



## The Sentinel

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Vietnam Veterans of America – Chapter 1002 – Wallkill Valley  
P.O. box 463, Vernon, NJ 07462 - 973-271-2413

April 2016

Website: [www.VVA1002.org](http://www.VVA1002.org)

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### **FROM THE MINEFIELD:**

*Submitted by John Harrigan*

Well Elections are over and with a unanimous vote the Officers of the Chapter will remain the same for the upcoming two years. We as your representatives would like to Thank you, our Members, for your support in reelecting us to these positions. We have also added a few new members to our Board of Directors and will be meeting sometime in May and discuss how to keep the Chapter active in the community. We will keep striving to make Chapter 1002 the best VVA Chapter in New Jersey.

We have had two new members join our Chapter bringing our VVA total to 179 and our AVVA total to 38. We have lost a few AVVA members and hope to get them back in the near future.

We have gotten our updated raffle license and Jack and Sharon are in the process of getting our next batch of 50/50 tickets for the 2017 Scholarship.

The dates for this years can shakes will be coming up very shortly. On that note Rich Predmore has advised me that this year we have 69 Applications that he and his volunteers will be reviewing. Last year we received 58 applications, so you can see the number of students is starting to grow.

In case you were not aware our Clothing Bin money has stopped coming in as they are having a reorganization of their company and we have not received any checks from them since December. This was a great source of income for the Chapter so with this source gone we will be holding our first Chapter can shake on May 28th at Mac and Lindys in the Vernon Shopping center.

Our Thursdays are still pretty busy helping Veterans with paper work and gets pretty crowded with Chapter members just stopping by and having a good time. The word on what we do has gotten across the border to PA as

myself and Walt were at the Milford American Legion last week helping some of the Vets up there.

Remember next week is Casino night and have a lot of nice prizes to be given away, so come in and have a good time and help out the Cemetery. If this is a success we can see about doing it as a Chapter Fund raiser. If anyone has any ideas about raising funds for the Chapter please let us know. That's it for now see you at the meeting.

John

### **1<sup>st</sup> VICE PRESIDENT:**

*Submitted by John Brady*

Just wanted to let the Marines and FMF Corpsman of our chapter and anyone else who may be interested about the beginning of the final construction phase of the National Museum of the Marine Corps (NMMC).

The NMMC was opened to the public on November 10, 2006 and shows the history of the Corps from it's beginnings at Tun's Tavern in 1775 to 1975, the end of the Vietnam War.

Now the final phase is being built to tell the history of Marines from 1975 to the present day. Groundbreaking was done on March 27, 2016 and is scheduled to be completed in 2017. Upon completion the Museum will nearly double in size with additions of the new post-Vietnam galleries, a giant screen theater, expanded education suite, a Marine Sports Gallery and Marine Corps Combat Art Gallery.

I have been fortunate to have visited the museum many times over the years. In fact, the first time was while the museum was still under construction and we had to wear hardhats while being escorted.

The NMMC is located along route 95 in Quantico, Virginia and is free to the public. More information is

*Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another!*

available at the museums website,  
MARINEHERITAGE.ORG.

## **SERVICE OFFICER:**

*Submitted by Skip Kays*

If you want any further information, or have any suggestions you can contact me at 973 459-9392 or at skays1@embarqmail.com

### **Vietnamvetradio.com**

This is an Internet radio station that I learned about on Facebook.

It is put together by vets and plays music from the Vietnam era, roughly from 1962 with our earliest formal involvement till 1975 when Saigon fell.

I just like listening to the music and the clips they play from that era. Minimal commercials and those are only for the radio station and some Veteran's activities and groups. TUNE IN.

### **The VA continues to generate headlines**

Our veterans deserve better from the nation they have served.

The Veterans Affairs—scandal headlines speak for themselves. The Daily Beast: “Veteran Burned Himself Alive outside VA Clinic”; azfamily.com: “Dead veterans canceling their own appointments?”; New York Times: “Report Finds Sharp Increase in Veterans Denied V.A. Benefits,” “More than 125,000 U.S. veterans are being denied crucial mental health services,” and “Rubio, Miller ask committee to back VA accountability bills.” Are these headlines from 2014, when the VA scandal broke? The sad answer is no. All these headlines — and so many more — are from the past ten days, a fact that also speaks for itself.

