

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

**Draft #8**

TUESDAY, (August 11, 2026)

8:00am – 5:00pm	Situation Room	Boardroom 1 - 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
8:00am – 5:00pm	VVA/Media Office	Boardroom 4 - 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
8:00am – 5:00pm	AVVA Office	Boardroom 3 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
8:00am – 12:00pm	Pre-Registration only	Grand Foyer – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor
9:00am – 5:00pm	Veterans Mall	Grand Ballroom 1/2/3 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor
1:00pm – 5:00pm	On-site registration	Grand Foyer – 2 <sup>nd</sup> 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 <sup>nd</sup> Floor

WEDNESDAY, (August 12, 2026)

8:00am – 5:00pm	Situation Room	Boardroom 1 - 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
8:00am – 5:00pm	VVA/Media Office	Boardroom 4 - 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
8:00am – 5:00pm	AVVA Office	Boardroom 3 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
8:00am – 6:00pm	Registration	Grand Foyer – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor
8:45am – 10:30am	Opening Ceremony	Conference Center A– 3 <sup>rd</sup> 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 <sup>nd</sup> Floor
11:00am – 12:30pm	<b>Mission 75 Presentation</b>  <u>Presenter:</u> Tom Burke, VVA President	Conference Center A– 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
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 <sup>nd</sup> Floor

(Advanced Tickets Required!)

2:00pm – 3:30pm	<b>Chapter Transition Strategy</b>	Conference Center A– 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
	<u>Presenter:</u> Dominick Yezzo, VVA General Counsel	
3:45pm – 5:15pm	<b>Empowered Aging: Navigation Community and VA Resources</b>	Conference Center B– 3 <sup>rd</sup> 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	<b>Six Choices for VVA's Future</b>	River Terrace 1 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> 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 <sup>nd</sup> Floor

THURSDAY, (August 13, 2026)

8:00am – 1:00pm	Situation Room	Boardroom 1 - 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
8:00am – 1:00pm	VVA/Media Office	Boardroom 4 - 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
8:00am – 1:00pm	AVVA Office	Boardroom 3 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
8:00am – 1:00pm	Pre-Registration only	Grand Foyer – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor
9:00am – 1:00pm	Veterans Mall	Grand Ballroom 1/2/3 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor
1:00pm – 5:00pm	On-site registration	Grand Foyer – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor
9:00am – 10:30am	<b>VVA Legacy Task Force -- The Road Ahead</b>	Conference Center B– 3 <sup>rd</sup> 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	<b>Suicide Prevention</b>	River Terrace 1 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> 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– 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 – 3<sup>rd</sup> 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  
Paula Tuero-Flesch, VVA Veterans Benefits

12:15pm – 2:00pm

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

Grand Ballroom 5 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

12:15pm until

Free Afternoon to enjoy the area

2:00pm

AVVA Annual Meeting

Grand Ballroom 5 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

FRIDAY, (August 14, 2026)

7:00am – 7:30am

POW/MIA Ceremony

TBD

8:00am – 5:00pm

Situation Room

Boardroom 1 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

8:00am – 5:00pm

VVA/Media Office

Boardroom 4 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

8:00am – 5:00pm

AVVA Office

Boardroom 3 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

8:00am – 12:00pm

Registration

Grand Foyer – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

9:00am – 5:00pm

Veterans Mall

Grand Ballroom 1/2/3 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

9:00am – 10:30am

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

Conference Center B– 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 – 3<sup>rd</sup> 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– 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 – 3<sup>rd</sup> 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– 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 – 3<sup>rd</sup> 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– 3<sup>rd</sup> 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	<b>Sustaining Veteran Advocacy: Building Enduring Impact Through Dual-Entity Leadership</b>	River Terrace 1 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
	How to leverage the advantages of both VVA, a 501(c)(19) and AVVA, a 501(c)(3) to maximize our organization’s advocacy.	
	Presenters: James McCormick, Executive Director VVA Government Affairs Michael Fimmano, Chief Legislative Officer, VVA Government Affairs	
6:00pm – 9:00pm	Friday night Event Music by “The Bushmen” (Food service 6:00pm – 7:30pm. Entertainment 7:30pm – 9:00pm)	Grand Ballroom 4/5 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor

SATURDAY, (August 15, 2026)

8:00am – 12:00pm	Situation Room	Boardroom 1 - 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
8:00am – 12:00pm	VVA/Media Office	Boardroom 4 - 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
8:00am – 12:00pm	AVVA Office	Boardroom 3 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
9:00am – 12:00pm	Veterans Mall	Grand Ballroom 1/2/3 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor
9:00am – 10:30am	<b>Mission 75 Wrap up</b>	Conference Center A– 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
	<u>Presenter:</u> Tom Burke, VVA President	
10:30am – 12:00pm	Open Mic and Conference Wrap up	Conference Center A– 3 <sup>rd</sup> 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 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor