



Vietnam Veterans of America | Chapter 218 | Santa Barbara

RECON REPORT

“Never again will one generation of Veterans abandon another”

JUNE 2019

**“Together then,
Together now”**



Chapter 218

P.O. Box 4862
Santa Barbara, CA 93140
www.vvachapter218.org
Email: info@vvachapter218.org

Officers & Board Of Directors

President: Peter Bie
Vice President: John Blankenship
Recording Secretary: Tom Elliott
Treasurer: Rick Carter
Fred Cota
Hap DeSimone
Ed Foster
Chris Galbraith
Fred Golin
Don Matter
Rik Peirson
Pat Rumpza

Membership Director: Peter Bie
Chaplain: Pattie Murdy

Vance Memorial Fund

The Chapter's Vance Committee distributes assistance funds to qualified American veterans of all eras.

Fred Golin (Chair)
Chris Galbraith
Don Matter

Next Regular Chapter Meeting

June 12 | 6:00 pm social
6:45 pm meeting
Santa Barbara Elks Lodge
150 N. Kellogg Ave., Goleta
Dinner Available: \$9.00 per person

To the Membership:

I want to congratulate our newly elected slate of officers and board members who took office on April 10, each serving a one-year term. Officers: Peter Bie, President; John Blankenship, Vice-President; Tom Elliott, Secretary; Wilson Hubbell, Treasurer. Additional Board Members: Rick Carter, Fred Cota, Hap Desimone, Ed Foster, Chris Galbraith, Fred Golin, Don Matter, Rik Peirson and Patricia Rumpza. I thank each of you for your willingness to serve our chapter and for bringing such great energy and ideas to the group.

Our next Chapter meeting is **WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12** at the Santa Barbara Elks Lodge. By the time you read this I'm hoping that we'll be able to avail ourselves of the spaghetti dinner starting at 6PM, rather than waiting till they start serving the huge crowd at 6:30. That way you'll be able to get the dinner, eat in the main dining hall, or bring your dinner up to the meeting room. The business portion of the meeting will start at 6:45PM. Your presence is always welcome and appreciated. (See story on National VVA in this report) **THERE ARE NO MEETINGS IN JULY OR AUGUST.**

MEMORIAL DAY, MONDAY, MAY 27:

There will be ceremonies held at the following locations:

Goleta Cemetery, 9AM
Carpinteria Cemetery, 10AM
Santa Barbara Cemetery, 10AM

Plan on attending and wear your chapter shirt or fatigues, dress blues or Class A's (if they still fit).

TUESDAY, MAY 28, 10AM:

Our Huey Helicopter will be on display at the annual Memorial Day ceremony at San Marcos High School. The keynote speaker is a Vietnam Veteran who joined the service before he completed his studies at San Marcos. He has recently been honored with his high school diploma! The bird will be parked near the main flag pole at the stadium. Your attendance is encouraged as this is a great way to interact with high school students who are taking the time to honor all Veterans, especially those who served during the Vietnam era. Thanks to Larry Cook at SMHS for keeping this tradition alive.

THURSDAY, JULY 4, 1PM:

The annual 4th of July parade in Santa Barbara sponsored by the Pierre Claeysens Veterans Foundation. Our Huey will be towed in the parade. More details as we get closer to the event.

REMINDER: If you know of a Vietnam Veteran who has yet to join our chapter, or any chapter for that matter, tell them that there is a flat fee of \$50 to join and they will automatically be a LIFE member. Our chapter is happy to assist with the fee, just to encourage those who have yet to become a member. (A DD-214 is still needed to process the application). If you have been paying yearly dues of \$20 for three years or more, your status will be converted to LIFE. And if you know of any “at-large” members who wish to become affiliated with a chapter, it’s an easy do. It’s never too late to join! E-mail your questions to: info@vvachapter218.org. (The National VVA office recently made the decision to convert ALL members to LIFE status).

On a personal note: I will be attending the VVA National Convention in Spokane, WA in mid-July. Over the past year, the national office has been formulating ideas, gathering information from chapters across the country, and directing several working groups to look deep into the future of the VVA and what it will mean as our members, men and women, begin to age out.

The average age of Vietnam Veterans is now 72 and we are facing the hard reality that within a ten-year span, most will be in their early 80s and with age, infirmity, illness, death or just lack of energy and will, likely not to attend meetings, deal with the business of a chapter, nor serve as officers or board members (as has been happening with the VFW, American Legion and other long time Veterans organizations). This is true also for the national office as they are finding it more and more difficult to persuade members nationwide to serve on the various boards and committees. (Our chapter is experiencing this too).

With that in mind, the national office recently released its initial, first step approach to developing what’s called a Strategic Plan for Dissolution. It runs to nearly 40 pages, and contains a step-by-step, year-by-year formula for dissolving the national VVA in 2028. (Not a typo).

It is an intricate study as to what could or should be done in order to secure the legacy of Vietnam Veterans, their local chapters and State Councils, and to further protect the future interests of the chapters and the surviving membership as well as the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.

The Plan will be up for a vote at the national convention and I want to be there to represent our chapter and to be able to provide a first hand report upon my return. I will share copies of this report at our June meeting and will send a PDF to the membership, as well as via mail to those who don’t use e-mail. It is worth reading as it outlines the eventual end to an organization that began in 1982 and one in which we are proud to be a part, no matter what year we joined.

See you at the meeting on June 12!

Welcome Home!

Peter



Peter Bie, President

E-mail: peterbie@cox.net | Website: www.vvachapter218.org

