

**Ganado Veterans Organization
Meeting Minutes
April 10, 2026**

- I. Meeting Call To Order – 2:40 PM
- II. Invocation – Vice Commander Lawrence Lano
- III. Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence
- IV. Roll Call of Officers and Sign I – All Present
- V. Review and Adoption of Agenda
 - A. Motion to Accept – Loretta Spencer Hopkins 2nd By Rickey Crawford
 - B. Vote: FOR – 13, AGAINST – 0, ABSTAINED - 2
- VI. Review and Adoption Minutes – February Minutes (Tabled from March Meeting) & March Minutes
 - A. Copies of Minutes was provided to GVO
 - B. February Minutes were read, March Minutes were accepted as is since a paper copy was available
- VII. Recognition of Guests and Visiting Officials
 - A. Bobbie Ann Baldwin -NNVA Executive Director
 - B. Fallyn Begay -NNVA Ft. Defiance Agency VSO
 - C. Chris White - Ganado Chapter President and USMC veteran
 - D. Wilbur Smith – Commander, Cornfields Veterans Organization
- VIII. Reports
 - A. Commander
 - a. VSO called to say four FEMA trailers were available for homeless veterans. Two names submitted to NNVA but they did not have homesite leases. Asked VSO if names were received and she said yes they were.
 - b. Two GVO members who are trying to get home renovations. One veteran was able to secure funding through NNVA and the other GVO member still needs to secure funding. Marine Corps Ball Committee secured \$75,000 and will attend meeting to find out criteria. Also will reach out to Dine Nazbaa Partnership ad ask for assistance with a bathroom addition.
 - c. Vivian Mitchell with Elizabeth Dole Foundation has a program to help the caretakers of disabled veterans.
 - d. Vietnam Veterans Memorial Walk – Veterans Building in Thoreau was amazing.
 - e. We, some of us members of GVO, met with Ganado Chapter President and USMC veteran Chris White to create a profile on a government site called SAMS.gov for



Ganado Chapter. There has been funding available but Ganado Chapter needed this profile to actually receive the money. Hopefully now we can start to see improvements to the Veterans Building in the near future. Will let Chapter President elaborate on the funding when he speaks.

B. Vice Commander

- a. Attended the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Walk Ceremony on March 28, 2026 in Thoreau, NM. They had a beautiful veterans building but according to Executive Director Bobbie Baldwin said they had problems with paying for utilities. We need a building like theirs for Ganado. Very impressive with the way they did the celebration. We should consider joining them next year. Commander Nate Gorman did participate in the walk and with the posting of colors.
- b. On Memorial Day we wish to have a small gathering at my place to perform a proper flag folding along with brother Arnold Lano. So, Honor Guard was summoned to attend along with all of GVO.

C. Secretary

- a. Text received saying "We need to talk about your position as GVO Secretary".
- b. Money for Veterans Building and Chapter is short on money. So we need to get together along with Honorable Vince James to discuss money issues.
- c. Veterans Homesite Lease – BIA and Navajo Nation are having issues and bumping heads and is in the Navajo Times, so read the paper. Another organization is being audited. I do not want to get audited.
- d. Commander Gorman rebuttle – Money is an issue but not doom and gloom. We are not being audited nor are we going to get audited because we are following the rule of law. Again, we just recently worked with Chapter President, Chapter Manager, myself, Amelda James, Vice Commander Lawrence Lano and former GVO Secretary Lenah Henderson to create an account in a government website to accept grant money for this veterans building.

D. Color Guard/Honor Guard

- a. Honor Guard for Thomas Jackson, Flag Raising for Ganado Post Office, Honor Guard for Fred Cleveland, Headstone Placement for Leo Lee Roanhorse, Color Guard for Vietnam Veterans Memorial Walk in Thoreau, NM, Color Guard for 2nd Annual Celebrating Our Vietnam Veterans in Nahatadziil Chapter.
- b. We are not just Ganado Color Guard but we have come together with Cornfields and Kinlichee to have a stronger relationship within our community.
- c. We had two events happen in one day on Friday, April 3, a headstone placement for Jamison James and Honor Guard for a veteran in Nashchitii, NM. During the Ft. Defiance Agency Commanders Meeting, Commander Nate Gorman, Cornfields Commander Wilbur Smith and Kinlichee Commander Ericson Mann performed the Honor Guard for Davin Billie in Naschitii.
- d. Upcoming events – Ralph Johnson Memorial Rodeo Parade, Monday, May 18, asked to lead the parade. Possible attempts to perform as mounted color guard. Also, NN Behavioral Health is hosting a Back-To-School Celebration on July 22.

