



# 2013 VVA Candidate Statements

## 16TH NATIONAL CONVENTION, JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

### NATIONAL OFFICERS

#### John Rowan

President



I have been involved in Vietnam Veterans of America since its inception, as the first President of Chapter 32 in 1981, as a delegate at the first Convention and on the first Board of Directors, elected at that Convention. After another term as an At-

Large Director, I was the first Region 2 Director and chaired the first Homeless Veterans Committee, when that problem came to light.

After losing reelection in 1989, I returned to serve Chapter 32 in various positions, including President. In 1995, after some serious financial problems, I was asked to become the NY State Council President. We turned things around and I served for ten years. During that time I was the Chair of the Conference of State Council Presidents and in 2003 was again elected as an At-Large Director. In 2005 I was elected as your National President. I have been reelected three times. I am asking for your support again. We have come a long way since that first Convention. The beginning was rocky and we've had our ups and downs, but I have always put what is best for veterans and their families first.

When I took office we needed a number of administrative changes. Some of the changes have succeeded others not so much. One big improvement has been our ability to communicate to our membership and the world. *The Veteran* under Mike Keating has undergone a magnificent transformation. Because of the changes in format, we have been able to increase the advertising revenue, thus providing a better product within reasonable cost.

The initial transfer of our product sales program to Medals of America turned a major financial loss into a gain. We hope to enhance this service to our members, Chapters, and State Councils.

Establishing the car donation program enabled us to revamp our Veterans Benefits Department. We solidified our operations at the Board of Veterans Appeals and expanded our State Service Representative Programs. While revenue suffered this year from the financial climate, without it we would have had serious financial trouble.

The Veterans Health Council and its website, [www.veteranshealth.org](http://www.veteranshealth.org) has been a great success. Our Executive Director Tom Berger has been able to work with many of our health care affiliates to inform them about the health problems faced by veterans because of their military service, whether it was in Vietnam, the Persian Gulf or Iraq and Afghanistan. We are working with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to reach out to the minority veterans and the West Virginia State Council has spearheaded a joint effort with the United Mine Workers to inform their members. I am proud to have been able to solicit donations to support this valuable program.

None of these things would have happened without the Board, Committees, State Councils, Chapters, members, consultants, and, most importantly, our staff. I thank all of you for your support and hope that you will allow me to continue to serve you as your President.

#### Bruce Whitaker

President



I believe VVA must have a President who is actively involved in the management of the VVA National Office and who is regularly present to direct and oversee staff activities. I believe the members of VVA are entitled to a President who

works with the board of directors, the other officers, staff and members to ensure all issues are discussed fully and openly before action is taken so all opinions are recognized and considered.

I enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 1966, serving as a Fire Team leader in Vietnam and was awarded a Purple Heart. Before leaving the Corps as a Sergeant, I served as a Squad Leader and Chief Company Clerk at Camp Lejeune. Following my military service I became a Maryland State Trooper, retiring with 31½ years of service. During that time I served in various command positions, supervising people and projects.

I joined VVA in 1992; served as Chapter 172 Vice President 1994-1995; President 1995-2002; Treasurer, Maryland State Council 1996-2000; and President, Maryland State Council 2000-2004.

As Region 3 Director from 2003-2011, I maintained an active communication network and met with Region 3 members to listen to their concerns and seek their input on issues important to VVA, veterans and their families.

I chaired the Finance Committee 2009-2011 and established a Budget and Oversight subcommittee to monitor expenditures and ensure accountability.

I've served on working groups that developed a Policies and Procedures Manual for the board of directors and Memoranda of Understanding we use when working in partnership with other organizations. I helped rewrite the Disciplinary Code and have worked to develop policies and procedures dealing with specific problems involving chapters and state councils. I have presented seminars at several Leadership Conferences.

I've served on the Constitution, Public Affairs, Resolutions, Government Affairs, Finance, Convention and Leadership Conference Planning Committees. As Chair of the Veterans Affairs Committee, I was part of the VVA panel tasked with presenting our Legislative Agenda and Policy Initiatives before the Senate and House Veterans' Affairs Committees. I've been a member of Maryland Senator Mikulski and Congressman Bartlett's Veterans Advisory Com-

mittees for the last 10 years, providing me with positive lobbying experience and results at both Federal and State levels on veterans' issues. I've presented testimony before the Maryland General Assembly.

I chaired and organized VVA's "March to Remember" for the 20th Anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial on Veterans Day 2002. I also coordinated pass-in-reviews for the 10th and 15th anniversaries of the Vietnam Women's Memorial.

My range of financial, management, advocacy experience, and organizational skills, along with my leadership experience in the Marines Corps, as a Maryland State Trooper, and in VVA at the chapter, state council and national level have provided me with the tools necessary to lead VVA into the future.

With your support and working together, we will build a strong and healthy organization, ready for the future. I pledge accountability, transparency, integrity and effective and efficient leadership as President of VVA.

#### Marsha Four

Vice President



If not for joining Vietnam Veterans of America in 1987, like many of you, my life's path would have been very different. To begin, not only didn't I refer to myself as a Veteran, it wasn't even a part of my thinking. I joined the military in

1968; I served in Vietnam; I was discharged; I came home; I tried to melt back into my life. It took me quite a few years of unrest to really discover who I was...a Veteran. I actually learned about VVA from another woman Veteran who was giving a presentation on the Vietnam Women Veterans Memorial Project at the local VVA Chapter 67. That was the night everything turned around. My VVA national level involvement began with being my Chapter delegate to the 1989 VVA National Convention in Chicago. I was so overwhelmed, energized and intrigued by the work that was being done for Veterans, that I plunged into the fray and haven't looked back. Since my early days in VVA, I have become increasingly active in the arena of veteran issues; participating on national committees since 1992; serving on the National Board since 1999; writing and delivering Congressional testimony; delivering presentations and workshops for and on behalf of VVA, and serving as VVA's representative on the VA Secretary's Advisory Committee for Women Veterans twice.

My last seventeen years were spent in the non-profit arena, retiring in 2013 as the Executive Director of the Philadelphia Veterans Multi-Service & Education Center.

As a Veteran-specific agency it provided assistance, services, and training to Veterans of all eras without charge. Ultimately, I was responsible for the overall operation, contracts and their compliance;

assisting with the development and oversight of its budget; reporting to a Board of Directors, developing operational grants, overseeing sixty-three staff in five major programs with two Veteran Service Officers (VVA & AVVA). I believe my operational and organizational experience, along with communication skills, a long standing history with VVA and a broad knowledge of Veteran issues and the VA will bring a strong, useful and contributory resource in assisting the President, the Board of Directors and our membership in accomplishing the mission and agenda of our organization.

