

# Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter 324 - PO Box 18631 - Milwaukee, WI 53218



## Meeting Notice

19 June, 2024

5555 W. Good Hope Rd.  
Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.  
Chapter Meeting 7 - 8 p.m.  
**17 July, 2024**

### Future Meetings 2024

September 18, October 16,  
November 20, December 18

Chapter web page: [www.vietnamvetschapter324.com](http://www.vietnamvetschapter324.com)  
National web page: [www.vva.org](http://www.vva.org)

## Chapter Officers

President: Pat Ciofani [rezmel\(at\)sbcglobal.net](mailto:rezmel(at)sbcglobal.net)  
414-702-7734

Vice Pres: Treasurer: Pat Moore [irishpatat\(at\)sbcglobal.net](mailto:irishpatat(at)sbcglobal.net)  
414-354-2533 Cell: 414-731-6029

Secretary: Dennis Symanski [dski06\(at\)hotmail.com](mailto:dski06(at)hotmail.com)  
414-453-3600

Director: John Morgan [asa600\(at\)aol.com](mailto:asa600(at)aol.com)  
414-871-9274

Director: Bob Rugg  
414-323-4852

Newsletter: John Zutz [john\(at\)zutz.org](mailto:john(at)zutz.org)

John is listed in the phone book - good luck finding one

No August Meeting - No August  
Newsletter

Have a safe summer.

## VVA-324 Fundraising

**This is the only fundraiser by the chapter. More people equals more donations. We need your help.**

Distribute Orange Blossoms at American Family Field

**Think of veterans (like your father) giving poppies in front of the grocery store. That's what we do.**

**For particulars please contact Pat Moore.**

**First date: Sunday, June 30**

**Second date: September 29th**

The Milwaukee Brewers are pleased to announce the continuation of Military Sundays for the 2024 season. Any active-duty military member or veteran can receive up to two free Terrace Level tickets by showing their military ID at the ticket office prior to any Sunday home game.

This offer is available only on the day of the game. the ticket office opens at 10 a.m subject to availability.

## July 4 Parade

Staging at 8a.m. Parrade starts at 9a.m.

Staging on Menomonee River Parkway  
from Swan Blvd. (92nd St) to North Av.  
Enter from the Parkway or from North Av.

We are unit #33

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

Milwaukee Chapter 324

June 19, 2024

Meeting called to Order by President Pat Ciofani at 7:00 pm

Minutes of May 15, 2024 meeting reviewed and accepted

Treasurer's Report – Pat Moore - \$4372.51 balance in our checking account

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Allied Veterans Meeting Update – Pat Ciofani

Website – Contact Pat Moore with items of interest to the chapter

OLD BUSINESS

New election and finance reports are filled out and will be filed with National and State VVA