E. Resilient Women of GVO – Lenah Henderson – Group was formed for female veterans, Blue Star Mothers, Gold Star Mothers and Surviving Spouses. To address issues that are specific to females and have camaraderie among ourselves. Bobbie Baldwin is very impressed with the formation of this group. We had a difficult time with the name but we found one and we found a logo. We are going to focus on fundraising for now starting with a Navajo taco sale. We are not involving politics because we are a healing group.

F. NNVA Executive Directory Bobbie Baldwin

- a. Budget – Warrior Home – Nursing home for veterans. Navajo Division of Health said there was money available but were now we're told it isn't possible. \$8 million dollars is missing. Supposed to have 36 months after the money was given for a nursing home to be built and we are asking for that money to be reallocated to the Navajo Nation and specifically to the Navajo Nation Veterans Administration so we can partner with Department of Health and Economic Development so we can build a 30 bed nursing home.
- b. We have 24 acres of land that was discovered which was not disclosed from the previous director. So we will be talking to Senator Pinto from New Mexico to talk about capital outlay funding for a veterans center where veterans can go to congregate, apply for benefits and research or gather for meetings. We are partnering with Navajo Nation Department of Transportation because the land is near the new water line and NDOT can pay for the connection to the water line.
- c. GVO is talking about getting a veterans building like Thoreau, so try to get a land withdrawal which will help to advocate for money from the state. When asking for money you need to have "shovel ready" land in order to build. Work with Navajo leaders to get funding for your veterans building.
- d. Regarding housing, there are 154 individuals on the housing list. 28 homes have been granted. 126 are on the construction list and on the On Deck list. On Deck means they haven't started on construction but they are approved to be on the housing list. Last administration they only built 8 homes but this administration we have over 150 that will be built. Home Improvement list was have 180 individuals. You are encouraged to put your name on the Home Improvement list.
- e. Recently big VA said if your medication is taken and you can still function then they can downgrade your rating. Dr. Andy Nez is sponsoring legislation against this situation even though big VA rescinded the proposed policy.
- f. Honor Guard, we really want to commend your Honor Guard. Unfortunately there was an incident with one particular honor guard and NNVA will no longer be referring families to that honor guard which is located in New Mexico and Ft. Defiance Agency. But I want to commend you for always having a squared away appearance, a squared away attitude, being professional and rendering the utmost respect to the family and I want to thank you personally and to your family, your parents, your children and getting your uniform ready for you.

G. Ft. Defiance Agency VSO Fallyn Begay

- a. Talking Circle is available to all veterans and is a safe place for veterans to discuss anything they need to talk about. It will be held every Thursday from 10AM to 12PM.
- b. Arizona Coalition for Military Families from Phoenix which is a symposium which will discuss how to help veterans and how to take care of the caretakers that take care of veterans.
- c. DNR conference to discuss Home Site Leases which will be held at Twin Arrows to get a lot more information on assisting veterans to obtain their home site leases.
- d. Memorandums – Clarification for assistance under the Veterans Trust Fund. The third round of VTF distribution is not accurate because we have to adhere and uphold the policy which states each applicant can receive two Hardship, two Energy and two Self Help assistances. The flyer is from the Central Agency who still have funding in their accounts.
- e. Letter from Housing Manager at NNVA, William Nez, requests from all veterans across the Navajo Nation and asks all CVOs advocating for timely utility connections for veterans. This is a main challenge for veterans housing. So we need CVOs to create resolutions to support the fast connection of utilities for veterans.
- f. Letter was sent to Navajo Nation Council requesting \$1 million for unmet needs budget specifically for Ft. Defiance Agency used for personnel, travelling funding, and office equipment including new computers and printers. And facility maintenance and administrative support cost. Would like a resolution supporting this request.
- g. Veteran participant count. Last year GVO had 56 and now after updates it is 109.
- h. Budget for GVO is \$7436. Stipends are a little bit high and may need to be transferred to a different account.
- i. With war currently ongoing we had two prayer events, one at Veterans Memorial Park in Window Rock and another in Chinle.