I ask that you review my credentials and consider my strengths in my potential as a deliberative and capable candidate for the office of Vice President. I have invested the last 25 years on Veteran issues, working for what is right and fair and just.

I believe that integrity, balance, and trust are essential ingredients for a strong and responsive Leadership. These elements invite healthy, thought-provoking dialogue, vital to providing strength to the organization, committee and department functions, and ultimately our membership, to whom we are responsible.

I am married to Tony who I met and served with in Vietnam. We have three grown sons and four grandchildren.

#### Fred Elliott

Vice President



It feels like yesterday that we were in Reno, Nevada for a VVA Convention and election and yet, we're getting ready to do it again. Since that convention where you elected me Vice President, I've been very busy. As I promised, I

have let everyone know what I've been doing by having a column in *The VVA Veteran* every issue. And as many of you know, I have always been available to answer your questions either by email or telephone.

Besides writing a column, I've conducted what are now quarterly meetings with the national office staff. I have gotten to know the staff better through these meetings and my visits to Silver Spring. By holding these meetings, something that has not been done in many years, the staff have gained a platform where they can openly discuss items of concern, make suggestions, and even air complaints without fear of reprisal.

At each Board meeting, I have held a lunch meeting with all of the chairs of the standing committees and task forces. By doing so, it has allowed the chairs to offer suggestions about the organization, discuss what they feel are "roadblocks" to accomplishing their mission, and to exchange ideas with the other chairs.

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## NATIONAL OFFICERS

In working with the chairs, I have been able to have them update their web pages, post meeting minutes, and help them understand the expectations of a committee and/or task force chair. I have also developed a "handbook" for chairs to refer to when unsure of what is expected of them.

I have also been the VVA representative at the AVVA Board of Directors. It has been a pleasure and an honor to fill that position and work with the terrific group of people who are the leadership of AVVA.

As an outgrowth of my meetings with the national staff, I developed a staff directory that contains a picture (taken by me) of each staff person along with their department, job title, telephone number, and branch of service if they are a veteran. This has enabled the BOD and State Presidents to easily identify the staff by name.

Another staff-related project was the development of position (job) descriptions for each individual. This was something that had been started several times previously but never completed. Now each staff person has a position description specific to their job.

I have worked very closely with the National Treasurer and Secretary on several issues to the benefit of VVA. And I have attended several state council and chapter meetings by invitation. My real passion is the Agent Orange Town Hall meetings I have attended. I intend to continue to work on this issue, among others, to bring it the attention it deserves.

If you like my "hands-on" approach to being a Vice President, my open communications, my ability to help out whenever and wherever it's needed, then reelect me as Vice President at this year's Convention.

### Bill Meeks

Secretary



I served with the Marine Corps; I was a platoon radioman for Bravo Company, 1st Bn 27th Marines and my shortened tour in 1968 was located in I Corps in Vietnam. Since joining VVA in 1992 I have held numerous elected or appointed positions at

the chapter, state council and national levels. I am married to Suzie, we have three children, nine grandchildren and I am employed by Van De Wiele & Vogler Engineering for the last twenty-four years.

As your elected National Secretary since August 2011, I have insured that all National Board of Directors meeting minutes have been distributed within three (3) to five (5) days after each meeting. In an effort to make our membership more aware of upcoming VVA business I have prepared the National meeting agendas and provide these on

a continual basis until the meeting date. With the creation of the VVA BOD Motions and Policies Reference Guides, our membership has a better understanding of what policies and motions are in place for the National Board of Directors to conduct VVA business properly.

By posting all of the approved National Board of Directors Meeting Minutes from 2008 to present on the VVA web site, I have made each member aware of what VVA business took place during these meetings and this move has provided easy access for members to get a better understanding of VVA National's operation. The VVA National Disciplinary Policy Flow Chart by the Numbers was created to assist members working on disciplinary actions and keep the disciplinary process flowing properly. The VVA Secretary Notification of BOD Action Form has provided a record that the VVA Membership Department has notified the chapter members of a National BOD action and the database has been documented to show chapter revocation or voluntary disclosure of chapters.

I will continue to work with our membership to improve communication and the distribution of correspondence from VVA National. I would appreciate your vote for Secretary at the convention.

### Wayne Reynolds

Treasurer



I am running for re-election as National Treasurer because I want to continue the progress we have made in improving our financial management. I am a proven leader who can work with all levels of VVA. Two years ago I promised to make VVA's

finances transparent and, with the help of the Finance Committee, we have accomplished that. Now I am asking for your support so I can continue to work with everyone to continue to achieve VVA's goals.

This has been a very busy 2 years. One of my first actions was to meet with the contractor who supplies ads for *The VVA Veteran*. As a result, we are receiving more revenue for fewer ads (which leaves more space for content) and the editor of *The VVA Veteran* is back in control of ad content. Soon after becoming Treasurer I discovered very serious problems with our contract for implementation of the iMIS software which VVA had purchased to improve our membership and financial operations. After an investigation and report to the BOD were completed, we instituted changes to correct the problems in a cost-effective manner. As Compliance Officer, I review our contracts to ensure that we are receiving cost-effective services.

I am assigned the task to work closely in the oversight of our Information Technology and Finance Departments. We have streamlined our financial reporting to make it more understandable and to reflect actual expenditures.

I have also been active in using my contacts in Congress to promote legislation that will assist veterans. While overseeing financial activities, I was able to assist the Region 9 Director in revitalizing VVA in Colorado and forming new Chapters.

VVA SERVICE: Life Member of VVA. I served 3 years as President of Chapter 511 and have been Alabama State Council President for 15 years. I was also the National Treasurer from 2001 to 2003. I have served on the following National VVA Committees: Finance, Public Affairs, Veterans Healthcare, PTSD and Substance Abuse, and Constitution. I also am a former Secretary of the Conference of State Council Presidents. As a member of the Board of the Vietnam Veterans Assistance Fund for 4 years, I assisted in raising funds for the Service Officer Program and other VVA supported projects.

MILITARY SERVICE: I served in Vietnam with the 95th Evacuation Hospital and 22nd Surgical Hospital in 1968-69.

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT: I hold a Master's Degree in Finance from the University of Georgia and a Doctor of Education Degree from Auburn University. I am a retired Public School Superintendent and currently am a Registered Nurse. For the past 14 years I have been the owner and CEO of a government contract consulting business.

PERSONAL LIFE: I am the oldest of twelve children and my father was a World War II and Korean War Veteran. I have been married to Carol Reynolds for 43 years and we have two children. Paige is a DOD Engineer and Wesley is a Neurologist in the Air Force. We have two grandchildren.

### Thomas R. Burke

Treasurer



My beginning with VVA was as the Vice President of Chapter 857, New Philadelphia, Ohio, ultimately serving four terms as their President. Elected as State Council President of Ohio in 2006, I am now serving my fourth term. I am a Life

Member of VVA.