Two years ago this week — thanks to courageous whistleblowers in Phoenix and a fed-up House Veterans Affairs Committee chairman — the world was finally exposed to rampant VA dysfunction and corruption. Dozens of veterans had died while waiting for care at the Phoenix VA — which was, unfortunately, just the tip of the iceberg. Across the country, VA officials had manipulated lists to hide real health-care wait times. In total, thousands — and possibly far more — met the same fate: waiting, and dying, at the hands of a calcified and soulless bureaucracy. Investigations were launched, and VA Secretary Eric Shinseki eventually resigned.

Even the reflexively defensive Obama administration confirmed the obvious in a June 2014 report, admitting that “a corrosive [VA] culture has led to personnel problems across the Department that are seriously impacting morale and by extension, the timeliness of health care,” with “problems . . . exacerbated by poor management and communication structures, distrust between some VA employees and management, a history

of retaliation toward employees raising issues, and a lack of accountability across all grade levels.” The report flatly states that the VA must be “restructured and reformed.” Yet, two years after the VA scandal broke, no such restructuring or reform has occurred. Instead, almost nothing has changed at the failing Department of Veterans Affairs. VA officials have kept their jobs, and veterans continue to be treated like second-class citizens inside their own system.

But after two years of committee hearings, two years of investigations, and two years of funding increases for the VA, how bad could it really still be? Judge for yourself. Today health-care wait times for veterans remain unacceptably high; in fact, they have gone up in many places. Whistleblowers continue to say that records of VA wait times are still being manipulated across the country, with the VA's own inspector general recently finding that over half of VA medical facilities investigated still use “improper scheduling.”

On the benefits side, while the number of backlogged disability claims has come down, the wait for first-time applicants remains, on average, 389 days; it's over 770 days in Baltimore and 630 days in Boston. Meanwhile, the backlog for appealed claims has skyrocketed to over 255,000 — and most of the veterans on that list have been waiting upwards of three years. Imagine getting your health care at the post office or the DMV — welcome to health care for veterans. But don't veterans now have health-care choice? No, they do not. Good legislation was passed in 2014: the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act, which gives veterans a temporary “choice card.” But the choice cards veterans actually receive are barely worth the cardstock they are printed on. Because of congressional restrictions and sheer VA bureaucratic obstinacy, use of the so-called choice card is extremely cumbersome and time consuming, leaving millions of veterans with a card, but still no timely or convenient choice. Worse, thanks to delays in VA payments, veterans who use the card are often stuck with big medical bills. Efforts to hold negligent or dishonest — sometimes even criminal — VA officials accountable have also met a brick wall. VA accountability rules aimed at senior managers were part of the same 2014 legislation, but less than a handful of VA officials have actually been fired. The VA refuses to use this and other accountability tools, even against officials who defrauded the department of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Unsurprisingly, top VA officials and their Beltway enablers are opposed to stronger accountability legislation, which remains stalled in the Senate. Perhaps worst of all, the whistleblowers who exposed the scandal in the first place continue to be marginalized, targeted, and even spied on, as the Washington Examiner reported in January this year. There is no denying the sad reality



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that the VA is no more functional today than it was in 2014. This tragic stasis comes despite the fact that the VA has the second-largest budget in the federal government (\$160-plus billion) and a workforce twice the size of the Marine Corps (340,000-plus employees). The VA's problems have nothing to do with funding and very little to do with staffing. So, why has nothing changed? With the problem well identified, with both Democrats and Republicans professing to want to fix the VA, and with veterans overwhelmingly supportive of serious reforms, how have attempts to change the VA's "corrosive culture" gone nowhere?

Until politicians are forced to admit that the VA's health-care model has failed, and until special interests are forcefully confronted, very little is going to change. The answer will not surprise you: Entrenched ideologies, self-interested politicians, and special interests block the path to VA reform. Until politicians are forced to admit that the VA's health-care model has failed, and until special interests are forcefully confronted, very little is going to change. So, as a veterans advocate who has been involved in the fight to fix the VA for years, allow me to speak bluntly. The reason the VA health-care model doesn't work is the VA bureaucracy itself. VA health care is top-down, single-payer, government-run health care. Imagine getting your health care at the post office or the DMV — welcome to health care for veterans. Every day, veterans attempt to navigate a massive government network of hospitals and clinics that are run like a Washington bureaucracy. It's socialized medicine at its worst. They're told the next billion dollars in funding will fix it, but it never does.

