

Vietnam Veterans of America
2026 National Leadership & Education Conference
Hyatt Regency Jacksonville, FL

Draft #6

TUESDAY, (August 11, 2026)

8:00am – 5:00pm	Situation Room	Boardroom 1 - 3 rd Floor
8:00am – 5:00pm	VVA/Media Office	Boardroom 4 - 3 rd Floor
8:00am – 5:00pm	AVVA Office	Boardroom 3 – 3 rd Floor
8:00am – 12:00pm	Pre-Registration only	Grand Foyer – 2 nd Floor
9:00am – 5:00pm	Veterans Mall	Grand Ballroom 1/2/3 – 2 nd Floor
1:00pm – 5:00pm	On-site registration	Grand Foyer – 2 nd Floor
6:00pm – 9:00pm	Welcome Home Party Music by “Beach Bumz” (Food service 6:00pm – 7:30pm. Entertainment 7:30pm – 9:00pm)	Grand Ballroom 4/5 – 2 nd Floor

WEDNESDAY, (August 12, 2026)

8:00am – 5:00pm	Situation Room	Boardroom 1 - 3 rd Floor
8:00am – 5:00pm	VVA/Media Office	Boardroom 4 - 3 rd Floor
8:00am – 5:00pm	AVVA Office	Boardroom 3 – 3 rd Floor
8:00am – 6:00pm	Registration	Grand Foyer – 2 nd Floor
8:45am – 10:30am	Opening Ceremony	Conference Center A– 3 rd Floor
	Invocation – Liz Cannon Presentation of Colors – Florida State Council National Anthem – Pledge of Allegiance – Hotel employees (Veterans) Introduction of VVA Officers Welcome – Tom Burke, VVA President Welcome – Florida State Council President Welcome – Sharon Hobbs, AVVA President Keynote Speaker – Phil Napoli Announcements – Wes Guidry, Director of Meetings	
11:00am – 5:00pm	Veterans Mall	Grand Ballroom 1/2/3 – 2 nd Floor
11:00am – 12:30pm	Mission 75 Presentation	Conference Center A– 3 rd Floor
	<u>Presenter:</u> Tom Burke, VVA President	
12:30pm – 1:45pm	VVA/AVVA Officers Luncheon_ Open to Past or Present, Chapter or State Council Officers & Board Members + Guests	Grand Ballroom 5 – 2 nd Floor

(Advanced Tickets Required!)

2:00pm – 3:30pm	Chapter Transition Strategy	Conference Center A– 3 rd Floor
	<u>Presenter:</u> Dominick Yezzo, VVA General Counsel	
3:45pm – 5:15pm	Empowered Aging: Navigation Community and VA Resources	Conference Center B– 3 rd Floor
	Presenting the resources available from the community and the VAMC that are essential for empowering the aging Veteran specific for the individual goals of the Veteran and caregiver	
	<u>Presenter:</u> Dr. Molly McGaughey, Certified medical director, certified in family medicine, hospice and palliative care medicine	
3:45pm – 5:15pm	Six Alternatives for VVA’s Future	River Terrace 1 – 3 rd Floor
	VVA’s future will most likely be decided at the 2027 National Convention. VVA has six options to consider before then. This seminar will address the definitions, explore the facts, discover the pros, and uncover the cons of each possibility. Information can bring you choices and choices can bring you power. Educate yourself about options and alternatives.	
	<u>Presenters:</u> Leslie DeLong, VVA Constitution Chair Sharon Hobbs, AVVA Nat’l President Charlie Montgomery, VVA Region 3 Director	
6:00pm – 9:00pm	Wednesday Event Music by “Chrome 57 Band” (Food service 6:00pm – 7:30pm. Entertainment 7:30pm – 9:00pm)	Grand Ballroom 4/5 – 2 nd Floor

THURSDAY, (August 13, 2026)

8:00am – 1:00pm	Situation Room	Boardroom 1 - 3 rd Floor
8:00am – 1:00pm	VVA/Media Office	Boardroom 4 - 3 rd Floor
8:00am – 1:00pm	AVVA Office	Boardroom 3 – 3 rd Floor
8:00am – 1:00pm	Pre-Registration only	Grand Foyer – 2 nd Floor
9:00am – 1:00pm	Veterans Mall	Grand Ballroom 1/2/3 – 2 nd Floor
1:00pm – 5:00pm	On-site registration	Grand Foyer – 2 nd Floor
9:00am – 10:30am	VVA Legacy Task Force -- The Road Ahead	Conference Center B– 3 rd Floor
	Explanations of the proposed process for telling VVA's story, and having our achievements properly archived. Also, discussion about options and participation by all VVA members.	
	<u>Presenters:</u> Steve Williams, Chairman Marc Leepson, Senior writer for The Veteran & Arts Editor	
9:00am – 10:30am	Suicide Prevention	River Terrace 1 – 3 rd Floor

Methods, tools and techniques for disrupting suicide in veterans, family members and friends

Presenter: Dr. Tomas Hall, Ph.D

10:45am – 12:15pm

Amending the Governing Documents of an Affiliate Organization, the Chapter

Conference Center B– 3rd Floor

The seminar will consider the ranking of governing documents of a chapter and the effects the governing documents have from the top down on an affiliate organizations. The seminar will cover the VVA Constitution, the Charter, the Group Letter, the Articles of Incorporation, the Letter of Determination, and the constituent bylaws.

Everyone is encouraged to ask questions and discuss effects the governing documents have on the divisions of the VVA in the seminar and throughout the leadership conference.