Brewer Fund Raiser June 30<sup>th</sup> - 10:00 am

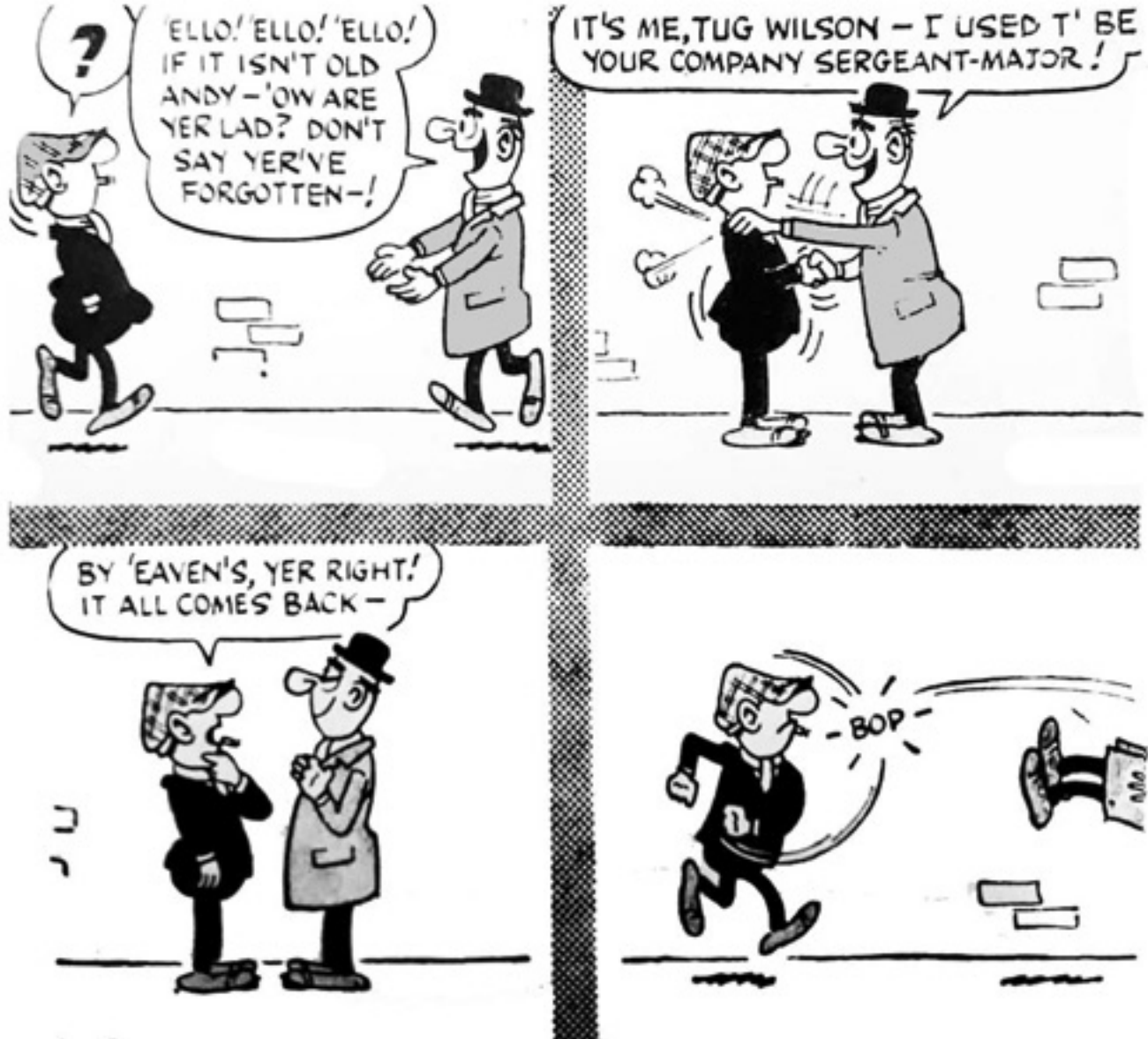
State VVA Council Meeting June 22 – Pat Ciofani will attend

NEW BUSINESS

Wauwatosa 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade – 9am – Assemble between 8 and 9 at 92<sup>nd</sup> and Menomonie River Parkway – We will be riding in vehicles

NO AUGUST MEETING

Adjournment 7:30 pm



## Precludes Future Burials in National Veteran Cemeteries

# VA Says It Can't Change New Urn, Plaque Benefit

By Amanda Miller, Military.com, May 13, 2024

The Department of Veterans

Affairs acknowledged criticism of its plan to distribute memorial urns and plaques in a final rule published Friday -- namely, that accepting an urn might bar later burials in veteran cemeteries -- but said it didn't have any choice under the federal law that authorized the new benefit.

Both the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs and the National Funeral Directors Association lodged concerns earlier this year over the new benefit and how it might have negative consequences for those who also seek burials.

A 2021 law change expanded the section of the U.S. Code that already authorized the VA to issue "headstones, markers, medallions and burial receptacles" by adding "urns and commemorative plaques," according to information previously provided with the proposed rule. The new authority came as part of the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020, enacted the following year.

The urns and plaques will denote the individuals' status as veterans and will be furnished at the government's expense. But one provision of the VA's rule, in particular, had the organizations worried, and it hasn't changed -- the part that says families forgo a veteran's burial in a national cemetery after accepting an urn from the VA.

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs had argued that an item of "such relatively low cost" as an urn or plaque shouldn't deny veterans the "significant" benefit of burial in a national cemetery, a benefit "that also provides perpetual care."

Groups also contended that the provision might unnecessarily preclude veterans from being buried together with their spouses when, for example, a family decides they want to place a veteran's cremated remains in their spouse's rightful national cemetery plot.

The VA addressed that concern Friday by pointing out that the prohibition is specific to national cemeteries and that accepting an urn or plaque doesn't preclude burial in other types of veterans cemeteries. States also operate veterans cemeteries separately from the VA's National Cemetery Administration.

The organizations also predicted in their

comments that the offer of a free urn could result in future generations mishandling a veteran's remains that might otherwise be securely interred. Another worry: Families might be caught off guard and leave cremated remains unclaimed once they realize interment is off the table.

The VA said it plans to try to warn families of the potential pitfalls of accepting an urn or plaque.