Yet, for ideologically entrenched leftists, this type of health care is supposed to be a model for all Americans. These leftists don't dare try to overhaul the VA, because then they would be effectively admitting defeat on government-run health care. They refuse to let the facts get in the way of their ideology — and veterans suffer as a result. Conservative reformers see health care very differently. We believe choices, competition, accountability, and transparency are good for consumers — and, in this case, for those who deserve the best health care and service our country has to offer.

Yet, when reforms are advanced in thoughtful and sensible ways that would restructure the tangled bureaucracy and put vets in control of their own health care, VA officials, unions, and apologists go insane. They accuse reformers of wanting to privatize, dismantle, and defund the VA (and, of course, it's always a "Koch-Fueled Plot to Destroy the VA," as a recent Mother Jones headline put it). Typical left-wing tactics: no new policy ideas, only new personal attacks. However, blame only starts with the VA and its ideological allies. The VA's congressional committees, in order to keep their bipartisan veneer and find lowest-common-denominator consensus, avoid tough, necessary reforms and instead just throw more money at the problem. Committee staff quietly quash ambitious plans in favor of bills that look tough, but are not. And of course government unions — like the American Federation of Government Employees — mobilize to attack reformers. Union jobs and dues, not quality services for veterans, are their lodestar. But the most troubling — and effective — opponents of reform are veterans' service organizations.

Almost all the D.C.-based veterans' groups (excepting my former organization, Concerned Veterans for America) reflexively defend the status quo — kissing the rings of VA officials, cutting cozy congressional deals behind the scenes, and falling over themselves for the next White House invitation. Vets' groups should be the VA's watchdogs, but instead they're self-interested lapdogs. None have introduced any bold or new ideas since the scandal started, and all have mastered the art of blocking meaningful reforms. Until D.C.-based veterans' groups, who wield a lot of power with individual congressmen and senators, start to represent their members, who do want meaningful reform, such reform is extremely tough.

Thankfully, both a forthcoming VA commission report, and soon-to-be-introduced legislation, will chart a course for real, systemic VA reform. Both will represent yet another stand-up-and-be-counted moment for so-called veterans advocates. The report, from the Commission on Care, is already being mischaracterized and attacked by the usual suspects — including, you guessed it, veterans' groups. Reform legislation will also

be disingenuously attacked. But for those of us who know how broken the VA is — and aren't interested in being liked by the VA or invited to the White House Christmas party — we will continue to fight like hell to give veterans the top-notch service they have earned. — Pete Hegseth is a Fox News contributor, an Army veteran

Read more at:

<http://www.nationalreview.com/article/433760/va-still-unreformed>

Enclosed is another article by Jim Webb, Marine Vietnam Vet, former Secy. of the Navy under Ronald Reagan, Senator from Virginia and recent Democratic presidential hopeful.

### **The War On Military Culture**

January 20, 1997

by James Webb, *The Weekly Standard*

During the summer of 1975, a debate of historic proportions occurred on the floor of the House of Representatives. The debate was significant not because of its rhetoric, which was rather shopworn, or because the issue under discussion was dramatic — a bill mandating the admission of women to the service academies. Rather, the parliamentary methods used by the bill's proponents and their method of argument inaugurated a new era in civil military relations and have dominated military personnel issues ever since.

The late Sam Stratton of New York, a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee and a proponent of the Equal Rights Amendment, introduced the measure directly on the House floor as a rider to that year's defense appropriations bill. With the avid assistance of several feminist legislators including Bella Abzug of New York and Pat Schroeder of Colorado, Stratton argued essentially that answering the question of whether women should be permitted to attend the service academies had nothing to do with the manner in which those institutions prepared young men for leadership in combat. Noting that "only" 90 percent of the graduates of those institutions had served in combat-designated billets (the others had been designated "not physically qualified" before graduation), Stratton argued that "the sole issue is a simple matter of equality. . . All we need is to establish the basic legislative policy that we wish to remove sex discrimination when it comes to admissions to the service academies."