I was elected to the National Board of Directors at large in 2009, having served in many VVA capacities. Some of the national committees that I have served on include, Chair Public Affairs Committee, Chair Finance sub-committee on In-

vestment, Vice Chair Government Affairs, First Vice President Council of State Council Presidents, Vice Chair Veterans Incarcerated, member National Finance Committee, member National Leadership Conference committee and others. I will continue to work with all committees whenever possible for the betterment of our organization.

I had primary involvement in establishing a National Program for OEF/OIF Veterans known as SERV (Supportive Education for Returning Veterans). This program now bears its name in several college programs across the northeast.

I was an instrumental partner in leading an effort along with the Ohio Department of Veteran Services to join together with other agencies in the State, the city of Columbus, county veteran service offices and all National Veteran Service agencies to commemorate the First Vietnam Veterans Day in Ohio from March 26-29th of this year.

I volunteered for the Navy in 1963. Serving at various duty stations, I was assigned to Helicopter Combat Support Squadron One at Imperial Beach, California. Assigned to the aircraft carrier U.S.S. *Hancock* in 1966, I served in HC-1's on board detachment. I was honorably discharged in 1969.

I am an active member of the Amvets, American Legion, and Life member of Veterans of Foreign Wars. I have come to believe that no one person can accomplish all things, but standing together we can accomplish more than any of us may realize as individuals.

I have previously served as the National President, Vice President, treasurer, and Secretary of a National transportation organization in the eighties with a membership at that time of 50,000.

A few of the positive assets I bring to our organization:

- > Thirty Seven Years of Corporate Experience at various levels of management
- > Fifteen years in Senior Management
- > Budget responsibility for some thirty eight million dollars
- > Background in sales/marketing/logistics
- > Contract negotiations & Pricing authority for various Fortune 500 companies
- > Excellent communication and people skills

It is my belief that National Officers should be a reflection of those that they represent. I will represent you our members to the best of my abilities. We are responsible to you. I have and will continue to take this responsibility seriously.

I ask for your support in the upcoming elections to continue representing VVA as your National treasurer.

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Jacksonville  
2013





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## 16TH NATIONAL CONVENTION, JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS, AT-LARGE

#### Jerry Yamamoto

Board of Directors, At-Large



I've been working very hard the past eight years as an At-Large Member of the National Board of Directors to support programs that will ensure the continuity and growth of the Vietnam Veterans of America. I support our board's work at exploring new funding sources, such as soliciting advertisers for our website and *The VVA Veteran*, a car donation program and partnerships in the business world, due to the possible loss of funding from our Household Goods Donation Program. I also am a strong supporter of our new Veterans Health Council, which is outreaching to health professionals who don't know they are treating veterans and to veterans who don't use the VA because they may not be aware of their eligibility for VA benefits. I endorse our legislative programs that support the military and veterans' rights and benefits with the VA.

As Board Member and Chair of the National Minority Affairs Committee, I have been working at obtaining new members by outreach to our under-represented populations, such as veterans in the American Indian and Asian American/Pacific Islander and Black communities, with recruiting at events in the community, at conferences and at the national congressional ethnic caucus conferences.

For my personal goals, I'm focusing specifically on veteran issues, such as ensuring the continuity of the VVA, working extensively on legislative issues, homeless and drug treatment programs, employment issues, illegal leasing of veteran property at the West Los Angeles VA Hospital, and living the VVA founding principle of "Never Again Will One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another."

#### Ken Holybee

Board of Directors, At-Large



I was born in Oakland California in February 1949, and raised in Petaluma California where I graduated from high school in 1967. I went to work for my father driving trucks, and then joined the Army in January 1969. I attended basic training in Ft Lewis Washington and then went to Ft Ord California for AIT. In June of 1969 I arrived in Vietnam and served in the 528th Quartermaster Company, Petroleum Supply as a driver, mechanic and spent time on a gun truck and gun jeep. I left Vietnam on September 2, 1971 with the rank of Specialist E-5, and returned home where I began driving trucks in the family business again.

I joined VVA in 1987 and became a life member in 1990. During this time I have served on the board of chapter 223, Santa Rosa, California and on the board of the California State Council. I have served two terms as the council president, one term as vice president and three terms as a board member. I have attended eleven national conventions as a delegate.

On the national level I have served on the Constitution committee for over ten years and currently serve on the Agent Orange and the Public Affairs committees. I have served as a national board member for this last term and would be honored to serve another term as your board member.

#### Allen Harvey

Board of Directors, At-Large



I served in the 1st Marine Division from 1966-69. While in Vietnam, I served with the Marine Advisory Corps (1968).

I've been a life member of the Vietnam Veterans of America since 2000 and a life member of AVVA since August 2005 in memory of my late wife Lois Harvey.

I was elected membership chairman for VVA's Chapter 671 for five years. In 2006 I was elected President to the GA State Council for VVA. In 2009 I was elected Vice President of my chapter 671 in Savannah GA. The office positions I hold today are VP of Georgia State Council for VVA and President of Chapter 671 VVA in Savannah GA.

#### LIST OF COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

1. Vol. for the Red Cross with deploying and returning troops from war at Hunter Army Air Base
2. Vol. with the USO with deploying and returning troops from war at Army Hunter Air Base
3. Active member of the Marine Corps League Chapter 1326, Detachment West Chatham.
5. Working with the Tybee Island Veterans Memorial in recognition of all veterans from all wars.
6. Member of the National League of POW/MIA Families since 2005 and Vice Coordinator to the Region II Coordinator. I have sat on the VVA's POW/MIA Committee since 2009.
7. VVA representative to Chatham County Veterans Council since 2002.

I am married to the former Susie Stephens Ragan whose brother-in-law has been missing in Vietnam since 1967.

Welcome Home. Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another.

#### Pastor Toro, Jr.

Board of Directors, At-Large



1967-1971 United States Marine Corps; 1969-1970 13 month tour of duty in Da Nang, Vietnam. Honorably Discharged in 1971.

1972: NYC Corrections Officer; 1974 NYC Police Officer; 1978 Port Authority of NY & NJ Police Officer promoted to Detective in 1980; Retired in 1991 with a 100% Disability.

1999: Joined VVA Queens Chapter #32 and in two years elected President and served in that position until 2011. Currently the Southern District Director and Government Affairs Chair for the NY State Council; Elected to the National Board of Directors as At-Large-Director on August 19, 2011 to present and serves on Government Affairs, Minority Affairs and Veterans Benefits Committees.

Led Chapter Honor Guard ceremonies for military personnel killed in action and those killed on September 11, 2001; Led the fight for Veterans Outreach, Benefits and Compensation; Helped save NYC's three Veterans Hospitals; Established the first Veterans Service Center in NYC; Established the Chapter as an 'Organizational Friend' accepting the responsibilities of the burial of Indigent Veterans.