"VA will continue to raise awareness of the limitations of [the new law] by providing detailed information about the commemorative plaque and urn program," according to the supplementary information provided with the final rule.

It also hopes its definition of an "applicant" will "minimize the potential for unintended forfeitures of benefits, family disputes and duplicate claims." To receive an urn or plaque, an applicant "must certify they are authorized to make decisions about the disposition of the veteran's remains and certify their awareness of other precluded benefits."

The VA also addressed a suggestion that it create a process in which families could return an urn and have the veteran's full burial benefit reinstated.

"Even if VA agreed with the commenter's suggestion to implement a return process in this final rule, VA has no authority to do so," according to the department.

The VA did not address a prior query by Military.com about whether it incurred an added responsibility by introducing the incentive, in the form of an urn, for a family not to inter a veteran's remains.

However, in the supplementary information, the VA said it "has no jurisdiction over a commemorative plaque or urn once it has been furnished and must defer to a veteran's family members to maintain control of a furnished plaque or urn as their personal property."

The VA said it has no ability to control the circumstances that may result in the remains of veterans becoming unclaimed by a family member or personal representative.

The department said it "has several benefit authorities supporting unclaimed veterans and those who bring remains to VA to ensure dignified burials," but in the case of a veteran whose family opted for an urn or plaque, burial in a national cemetery will not be an option.

# to Address Mental Health Disorders in Veterans

## VA to Fund Research Using MDMA, Psilocybin

By Patricia Kime, Military.com, January 08,

The Department of Veterans Affairs has announced new funding for research into the potential use of psychedelic substances to treat post-traumatic stress disorder and depression in former military personnel.

The VA on Friday issued a request for applications from researchers and academic institutions on potential research into the safety and efficacy of psychedelic drugs such as MDMA, psilocybin -- the active ingredient in "magic mushrooms" -- and other compounds to address mental health conditions.

According to the VA, it is the first time in nearly six decades the department will fund such research and comes amid a growing but cautious optimism among the veteran community and Congress that the drugs, widely associated with illicit party culture, could offer breakthrough treatments for the unseen wounds of war and military service.

"Veterans and VA researchers have told us about the potential promise of psychedelics to treat mental health conditions for some time," VA Under Secretary for Health Dr. Shereef Elnahal said in a statement Friday. "Now is our chance to study this potential method of treating veterans with PTSD and major depression across the country."

VA researchers previously have conducted studies on the use of psychedelics, including MDMA, known also as the recreational drug molly or ecstasy, and psilocybin, but those studies have been funded by private institutions.

Officials did not say how much funding the department plans to award researchers for the studies. The details of the request for application were not available as it has yet to be published online.

In September, VA researchers and scientists met with other federal health officials for a conference on psychedelic-assisted therapies that combine the use of psychedelic substances with psychiatric therapy.

At the time, Elnahal said VA researchers are interested in determining how to support the research nationwide and build the infrastructure needed to expand clinical trials in light of success by organizations such as the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies, which has completed two clinical trials on the potential of

MDMA to treat PTSD and has filed a New Drug Approval application with the Food and Drug Administration for the controlled substance.

VA officials said the research, which will involve substances that are tightly restricted under federal law, will be "completed under stringent safety protocols." The VA will work with the FDA as well as the Drug Enforcement Administration to ensure compliance with federal law, officials said.

The fiscal 2024 National Defense Authorization Act, signed by President Joe Biden on Dec. 22, required the Defense Department to establish a process also to fund research on psychedelic substances for mental health conditions.

The law also gave the defense secretary flexibility to let active-duty service members participate in clinical trials involving psychedelic therapies, but it did not mandate the requirement.

Among the psychedelics that would be covered by the law are MDMA; psilocybin; 5-Methoxy-N,N-dimethyltryptamine -- a fast-acting psychedelic substance derived from toad venom also known as 5-MeO-DMT; other "qualified plant-based alternative therapies;" and ibogaine, a compound found in the roots of an African shrub that has been used for centuries in spiritual and healing ceremonies.

On Friday, as the VA announced its new funding, scientists at Stanford University published research in the journal *Nature* that showed, when combined with magnesium, ibogaine "safely and effectively" reduced anxiety, PTSD and depression symptoms in a study involving 30 U.S. special operations veterans.

The study was sparked, according to Dr. Nolan Williams, an associate professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Stanford, by veterans who had been traveling to Mexico for ibogaine treatments.