H. Chris White – Community Update – Post Office: Land Department did not create the paperwork needed to submit. They were supposed to get it done in August. In December the Ganado Post Office closed and we had to pick up mail in St. Michaels. Four Seasons Construction did renovate the old Post Office and we were able to use the old building once again. Sage Memorial Hospital: expanded the facilities for the sewer. MOU: Meeting with DELTECS, GVO and Ganado Chapter. Grievances were noted and addressed.

IX. Old Business

A. Budget Update & GVO Purchases

- a. Two quotes turned into NNVA - First for \$1218.83 and another for \$713.97. Purchase orders will be generated from the Office of Finance.
- b. Ordering printer from Parkers in Farmington

- c. Balance -Operating/Office Equipment - \$1575.00, Honor Guard - \$1561.00 and Programs -\$167.20
 - B. Navajo Strong – Dog/Cat Food Distribution – Over 70 veterans were given items from this distribution. Veterans from Ganado, Cornfields and Kinlichee received assistance from this distribution. Navajo Strong came in from Utah with donations from across Utah and Idaho and Wyoming.
 - C. Ft. Defiance Agency Commanders Meeting held on April 9 – Dr. Andy Nez has a resolution to keep the VA from lowering benefits if medication cures or makes a veteran better. Also a resolution to make the Navajo Nation a Purple Heart Nation.
 - D. Vietnam Veterans Celebrations Thoreau and Nahatahdziil
 - E. Navajo Women Warrior Recognition Day – Thursday, March 19 – Twin Arrows – 79 registered and 54 attended. Health, non-profit organization booths and VA attended. Prefer to have primarily for women to address the issues because it is more sensitive as opposed to having male veterans present. Spouses of veterans are also addressed.
- X. New Business
- A. GVO Highway Cleanup – Earth Day – Wednesday, April 22, 2026, 9 AM - Noon
 - B. Memorial Day – Monday, May 25, 2026 -
 - C. Purple Heart Community – Resolution GVO 2026-004- Tabled for next meeting
- XI. Announcements
- A. Tax Day – April 15
 - B. Pre-Veterans Day Celebration Committee Meeting- Thursday, April 16, 3 PM
 - C. Talking Circle – April 16, 10 AM to Noon, NNVA Office
 - D. Next chapter meeting – Tuesday, April 21 at 6 PM
 - E. Honor Guard Conference – April 18, Upper Fruitland
 - F. GVO Highway Cleanup – April 22
 - G. Female Veterans Conference – May 4 – 5:30 PM, Zuni, NM
 - H. Food Handlers Training – Ganado Chapter – May 14
 - I. 55th Annual Ralph Johnson Memorial Rodeo Parade – Monday, May 18
 - J. May is Older American Month
 - K. Navajo Hopi Riders to Honor Gold Star Mother Isabel Shondee – June 4 – 8 AM
 - L. Next GVO Meeting- Friday, May 8, 2 PM
- XII. Adjournment – 1736 – 5:36 PM

GANADO VETERANS ORGANIZATION & NAVAJO STRONG APRIL 10, 2026



NAME	BRANCH	PHONE OR EMAIL
1. Commander Nate Gorman	Army	(480) 261-2577
2. Vice Commander Lawrence Lano	USMC	505-879-7937
3. Secretary Steven Kee	ARMY	
4. Gold Star Mother Isabelle Shondee		
5. Joretta M. Yazzie		505-713-7453
6. Annie Rose Curley		928-206-6841
7. Maggie Kirk		505-593-3045
8. Helen M. Lincoln	Navy	928-799-4890
9. Scott George	ARMY	
10. Lavonna George		
11. Loretta Spencer-Hopkins	Army	928-233-0358
12. Keith Henderson		751 403 0241
13. Priscilla Quintero	USAF	505-457-1685
14. Ricky Crawford	ARMY	928 797 5443
15. Bobbie Ann Baldwin	USMC	928 206 6519
16. Fallyn Begay	NNVA VSO	928 871 7307
17. Betty Van Winkle	VISTOR	(928) 206-9586
18. DWAYNE WHITE (CONSPIROUS VETERANS)	ARMY	
19. Annie N. N. N.		928-206-6685
20. Patrick Burns	USMC	928-241-8358
21. Chris White	USMC	928-241-8325
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