Decorations: U.S.M.C. Good Conduct Medal; National Defense Medal; Vietnam Service Medal w/4 Bronze Stars; Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal; Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm; Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation Civil Action Medal.

Awards: NYC, NY S Senate and Assembly Proclamations; NY State Liberty Medal (2); Member of NY S Senate Veterans Hall of Fame; Chapel of Four Chaplains Legion of Honor Award; Distinguished Service Award from VVA NY State Council.

Supported by his wife Evelyn and family.

#### Francisco F. Ivarra

Board of Directors, At-Large



I am running for At-Large Director because I firmly believe in the principles of the Vietnam Veterans of America and in my obligation to serve all our veterans and their families. I strongly believe in open communication, inclusiveness and organizational transparency. I have significant experience in working with and leading organizations that help our veterans' community. I have served as National Commander, American GI Forum of the United States; Chair of the USDVA Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans; the Five Star Congressional Veterans History Project

Board of Directors; the Washington State Governor's Advisory Committee on Veterans Affairs and the Seattle VA Fisher House Foundation Board of Directors. My board experience has helped to raise thousands of dollars for organizations like the Seattle VA Fisher House; SER Jobs for Progress; and the Hispanic Educational Foundation. I was recently named Chair of the King County Veterans Levy Oversight Board of Directors that monitors the use of over twenty-five million per year to provide services to veterans, military personnel and their families. In 2002, I helped the Hispanic Congressional Caucus plan the first summit on Hispanic veterans' issues in Washington, D.C.

I am a retired professor, VVA Life Member; a combat veteran and Purple Heart recipient who served with the Americal Division 196th Light Infantry Brigade (1st/23rd Infantry 1968-1969). I have also served as a veterans service officer; a Vet Center PTSD Counselor/Trainer and am currently Vice President of VVA Chapter 102, Seattle.

I ask for your vote. Thank you.

#### Richard DeLong

Board of Directors, At-Large



Richard C. DeLong of Lafayette, Louisiana, joined the Army in 1965 and served four years with the Army Security Agency. After serving two consecutive tours in Vietnam he was honorably discharged in 1969.

Richard joined Vietnam Veterans of America in 1988. He served as Sergeant-at-Arms, Treasurer, and President of Chapter 141 in Lafayette. In 1998 he was elected President of the Louisiana State Council. Richard was re-elected to this position for three consecutive terms. In 2002 he was elected chair of the Conference of State Council Presidents and became a member of the VVA Board of Directors. He served in this position until 2004. In 2003, Richard was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Vietnam Veterans Assistance Foundation (now known as the Veterans Assistance Foundation) where he served for two years. Richard was elected to the National Board of Directors in 2009 as an At-Large Director. In October of 2012 he was appointed chair of the POW/MIA Committee. In addition, he serves on the following national committees: Veterans Incarcerated Committee, Veterans Against Drugs, Membership Committee and the Subcommittee on Awards. Richard assisted in rewriting the National Disciplinary Code in 2007 and now serves as a member of both the National and Region 7 Disciplinary Committees.

Richard is retired from Bellsouth Communications after 31 years of service. He has been

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS, AT-LARGE

married for 18 years to his wife Leslie, who is also a life member of VVA. Richard is a former member of the Veteran's Advisory Committee for the VAMC in Alexandria.

### Billee Culin

Board of Directors, At-Large



I have been serving VVA, the members and veterans from all eras for many years. I was in the Army from 1969 to 1971. I was a secretary in the JCS Office in The Pentagon. While attending college, I served Vietnam veterans with their education benefits at Mercy College. I have been a member in good standing of VVA since 1999 and elected to and held a variety of offices—Chapter 120—Secretary and on Board of Directors, CT State Council President eight years, CSCP Secretary 2004 to 2010 and an At Large Director 2005-2007. I am president of Chapter 1043 in Sun City, AZ.

When I arrived in Arizona, my feet didn't stop running. I formed a VVA chapter in Sun City, am VAVS Rep at the Phoenix VAMC, VVA Rep Arizona StandDown, and am a service officer for VVA.

There is much to be done to keep and obtain the benefits that we are rightfully entitled. Funding for our Service Officer Program is vital and we must have more ease in the grant process. We are a grassroots membership driven organization. I feel that the national elected body MUST work for us—the members. I am not one to rubber stamp anything without proper review and an accountability and cost clause, if necessary. I make decisions on what is the best for our organization and its integrity. Isn't that why we elect them?

I will continue to serve our brothers and sisters with pride and confidence. Welcome Home.

### Kerwin B. Stone

Board of Directors, At-Large



I have been practicing law in Beaumont, Texas since 1978. My practice areas include corporate law, contracts, banking, and real estate. My marriage was a delayed casualty of the War, as are my Agent Orange problems. My two sons have blessed me with four marvelous grandchildren. My older son is a fighter pilot, and my younger son is a Methodist pastor. I am a Christian and an active member of my church.

I earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees in mathematics from Southern Methodist University, and then reported for active duty in the Air Force in 1970. I was later assigned to Ko Kha AS, Thailand. I visited other scenic locations throughout

SEA, including Vietnam, until my tour ended in 1973. I separated as a Captain in 1975 and went to law school at The University of Texas on the GI Bill.

I joined VVA in 1993. I was Treasurer of Chapter 292 for six years, and have been its President since 2005. Since 2010, I have been Secretary of the Texas State Council and also of the Vietnam Veterans Assistance Foundation of Texas. VVA is both a family and a passion for me.

I have formed hundreds of organizations. I have served on the Boards of many companies (both for-profit and nonprofit), and as a school board Trustee. I believe in the traditional American values we grew up with. VVA's National Board needs to support those traditional American values, and it needs to demand greater accountability from VVA's leadership.

### Joe Kristek

Board of Directors, At-Large



A Vietnam veterans organization that accepted Era vets was rare back in the sixties. When I heard about VVA and checked it out, I never looked back.

I joined VVA and Chapter 480, in 1989, serving as Secretary, Vice President and later President. I helped Chapter 803 get started and served as their interim President. Attended VVA Service Rep School in 1995 and still serve. Appointed as the New York State Council Central District Director (1996-2004). Served as the Region II Disciplinary Chair 2004.

Relocated to North Carolina in 2005. Organized and served as President of Chapter 966 (2006-2010). Helped Chapter 1022 and 1033 get started.

I have a knack for starting Chapters and working with membership.

Elected North Carolina State Council President in 2008 and will end that assignment in June 2014.

Serve on the North Carolina State Veterans Committee and State Veterans Affairs Commission Advisory Committee. VAVS Representative at the VAMC in Fayetteville, NC.