Presenter: Leslie DeLong RP, VVA Constitution Committee

10:45am – 12:15pm

Ask a Top Gun VSO

River Terrace 1 – 3rd Floor

VSOs available to answer questions from VVA conference attendees. It will be a panel of senior VSOs answering general questions from the audience. No personal cases will be discussed as the VSOs can be contacted separately for those matters.

Presenters: Marc McCabe, Facilitator
Elliot Wilson, Co-Director, VVA Veterans Benefits
Paula Tuero-Flesch, VVA Veterans Benefits

12:15pm – 2:00pm

AVVA Luncheon
Everyone is invited, VVA & AVVVA
(Advanced Tickets Required!)

Grand Ballroom 5 – 2nd Floor

12:15pm until

Free Afternoon to enjoy the area

2:00pm

AVVA Annual Meeting

Grand Ballroom 5 – 2nd Floor

FRIDAY, (August 14, 2026)

7:00am – 7:30am

POW/MIA Ceremony

TBD

8:00am – 5:00pm

Situation Room

Boardroom 1 - 3rd Floor

8:00am – 5:00pm

VVA/Media Office

Boardroom 4 - 3rd Floor

8:00am – 5:00pm

AVVA Office

Boardroom 3 – 3rd Floor

8:00am – 12:00pm

Registration

Grand Foyer – 2nd Floor

9:00am – 5:00pm

Veterans Mall

Grand Ballroom 1/2/3 – 2nd Floor

9:00am – 10:30am

**Basic Parliamentary Procedures, is it true?
Frequently Asked Questions**

Conference Center B– 3rd Floor

This seminar will practice mock meetings presiding and conducting business in increasingly more complex situations using proper parliamentary procedures. There will be an open forum to discuss a series of questions of truth and frequently asked questions both with citations, and a discussion on the relationship between a set of

convention rules and Internet rules.

Presenter: Leslie DeLong RP, Chairman, VVA Constitution Committee

9:00am – 10:30am

How to become an effective legislative advocate

River Terrace 1 – 3rd Floor

The seminar is a nuts and bolts hand on experience where you will learn the basic procedures of working with your local elected officials including the do's and don'ts.

Presenters: Bill Patton, VVA Government Affairs Chairman
James McCormick, Executive Director VVA Government Affairs

10:45am – 12:15pm

You have been Elected President - Now what?

Conference Center B– 3rd Floor

Provide information to New / Current Chapter and State Council Presidents on Duties of being President. Includes an understanding of reports and documents needed to carry out your Position. Also provided will be a copy of State Council Presidents Handbook

Presenters: John Riling, National Vice President
Chuck Odom, Mississippi State President, CSCP Chair
Dan Stenvold, North Dakota State President, VVA Board of Directors

10:45am – 12:15pm

PTSD/Substance Abuse: What You Need To Know Coping With Aging Stressors

River Terrace 1 – 3rd Floor

PTSD/Substance Abuse remains a significant concern for our aging veteran population. In our seminar we will identify stressors related to PTSD/Substance Abuse and explore healthy coping strategies to help veterans and their family members deal with everyday life events impacting the family unit

Presenter: Dr. Tomas Hall, Ph.D

12:15pm – 2:00pm

Lunch

On your own

2:00pm – 3:30pm

Duties of the Secretary

Conference Center B– 3rd Floor

This seminar will cover the eleven duties of the Secretary prescribed by Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised, along with the twenty-nine duties prescribed by the VVA Constitution.

Presenter: Leslie DeLong RP, Chairman, VVA Constitution Committee

2:00pm – 3:30pm

Caring Through the Journey

River Terrace 1 – 3rd Floor

The UPs and DOWNs of Caregiving for Parkinson's and Dementia"
She will be presenting on caregiving tips and lessons learned for Parkinson's Disease and Dementia

Presenter: Dr. Molly McGaughey, Certified medical director, certified in family medicine, hospice and palliative care medicine

3:45pm – 5:15pm

Duties of the Treasurer

Conference Center B– 3rd Floor

The seminar will cover the legal, Constitutional and practical responsibilities of a Treasurer at the Chapter and State levels. We will review the current "Treasurer's handbook" for appropriate updates and revisions. Copies of the current State Council/ Chapter Treasurer's Handbook will be provided.

Presenter: Dottie Barickman, National Treasurer

3:45pm – 5:15pm **Enrollment & Eligibility as it relates to the PACT ACT** River Terrace 1 – 3rd Floor

Seminar will review eligibility for health care under the PACT ACT of 2022
Inclusive of the March 5, 2024 provision, for veterans who were exposed to toxins
and other hazards while serving in the military.

Presenters: James McCormick, Executive Director VVA Government Affairs
Michael Fimmano, Chief Legislative Officer, VVA Government Affairs

6:00pm – 9:00pm Friday night Event Grand Ballroom 4/5 – 2nd Floor
Music by “The Bushmen”
(Food service 6:00pm – 7:30pm. Entertainment 7:30pm – 9:00pm)

SATURDAY, (August 15, 2026)

8:00am – 12:00pm Situation Room Boardroom 1 - 3rd Floor

8:00am – 12:00pm VVA/Media Office Boardroom 4 - 3rd Floor

8:00am – 12:00pm AVVA Office Boardroom 3 – 3rd Floor

9:00am – 12:00pm Veterans Mall Grand Ballroom 1/2/3 – 2nd Floor

9:00am – 10:30am **Mission 75 Wrap up** Conference Center A– 3rd Floor

Presenter: Tom Burke, VVA President

10:30am – 12:00pm Open Mic and Conference Wrap up Conference Center A– 3rd Floor

12:00pm Lunch (on your own)

6:00pm – 7:00pm Reception Pre-Function Salon

7:00pm – 10:00pm VVA Awards Banquet Grand Ballroom 4/5 – 2nd Floor