According to the study, participants experienced average reductions of 88% in PTSD symptoms, 87% in depression symptoms and 81% in anxiety symptoms relative to how they were before treatment.

"No other drug has ever been able to alleviate the functional and neuropsychiatric symptoms of traumatic brain injury," Williams said in a statement released by the university. "The results are dramatic, and we intend to study this compound further."



## **Vietnam Veterans Reunion 2024**

On Sunday, August 4, 2024, The Highground will host its annual Vietnam Veterans Reunion combining Vietnam exhibits and an opportunity to meet other Vietnam Veterans.

### **WORKING ITINERARY:**

Vietnam Experience Exhibit: 10am-2pm

Static display Huey: 10am-2pm

Huey landing TBA (possibly at 10am and dependent on the weather)

Lunch: 11am-1pm

Doug Bradley Book: 1pm (We Gotta Get Out of This Place: The Soundtrack of the Vietnam War: 1pm)\*\*\*

Check back for updates! More information will be highlighted on our Facebook page ([facebook.com/](https://facebook.com/TheHighgroundVeteransMemorial)

TheHighgroundVeteransMemorial) and provided to those who RSVP with an email address.

Lunch will be provided at no cost to Vietnam Veterans (and one guest) who RSVP prior to July 31.

RSVP, to: [Theresa.museum@thehighground.org](mailto:Theresa.museum@thehighground.org) or call 715-743-422

## **Veterans Creative Arts gallery exhibition at Milwaukee VA**

The Visual Arts Show is a self-guided walking tour to view the 2023 Veterans creative arts and writing entries. A gallery exhibition of the Zablocki VA Veterans Creative Art Competition entries in the Milwaukee VA Medical Center Recreation Hall, rm. 3435.

**August 7, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., and August 8, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

Light refreshments available while supplies last.

## **Veterans Creative Art Competition performing arts show**

An exhibition of the Zablocki VA Veterans Creative Art Competition 2023 performing arts entries.

1 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 29 in the Milwaukee VA Medical Center Recreation Hall, room 3435.

Light refreshments available, while supplies last.

for “Back in the World” Exhibit

## **The Highground Seeks Veteran Art Submissions**

For many Veterans serving overseas, most notably during the Vietnam War, going home was referred to as getting “Back in the World.” “The World” was a place of normalcy, family, everyday acceptable and calm conditions—a place to forget the nightmare of combat. However, the reality of getting back in the World did not meet with these expectations for a great many Veterans. The war hitched a ride back home with them in the form of nightmares, post-traumatic stress, ruined relationships, survivor’s guilt and some destructive behaviors. For these Veterans, getting back in the World was the beginning of a new struggle.

Veterans of decades past and present day have similar journeys of recovery, learning to live in a way that does not forget the past and those buddies who they may have lost as they develop a new life of hope and strength. For many Veterans, spending time writing poetry, putting stories on paper, painting, playing music and involving themselves in other creative arts has helped them to honor the past, remain in the present and bring a stronger, more focused, and well-rounded “self.”

The Highground Museum is creating an exhibition titled “Back in the World” of Veterans expressive art—poetry, writing, music, traditional art formats and more—focusing on the aftermath of coming home after service and/or their thoughts on their military service.

The Highground is now accepting submissions of the art listed above by Veterans of any era for inclusion in this exhibit which will be on display September 14, 2024-January 2025.

For more information or to sponsor this exhibition, please email Theresa at [museum@thehighground.org](mailto:museum@thehighground.org) or call 715-743-4224.

For more information about the Museum, exhibits or upcoming events, visit The Highground’s website at [thehighground.us](https://thehighground.us) or follow them on Facebook at [Facebook.com/TheHighgroundVeteransMemorial](https://facebook.com/TheHighgroundVeteransMemorial). The Highground is located at W7031 Ridge Rd, Neillsville WI 54456. [thehighground.us](https://thehighground.us).



Vietnam Veterans of America #324  
PO Box 18631  
Milwaukee, WI 53218



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Correction Service Requested  
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## Sign Up Now With Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 324

Anyone can join! Membership Options:

Veterans:

Life Membership for all veterans \$50 (with a DD214 submitted).

Anyone Else:

- Associate Member - 1 year \$20 • Associate Member 3 year \$50 • Associate Life Member \$250
- Associate Life Member Installment Plan (\$50 Deposit; \$25 per month for 8 Months)

Please Print

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Membership # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to help Chapter 324 by donating \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to VVA324 and mail with this completed application to:  
VVA Chapter 324 - Membership, **P O Box 240552, Milwaukee WI. 53224**