Currently serve on the National Veterans Benefits Committee as well as the Service Rep Grievance Committee.

Represented Region III on the Future of VVA Task Force (2011-2012).

Joined the Army in 1965, basic at FT Dix, Signal School at FT Monmouth (36H20) and shipped to Hanau, Germany. Got home in August 1968.

Married 44 years, have four sons, two are career military (Marine & Navy Seabee).

Sometimes each of us needs to re-read the VVA Constitution, Section 2 Purposes A thru F, as a refresher and reminder.....why we do.....what we do.

### Jacqueline Rector

Board of Director, At-Large



Member since 1985 (Chapter 25-Palm Beach County, FL)

Served as president, secretary and board member

Facilitated Women Veterans Day in Palm Beach County for 2

years running

Organized and presented POW/MIA Recognition Ceremony for 5 years running

Florida State Council

Served as treasurer and 1st vice president; chaired Women Veterans Committee; chaired PTSD and Substance Abuse Committee; member of FL State Council Assistance Fund

Eight-Time Delegate to National Convention

VVA National

Served as a National Board member at-large twice

Chair, PTSD and Substance Abuse Committee; Co-Chair, Women Veterans Committee.

Member, Minority Affairs, Legislative, PTSD and Substance Abuse, Women Veterans, Veterans Incarcerated, Public Affairs, Homeless Veterans, and Veterans Healthcare Committees

Developed National training: "Blood, Sweat and Tears," a Cultural Diversity Training, and facilitated this training at Leadership Conferences in conjunction with the Women Veterans Committee

Developed National training: "Loving Your Vietnam Vet," a training for significant others of combat veterans. Facilitated this training as the PTSD Chair along with AVVA, and presented this in many areas of the country

Participant in the Medal of Honor Association's Veterans Against Drugs program in Bakersfield, CA, with Medal of Honor recipient CWO Louis Rocco.

Three-time presenter to Congress in conjunction with the William Joiner Center, Boston University, their specialty being the effects of war on American society.

Member of the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Readjustment Counseling. This committee offers input to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on the needs of veterans to aid in the enhancement of their ability to recover from the devastations of war.

### Pete Peterson

Board of Directors, At-Large



I was elected to the Board of Directors-at-Large during the 2011 National Convention.

I was drafted into the Army in April 1962 and served enlisted tours with Special Forces and the Army Security Agency.

In 1966, I attended Officer Candidate School at Fort Sill, Oklahoma and was commissioned in April of 1967. My officer assignments include Battery Com-

mander and Battalion Commander. I have two tours of duty in Vietnam, three tours of duty in Germany, a tour of duty in Korea and numerous tours stateside and special assignments. My military education includes the Command and General Staff College and the Army War College. I retired at the rank of Colonel. My wife Joan and I have four children and reside in Lawton, Oklahoma.

I have a BS in Business Management from the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma and a MA in Human Relations from the University of Oklahoma with postgraduate work at the University of Oklahoma

My work history includes, Program Administrator for the Agent Orange Class Assistance Program for the State of Oklahoma, and the Director of Veterans Family Services where I still serve now.

I was the Committee Chair for the 2012 Leadership Conference and serve on the Minority Affairs Committee and the Veterans Benefits Committee. On the state level I serve as the Chief Service Officer for the State of Oklahoma. I belong to several veterans' organizations and currently serve as the Chairman of the Oklahoma Veterans Council.

I am a life member of VVA.

### Dan Stenvold

Board of Directors, At-Large



My name is Dan Stenvold, life member #177294. I live in Park River, North Dakota. I have been a member of VVA since 1999. I am a life member of VVA, CVA, VFW, AMVETS, DAV and an annual member of the

American Legion. The legion didn't want me when I came home!

I enlisted in the Army in November 1968, basic at Fort Lewis, Washington, AIT at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. I arrived in Vietnam on May 3, 1969. I did 3 tours with Army Artillery units. I left Vietnam July 21, 1971. While in Vietnam, I developed some friendships that would last a lifetime. I also had to put some of those brothers in body bags. Isn't it amazing how the calendar says it was 44 years ago but my mind says a lot of that "stuff" was last night?

I went on to lead a normal life, like most of us. I am divorced; I have 3 wonderful children, four grandchildren with one on the way. My daughter has some of the Agent Orange problems that we all fear will show up in our children. She adopted 2 beautiful children from Guatemala.

I retired early from Polar Communications after a 33 year career in communications because of some Agent Orange "issues" and am now a 100% ER!

I'm in my 7th year as the Mayor of Park River. 17 employees, a budget of \$2.3 million. We own our own electric and garbage companies and treat water for a rural water company.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS, AT-LARGE

### Charlie Hobbs

Board of Directors, At-Large



I joined the Army in February 1967 and eighteen weeks later landed in Vietnam. After serving one year in-country with the Americal Division based in Chu Lai as a Military Policeman, I returned to Fort Devens,

MA, to finish my commitment. I joined VVA in July 1991; I have served as President of Chapter 203 in Chattanooga for a combined total of eight years; I served as the Tennessee State Council President for four years. Sharon and I have been married for thirty-eight years; we have three daughters and four grandsons.

For the past six years I have attended the Board meetings in Silver Spring; four years as a State Council President and two as the National Membership Affairs Committee Chair. While serving as the Chair, I learned that there is a misconception among our membership about our National Committee Chairs. Chairs have no authority to correct or change current practices. The Committees can recommend change, but the Board of Directors can make change happen. I have listened to your phone calls about membership issues and I have experienced the frustration of being unable to fix those problems. I soon realized that I cannot help change anything from the outside looking in.

If elected, I will continue to work for better processes and outcomes concerning our membership rosters; I will attempt to learn the facts on all matters that come before the Board; and I will always consider the impact that my vote will have on the membership.

### Roland M. Lambert

Board of Directors, At-Large



My name is Roland M. Lambert. I was born December 10, 1948 in Watertown, SD. I enlisted in the army in February 1968. I took basic training in Ft. Lewis, WA, and Metal Body Repair at Aberdeen Proving Grounds

in Maryland. After graduating in August 1968 I was assigned duty in Vietnam. I was stationed in Quang Tri with the 596th Light Maintenance Company. Later the company transferred to Gia Le and after a few months the company transferred to Chu Lai. During my time I was working in a parts warehouse until my enlistment was up in October of 1970.

After 26 months in Vietnam I used my military training to become a parts manager for an International Harvester implement and truck dealership where I still work.

