

VVA CHAPTER 641 Meeting Minutes 3 January 2026

Total Members Present: 12

Members Present On Site: Bill Bennett, Steve Campanella, Imants Celtniek, Ron Fink, Bill Gray, Roland Kauffman, Rich Schiffauer, Kenny Titcomb, Art Wong

Members Present Via Zoom: Richard Epstein, Carl Hirsch, Don Stanton

Meeting commenced at 0935

Approval of Minutes from Meeting: A motion was made and approved to accept the 6 December Chapter meeting minutes.

Treasurers Report: Ron Fink reported the Chapter has \$10,549.45 in our M.E.T. account where we received \$225 from household goods.

Membership Report: Roland reported the Chapter has 145 members (3 of whom are incarcerated veterans) and 16 associate members.

Incarcerated Report: No updates.

3DE: No updates.

VVA State Council: No updates as next State Council meeting isn't until late March.

Ukraine Report: Art Wong reported he took supplies to the Ukrainian Church for Ukraine Relief. Art reported the church was appreciative of our donation. Art also reported that a friend of his suggested that since there is so much need in the United States, that we should also focus on helping our community and country.

Requests for donations: Ron Fink reported he has received several requests for donations. The first request was from Samaritan's purse. Bill Bennett reminded Ron that the chapter had denied that request during the December chapter meeting. The second request came from the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI). This request will be discussed during our February meeting. The third request was from Patriots Point. It was decided to get more information on this charity and discuss it during the February meeting. Ron also reported he has not been able to reach Columbia Union College (Washington Adventist University) regarding the Charlie Shyab donation (they may be on winter break). Ron proposed placing a plaque on or near the Vietnam Veteran Memorial bench at Columbia Union (Washington Adventist University). Ron proposed the following language be placed on the plaque: "This plaque honors the life and memory of Charles (Doc) Shyab, an Adventist who taught classes at Columbia Union College and served with distinction in Vietnam as an Army medic. A discussion ensued about where and how the plaque would be placed and whether the plaque should come out of the Chapter's already

appropriated \$1000 donation, or if the plaque would be an additional donation and for what amount. Ron will do some research and bring info back at the February Chapter meeting. Finally, Ron received a request that the Chapter provide appropriate money for coffee and donuts at monthly Chapter meetings. Art Wong made a motion for the Chapter to appropriate up to \$30 per month for coffee and donuts at monthly Chapter meetings. The motion was approved.

Commission Report:

Bill Gray gave the following update regarding the Montgomery County Veterans Commission:

Meeting Date: December 16, 2025

Status of Veteran Homelessness in the County

As of January 2025, with a point of time survey, there were 50 homeless veterans and their families living in the County.

Permanent Supportive Housing Vouchers for Homeless Veterans Including those with Families
- We recommend the County make greater investment in permanent supportive housing which includes case management for homeless Veterans. This includes seeking additional HUD-VASH vouchers from the federal government. HUD-VASH is a collaborative program which pairs HUD's Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance with VA case management and supportive services for homeless Veterans. Veterans who have case management along with a voucher have greater success with permanent housing in the community.

Fiscal Year 2027 Priorities

1) *Communication and Outreach Planning to Promote Programs and Services that Benefit Veterans and Their Families*

Greater Community Outreach and Education on Veteran Issues - The Commission will develop a plan to increase communication with the public and other veteran service organizations that serve Veterans.

2) Commission was Established to Recognize the Service of Veterans by Planning for Veterans Day and Memorial Day—Commission will plan and participate in Veterans Day and Memorial Day recognition events.

Websites and Digital Displays to Honor

Veterans On www.montgomerycountymd.gov/veterans there are websites created by staff honoring County Veterans for Hometown Fallen Heroes going back to World War I, Vietnam Era Veterans, Women Veterans, Recognition for Veterans for Black History Month, and Thank You to County Veterans for Veterans Day.

Art Wong suggested the Chapter donate to homeless veteran's programs. This topic will be discussed at the February Chapter meeting after some research is done. Bill Gray will check with Bethesda Cares about a donation to their homeless veteran's services program.

Newsletter and Website: Richard Epstien reported he has updated the newsletter and the Chapter's web site.

Quaker Meeting:

Bill Gray reported his wife has been in and out of the hospital due to medical reasons, but that she is improving and is back at her assisted living facility. Roland Kauffman reported his wife is improving from her medical condition. Bill Gray also reported that Guy Hayslett suffered a stroke and is in rehabilitation. He is slowly recovering and is now getting over pneumonia. Bill Gray has been taking Guy to his rehabilitation treatment appointments as Bill has a wheelchair accessible van. Art suggested that perhaps other Chapter members can take turns helping Bill help get Guy to his treatment appointments so that Guy receives even more support from the Chapter.

Kenny Titcomb stated Guy Hayslett was the signature authority for VVA license plates. Kenny asked if Guy's signature is still valid or has anyone filled Guy's place in the Chapter. Bill Bennett pointed out license plate requests go through the VVA State Council. Art Wong stated that if someone already has VVA tags then new ones will be approved without signature required. Art also stated that anyone over 70 can get car registration fees exempted. All that is required is a benefit letter from the VA. Steve Campanella stated the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration sent him a black sticker for permanent registration of his vehicle. It was sent to him unrequested by him.

Art Wong reported he went to the Wall last week. Art was moved by the number of people visiting the Wall and he interacted with some of them. Art thinks it is important for Chapter members to go to the Wall once or twice a year to honor our fallen brothers and sisters.

A motion was made and approved to adjourn the meeting at 1019.

Executive Board Meeting

Board meeting commenced at 1019.

Steve Campanella moved to propose the following motion:

“Move to ratify the following expenditures authorized by the Chapter membership:

\$537.40 to Patriot Supply meals for homeless veterans

\$1,000 to Washington Adventist University

\$30 per month for coffee and donuts for VVA 641 Chapter meetings

And any other expenditures authorized by the Chapter membership since the last Board meeting.”

The motion was approved to accept the resolution.

A motion was made and approved to adjourn the Executive Board meeting at 1021.

Upcoming Chapter Events

Saturday, February 7, 2026, VVA Chapter 641 meeting at 0930 at Montgomery College Takoma Park Cultural Arts Center