brochure with designer, Bernie Rekowski.
- Reviewed and made recommendations to the following Committees: Elections (total revision on Section 5 and Oath of Office), Incorporation Awards (state-level criteria addition), Membership (transfers revision & addition), Finance (shipping policy still ongoing),
- Reviewed and revised Office Reference Guide with the Membership Co-Chair
- Reviewed and updated portions of the Strategic Plan with the SP Chair.
- Scheduled eight (8) GoTo Meeting sessions.
- Participated in eleven (11) GoTo Meeting sessions.
- Worked with vendor (Military Best) on adding a 4” Life Member patch to our products line on his website.

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- Wrote twelve (12) articles for the VVA Veteran magazine.
- Wrote five (5) reports for the AVVA Board.
- Wrote eight (8) report for the VVA Board.
- Wrote eight (8) after-action reports.
- Wrote seven (7) articles for the UPDATES e-newsletter.
- Conversed through hundreds of emails and telephone calls.
- Shipped fourteen (14) orders of Paper Safes.
- Comprised AVVA monthly Membership Reports and sent to Co-Chair for review before distribution.
- Submitted a grant to the National Foundation for Veterans & Families (NFVF) to print Paper Safes.
- Completed my two PTSD '2' facilitator online educational sessions to receive a completion certificate.
- Met with the Executive Director of Military & Veterans Caregiver Network over the phone and second call was to finalize our partnership.
- Sat with the Finance Committee while completing the 2017 and 2018 proposed budget
- Serving as the Interim Director of the AVVA Service Officer's Program since January 2017.
- Met twice with Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund CEO, Jim Knotts, through conference calling concerning the In Memory Plaque.
- Created agendas for all AVVA National Board meetings and National Meetings
- Presenter at the 2016 Leadership Conference in Tucson, AZ & during the 2017 George C Duggins Region 3 Conference in Frankfort, KY.
- Assigned to the "Future of VVA- Workgroup #1" as an advisor.
- Served as a non-voting advisor on the National Foundation for Veterans & Families Board of Directors

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- Wrote the President’s Transition Report

Travels:

- 2015 – 2017: I attended and presided over six (6) AVVA Board meetings in Silver Spring, MD.
- 2015 & 2016: I accompanied VVA Membership Affairs Chair to Washington DC for the Veterans Day holiday to work in the Membership and Information Tent.
- 2015 – 2017: I attended eight (8) VVA Board meeting; sitting as a non-voting member.
- 2016: I attended the George C. Duggins Region 3 Conference in Charleston, WV.
- 2016: I attended the Louisiana State Convention in Kinder, LA. While there I joined the AVVA State election meeting; I spoke to the members about our accomplishments and administered the Oath of Office to their newly elected State Representative, Ora Wells.
- 2016: In March, I visited the National Office to participate in the educational planning of the Leadership Conference to be held in Tucson, AZ.
- 2016: I visited our vendor’s (Military Best) place of business in Scottsboro, AL at no cost to AVVA.
- 2016 & 2017: I went to Washington DC to work in the Membership and Information tent on Memorial Day weekend.
- 2016: In August, I made a trip to Washington DC to meet with the National Park Service (NPS), JC Cummings (architect), and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) on the repair of the In Memory Plaque.
- 2016: In September, I accompanied VVA Membership Affairs Chair to Kokomo, IN for the 34th Annual Howard County Vietnam Veterans Reunion.
- 2017: George C. Duggins Region 3 Conference in Frankfort, KY. I presented a seminar titled “*The Future of AVVA*”.
- 2017: TN State Council meeting in Murfreesboro at no cost to AVVA
- 2017: Region 5 Conference in Cleveland, OH.
- 2017: NC State Council meeting in Durham at no cost to AVVA
- 2017: VVA Workgroup # 1 meeting (x 2) at the national office at no cost to AVVA.