In May of 2011 I became a charter member of VVA Chapter 1054 and was Vice-President until elected President in May 2012 and re-elected President in May of 2013 After seeing the work our chapter has done for veterans and the enthu-

siasm of our members to become involved, I wanted to learn more about the VVA National Organization. Some of the members of Chapter 1054 thought my ability to see both sides of an issue and work through and solve any problems would be an asset to the national organization and encouraged me to run as an At Large Board Director. I believe being a Director would allow me to serve fellow veterans better.

### Jim Pace

Board of Directors, At-Large



Born 1950 in the U.S. Army Hospital at Fort Lawton, Washington. Joined the U.S. Army in November of 1969. I spent a year in Vietnam at Hue-Phu Bai combat base 1970-1971. One of four members of my family including my

father that served in-country. All came home. After leaving the service, attended college on the GI Bill and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1977. I became part owner of a small Building Centers until I sold my interest in 1991 and became a VA Accredited Service Officer for the American Legion. In 1998, I switched to VVA and have held this position since and am currently contracted with the Washington State Dept. of Veterans Affairs. My office is co-located at the Bellingham VA Vet Center.

I currently live in Birch Bay, WA with my wife. We have three sons and one granddaughter.

In 1987, I joined VVA Chapter 165, Bellingham, Wa. and I have served as Chapter President for four years and WA State Council President for six years and Vice-president for the last 5 years. I have served as a member of the National Veterans Benefit Program Committee for the past 6 years and am currently the Vice-Chairman of that committee. I have also served on the National Membership Committee for the last 6 years.

Since returning home from Vietnam, I have spent a great deal of time helping fellow veterans and their families in getting their VA benefits.

### Tom George

Board of Directors, At-Large



I served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1966 to 1970. My tour in Vietnam was from 1966 to 1967 with the 11th Engineer Battalion. I joined VVA in January, 1999. Since then I have held the position of Vice

President (2 years), President (8 years) and now as a member of the Board of directors for Chapter 17. I currently serve on the Nevada State Council as Chief VSO. I have attended the last 5 Conventions as a delegate. I currently am a member of the National Constitution Committee.

I work full time as a veterans service officer for the State of Nevada. In my past life, I have worked as a bank auditor and heavily in the public contact field. I am a graduate of the University of Phoenix with a BS degree in Management.

I am happily married to my wife, Alene. We have 3 children and 2 grandchildren.

### Joseph A. Jennings III

Board of Directors, At-Large



My name is Joseph A. Jennings III. I'm the eldest son of the late Joseph & Ethel Jennings, born and raised right here in Columbus, OH. I graduated Bishop Hartley High School "Class of 65." I entered

the U.S. Army Dec 1967 did my Basic Training at Fort Gordon, Georgia, after that my AIT (Advanced Individual Training) as a Meteorological Observer for R&D and later on Ballistics was completed at Ft. Monmouth, New Jersey. I went on to be stationed at White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico and eventually Song Be, RVN.

After my military service I spent several years in corporate America with Huntington Bank Shares, Borden Inc, and Qwest Communications. Married to my wife of 31 years Susan, we live in Columbus. I have been a member of VVA since Mar 87, a Life Member since February 3, 1996, first elected to Chapter Delegate to the Ohio State Council in 94, appointed interim VVA Ohio State Council Secretary in April 96 and elected to 3 consecutive terms until my formal resignation in April 2001 to be hired as Executive Director of VVA, Buckeye State Council. In the summer of 2002 I earned my VVA and Department of Veterans Affairs accreditation as a National Service Representative. I formally retired November 2012 to devote more time to other interests, having been elected to my first term as Director At Large at the VVA 15th National Convention held in Reno, August 17-20, 2011.

### Linda Blankenship

Board of Directors, At-Large



Linda Blankenship of Rogersville, Alabama joined the Women's Army Corps, graduating basic training at Ft. McClellan, Alabama, in 1973. She completed the Combat Medic Course and the Physical Therapy Specialist Course at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas. Linda served during the Vietnam Era caring for soldiers returning from Vietnam. The soldiers Linda treated suffered from severe burns, amputated limbs, and painful long-term injuries.

Linda has been a life member of the VVA since 2008. She served as Alabama State Council Sec-

retary from 2009-2011, and VVA Chapter 511 Secretary from 2007-2011. She has been a member of the VVA National Media Club as a journalist/photographer since 2008. Linda was awarded VVA Veteran of the Year for Chapter 511 in 2009, and the Sharon Boyers award from the Alabama State Council in 2010.

Linda is a licensed Assisted Living Administrator, specializing in Alzheimer's and Dementia Care. She currently serves as a Veterans Upward Bound Educational Advisor and facilitates a Veterans Job Club, helping veterans find jobs. She supports homeless veterans during Operation Stand Down, Huntsville. Linda serves as the Senior Healthcare Advocate Chairman for the Alabama State Council.

Linda wants to make a difference and would be honored to represent and serve the National VVA as a Director At-large. She asks for your support and vote so she can serve you and fight for the benefits we earned.

### Warren Harmon

Board of Directors, At-Large



My name is Warren Harmon, President of VVA Chapter 1067 Huntsville, AL, and I announce as a candidate for an At-Large Director's position in the upcoming National Election. My qualifications include assignments in

Personnel and Administration, Military Intelligence, and Quartermaster during 30 years' military service in the USMC and US Army. I served 11 years in the USMC (GySgtE7) with an infantry tour of combat duty in Vietnam, with 3/3/3 in 1968-1969, before receiving an inter-service transfer to the US Army, in the rank of Warrant Officer, in 1970. I served a second combat tour in Vietnam with the 23rd Infantry Division, and later the 196th Infantry Brigade, in 1971-1972. I retired in January 1990, with over 30 years' military service, at the rank of CW04, having been selected for the new Master Warrant Officer program (MW04), I chose not to remain on active duty beyond 30, for the promised CW05 pay grade.

Under my astute leadership, Chapter 1067 has grown to 180 members in 10 months since being chartered, with over 100 lifetime members. I encouraged my officers to participate in virtually every veteran and community program scheduled in our area, to include RSA and Retiree Activity Days, in order to reach out to Vietnam Era Veterans living and working here, and promote VVA's causes. I will work just as hard for the National VVA, should I be elected to serve to serve on the National Board of Directors. Your vote is needed and appreciated, thanks.

### Connie Christensen

Board of Directors, At-Large



# 2013 VVA Candidate Statements

## 16TH NATIONAL CONVENTION, JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS, REGIONAL

#### Wayne Cartier

Board of Directors, Region 1

#### John Miner

Board of Directors, Region 1

#### Herb Worthington

Board of Directors, Region 2



I want to thank all of the VVA members and the AVVA members that I have met and worked with in Region 2 these past two years. You have helped guide me and advise me making my job easier.

Born and raised in New Jersey I still reside there but closer to the Jersey shore. I am married to Angela for 44-1/2 years and we have raised two children (Karen & Michel) and have two grandchildren (Isabella & Zachary).

Drafted into the Army in 1969 just after graduating from college. I was sent to Vietnam as a 11-B-10, light weapons infantryman. I served with the 2nd/60th Recon Battalion in the Delta. We were part of the 3rd Brigade, 9th ID. I was pulled from the field just before we invaded Cambodia and sent to Tokyo, to oversee a brochure being printed. Reporting back to the Information Office once completed, I found they arranged for me to work as a Combat Artist. Later, I went to the 25th ID in Cu Chi as a combat artist until I derosed in December of 1970.

I have been a member of VVA since 1989. I was a chapter president for six years, a State Council President for three years and the Chief Service Officer for VVA at the Newark, NJ, VARO for five and a half years. I am currently the chair of the Agent Orange and Other Toxic Substances Committee.

I hope you will allow me to serve you again as Region 2 Director. Thank you.

#### Sara McVicker

Board of Directors, Region 3



I am seeking re-election as Region 3 Director so I can continue to work for the interests of our members, the Chapters and the State Councils. Over this term, I have kept my promise to keep you informed, to ask for and represent your opin-

ions, to listen to your concerns, and to be available to help you and I will continue to do so.

In addition to my responsibilities as a Regional Director, I serve on the Finance Committee. As Chair of the Budget Oversight Subcommittee, I was asked by the Treasurer to help in investigating unapproved expenditures for the iMIS membership software and in developing corrective recommendations to the National Board of Directors. I continue to monitor VVA's expenditures and provide the Finance Committee with reports.

As Region 3 Director I proposed to the Conference of State Council Presidents and the National Board of Directors a Suspension Workgroup to look into the problems that were resulting in Chapter suspensions and was appointed as Chair. The Workgroup, in consultation with the State Council Presidents, made recommendations which were adopted by the National Board and which should help resolve many of the issues.

If re-elected, I will continue to ask hard questions and to insist on financial accountability and that decisions are made with input from the entire National Board of Directors, the State Council Presidents and our members.

It has been an honor to serve you and I ask for your continued support and your vote.

#### Bob Barry

Board of Directors, Region 4



Hello Region 4 Delegates. I'm Bob Barry, Life Member of Chapter 1036, and your Region 4 Director. Every Vietnam Veterans of America Convention and National election is important, but for you and me this one is huge.

It's in our home turf and the colors of Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi and Puerto Rico will be in the front center of the meeting hall.

I served with the 82nd Airborne in the Dominican Republic and the 101st Airborne in Vietnam. I discharged from the 509th Airborne as a staff sergeant. I have a BS degree from Florida International University and a Masters degree from the University of Georgia.

As Region 4 Director I serve on the Membership Committee, PTSD/Alcohol Abuse Committee, and the 2013 National Convention Committee.

The VVA is a very diverse corporation with many different personalities. I believe that if we allow for the differences in people we must allow for difference of opinion and find a common ground for the good of the VVA. I attend quarterly Board of Directors' meetings with the belief that, as our VVA Constitution says, "control and management of the Corporation and its funds and affairs shall be vested in the Board of Directors." I have an excellent working relationship with the Region's Council of State Presidents.

I have been very honored to represent you and humbly ask for your vote to continue to serve as the Region 4 Director.

#### Carol E. Schetrompf

Board of Directors, Region 4



My goal as Region 4 Director is to insure that any and all complaints within the region would be looked into and corrected if at all possible.

Any problems that a State Council Member, Chapter President, or member might have, I will be available to help them. I will be available to the membership by telephone, email, or in person. I have no problem traveling to a Chapter or State Council to assist where and when needed. I will always be open to complaints, suggestions, and even compliments.

I was in the Navy in 1965, after a break in service (due to pregnancy). I joined the Army Reserves in 1974, and in 1980 went back on active duty in the Army. From 1980 to 1992, was stationed in various locations. My last duty station was Fort Clayton, Panama from 1987 to 1992. In 1992, joined the Georgia Army National Guard. In 2004 was medically discharged. I have a total of over 30 years in the military. My husband, Pete, was in the Army from 1960 until 1990. I wasn't in country during Vietnam, but was in combat during Just Cause in 1989 in Panama. Some of my military awards include a Meritorious Service Medal, four Army Commendation Medals, four Army Achievement Medals, National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Star, and an Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (Operation Just Cause).

I was the Chapter 789 Secretary from 2003 to 2007, and from 2007 until 2011 Region 4 Director.

#### Sandie Wilson

Board of Directors, Region 5



Retired from Army Nurse Corps, serving in Vietnam 1968-1969. Retired from University of Michigan. Currently serving as director Region 5. Current national committee positions include: Service Benefits, Women Veterans, Health Care, Government Affairs.

Past national level experience includes: constitution, finance, health care, veteran affairs, and strategic plan. Served on VVAF. Past experience on the state level includes: 5 years as state council

president, 5 years as state secretary plus various committees. Appointed to the Michigan Agent Orange Commission. Past Commander of Michigan Commanders Group.

Current state level veteran activities include: Michigan Veterans Trust Fund commissioner, president, Vietnam Veterans of Michigan, Board Michigan Veterans Foundation.

My nursing background has provided the scientific knowledge to identify issues and opportunities for improvement in the lives of veterans and the ability to generate solutions. My military experience taught me the working concepts of teamwork and leadership. My union positions provided me with the knowledge to negotiate and represent.

I have had the pleasure of advocating for my military and veteran brothers and sisters for the past 40 years. I know the issues and the mission. Achieving the goals of the mission takes leadership and teamwork combined with political action and business stability. We have little time to accomplish what needs to be done. I desire to continue serving my fellow veterans as director of Region 5.

#### Dennis Cohoon

Board of Directors, Region 5



Dennis was drafted December 2, 1965. He attended and graduated from Radio Operator School, the NCO School, Infantry Officers Candidate School, Airborne Training and Special Forces Training. He went to Viet Nam September 26, 1967 and

was a rifle platoon leader until January 10, 1968 when he was promoted to 1st Lieutenant and reassigned as a ranger company platoon leader until his DEROS on September 26th, 1968.

He graduated from Ferris State College on November 21, 1977 with a Bachelor of Science in Business (Accountancy). He became a partner in the James E. Jones Certified Public Accounting firm. In May of 1985 Dennis became Broker/Owner of Century 21 Suburban with 2 offices. In January 1992 he was recruited by a large dealership to be their Sales Manager because of his strong leadership abilities. He remained there until retirement on November 4, 2009.

Joined VVA Chapter 267 Dearborn, Michigan in November 2009, and has been the Chapter Treasurer since 2010 due to the poor health of the then Treasurer. He started helping the Michigan State Council Treasurer in August 2011. He was elected to that position in 2012 and has held that to present.

Dennis has been married for 29 years and has 2 children.

Dennis has always given his all for those who depend on him, and will continue to, in all endeavors.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS, REGIONAL

### John Margowski

Board of Directors, Region 6



I am again a candidate for VVA Region 6 Director. I entered the United States Air Force in December of 1969, attaining the rank of Captain. I was Honorably Discharged in June 1974. My service during Vietnam was with the 906th

AREFS Squadron, Minot N.D., flying out of U-Tapao, Thailand and Kadena AFB, Okinawa. I am married, have one son, three step-daughters and five grandchildren.

I was a member of VVA Chapter 414, Waukesha, WI, serving as the Chapter Vice President, Treasurer, and Chapter President. I now belong to Chapter 425, Waukesha, WI. I was the Wisconsin State Council Vice-President for four years and State Council President for five years. I am the Chief Service Officer for the Wisconsin State Council. I was a National At-Large Board Member for 6 years, and am currently serving as the Region 6 Director, elected 8/2011 to the present. I chair the Veterans Benefits Committee and served on the Veterans Health Committee.

I have 37 years of service to veterans. As Regional Director, I will continue to work constructively with VVA National Officers and Board Members to achieve the goals that VVA sets for next two years. I will continue working with the Region 6 state presidents to assist with any problems that arise. Most importantly, I will work with the presidents to re-establish growth and strength of unity within our region.

### Allen J. Manuel

Board of Directors, Region 7



My name is Allen J. Manuel. I am running for Region 7 Director.

Born in Eunice, La. and residing in Ville Platte, La. Married 54 years my wife, Norma, and have 2 Sons, 4 Daughters, 15 grandchildren, and 13

great grandchildren. Retired from Amoco Prod. since 1993. Life member of VVA, A.V.V.A, D.A.V., and American Legion.

Enlisted in US Army in 1956 until 1966. Served one tour in Korea 1958-1959, Germany 1961-1963, Germany 1966 until my discharge day. Attending NCO academy in Fort Hood, Texas. Held the rank of Staff Sergeant E-6.

I am a Charter member of Chapter 632, Chapter Treasurer from 1994 to 1998. La. State Vice-President 1996 to 2000. Elected Region 7 Director in August 1999 till present. I am on the National Finance Committee since 2003 until now. I will continue giving awards to each state for Chapter of the year, Point man, and the Region 7 veteran of the year.

I am member of Chapter 689 of Angola, La. I have attended every National Convention and Leadership Conference since 1995. In 2001 I was inducted in the Chapel of Four Chaplains and in 2008 I received the Humanitarian Award from the Chapel of Four Chaplains.

In 2002 I received the VVA Achievement Medal and in 2007 was awarded the VVA Commendation Medal. I am very proud of my Region to continue working for the membership and assist all veterans in the past and future.

I serve on the advisor board at the VA hospital since 1996.

### Dennis J Andras

Board of Directors, Region 7



My name is Dennis J Andras, United States Army retired. I served in the Republic of Vietnam in the 101st Airborne Division with the 2/502 Inf. from 1969 thru 1971. I'm married to Kathy Andras for 42 years and have two sons, one of which is an Iraqi war veteran.

Some of the positions held with Vietnam Veterans of America are as follows; past President of Louisiana State Council 2006-2012, past Vice President of Louisiana State Council 1998-2006, Louisiana State Council finance committee, Chapter 553 President, Chapter Vice President.

Currently with Vietnam Veterans of America I serve on two National Committees which are the Government Affairs Committee and Economic Opportunities Committee also on a task force which is Veterans against Drugs. I have also lobbied on Capitol Hill congressional delegations on behalf of Veterans issues.

At State level I'm the Constitutional Chair, President of our State Foundation and Board of Director for Chapter 553. Also I'm a life member of Vietnam Veterans of America and Life member of Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America. I'm also a Board of Director of the Louisiana Medal of Honor Park. I have been honored by the Governor of the State of Louisiana and the Plaquemine Parish President for my work on behalf of Veterans affairs and issues.

I believe that there should be lines of communications and information sharing between the general membership and the Region Seven Director.

### Tom Owen

Board of Directors, Region 8



I enlisted in the Army in Oct. 1966 and took basic training at Ft. Ord. From there I went to Ft. Gordon for AIT as a comm. center specialist. From there to Ft. Benning for some advanced infantry training. In Jan. 1968 I was sent to the 2nd Inf. Div. on the DMZ in Korea and then in July was sent to RVN where I served with the 36th Sig. Bat. attached to the 1st Cav. at Camp Evans and then moved to Tam Mai. I was honorably discharged in July 1969.

Upon discharge I floated around in several jobs and then landed in Oregon in 1974 and went to work in the woods. I spent 18 years logging and did several of them logging with a team of Belgium draft horses in environmentally sensitive areas. I was injured in a car wreck in 1990 which ended my logging career. For the last 20 years I have been a licensed real estate broker during which time I served 12 years on the city planning commission.

I joined VVA in 1998. I became chapter VP in 99 and served in that position until becoming chapter pres. in 2004. I served as chapter pres till

2009. In 2008 I became OSC VP and president of Oregon SC in 2009. I was elected to the BOD as Region 8 director in 2011. I currently serve on the national VVA health care, agent orange and public relation committees. I am currently involved in organizing a national veterans' real estate referral network which has the potential to add considerable funds to VVA programs. I have been very active with legislators in DC in trying to promote our national legislative agenda.

### Dick Southern

Board of Directors, Region 9



My name is Dick Southern and I am seeking re-election to the Region 9 Director position with the Vietnam Veterans of America. I served in the Army as a Specialist 4 and a Hospital Ward Technician in B Co., 5th Medical Battalion

of the Support Command of the 5th Infantry Division (Mech) from July 1966 to January 1968. I have been a member of the VVA since 1996. I was elected Secretary of Chapter 391 in 1997, and still serve in that position.

I have been a California State Council delegate to the last 6 VVA Conventions. I was elected to the office of the California State Council President in June of 2002 and then to Second Vice President in 2004. I have served on the VVA National Membership Affairs committee since 2001. I have been a member of the VVA National Veterans Benefits committee since 2005. I was elected Region 9 Director in 2007.

I will continue to bring input from Region 9 to the National Board of Directors and let the members in my Region have a more active role in the decisions that are made. I strongly believe that "Communication is the key."

I ask for your vote and promise that you will continue to have an advocate to the many issues of the Vietnam Veterans of America with me as your Region 9 Director.

Thank you.

**CANDIDATE SUBMISSIONS:** The Elections Committee encouraged candidates to submit biographical statements with photos to *The VVA Veteran*. The rules were simple: 500 words for officers; 250 words for Board of Directors candidates. The statements are printed as is, without editorial review.

Jacksonville  
2013