The debate added two new dimensions to the way the Congress and other activists would address military issues, particularly those affecting female assimilation. First, Congress took its vote without detailed legislative hearings that would have allowed the military leadership to express its view — a decision that, in effect, told America's military that its perspective was neither

respected nor trusted where matters of progressive social policy were concerned.

Second, by focusing the debate on "simple equality" rather than the effect of injecting females into the already complicated and tension-enhancing environment of the operating military, Stratton and company managed to leave a much larger, more intangible, and far more complex issue on the table. And there it has lain ever since.

As a result, no effort has ever really been made to examine the issues raised by the ever-expanding sexual mixing inside the military's unique culture and its requirement of absolute fairness when it comes to administering punishments and rewards. The military is, at its core, a coercive institution, fraught with pressures and unwanted tasks. It relies on a code of conduct that demands egalitarian treatment in every aspect of discipline, recognition, and the subjection of its officers and its ranks to life-threatening risk. When double standards are introduced in matters of physical training and performance, they work against these very criteria.

Furthermore, the sexual jealousies, courtship rituals, and favoritism that are the hallmarks of romantic relationships are inevitable when males and females are brought into close quarters in isolated, intense environments. But these very phenomena inevitably corrode all notions of fairness as the military defines them.

These are matters of the utmost seriousness. They are at the center of most of the concerns regarding the assimilation of females into the military. And other than a hapless patchwork of unevenly enforced "fraternization" guidelines, they have never, not once in the 21 years since Sam Stratton's post-Vietnam gambit, been the subject of genuine scrutiny, much less a national debate.

Of course, many of those who voted with Stratton were not only seeking to provide opportunities for women where appropriate to the military's unique mission and operational circumstances, but were actively interested in undoing its historic culture. For those other than the quasi-revolutionaries who took delight in the chaos into which our country had fallen, the summer of 1975 in Washington was a bleak time. Following the embarrassment of our withdrawal from Vietnam, respect for military leadership was at its historic nadir. A year before, President Nixon had resigned in disgrace, and his resignation helped elect the so-called Watergate Congress, 76 Democratic freshmen in the House and eight in the Senate, with a surprising number of activists elected from formerly safe Republican districts. A majority of them had run almost solely on anti-military and antiwar themes. One of the first acts of the Watergate Congress was to vote down a supplementary appropriation for the beleaguered South Vietnamese





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military, virtually guaranteeing the collapse that occurred three months later when a refurbished North Vietnamese army launched a major offensive. All things military had become targets gleefully fired on.

Even with the restoration of American respect for the military in the 1980s, the effort to destroy the military culture from the outside has continued unabated, frequently through the use of “wedge” issues involving women. Major changes in female military roles often have been instituted either against the advice of the senior military or without their substantive input. Events such as the 1991 Tailhook debacle have been seized upon and used by feminists to attack the military culture and bring about major concessions.

Right now we are seeing this same drama being played out with the recent revelations of sexual abuse in the Army’s sexually mixed training commands. The ink was not yet dry on the initial reports of drill instructors’ having engaged in consensual and nonconsensual sex with female underlings before editorials and op-ed articles were excoriating the Army’s “cultural” failings with respect to women. The Secretary of the Army has appointed a commission to study the Army’s cultural problems; a commission the Wall Street Journal recently reported is dominated by those who wish to expand female roles still further.

After two decades of such pressures, the time has come to examine the impetus and motivations behind these continuing attacks, and what their overall impact has been on the military as an institution prevents, and fights, wars. What is it about the military that causes these persistent efforts to reach beyond a justifiable condemnation of incidents of misconduct and impute malice to the military culture and especially military men—every time a problem comes up?

The roots of this assault on the military culture go back thirty years, to an odd dovetailing of the feminist and antiwar movements. A principal focus of the antiwar movement, symbolized by its decision to march on the Pentagon rather than on Congress in October 1967, was to demean the notion of military service, as the surest way to discredit the conduct of the Vietnam War. At the same time, a frequent feminist argument was that politicians

who used military service as a credential for election and advancement were unfair to women, who had no opportunity to gain the recognition that such service frequently provided.

Another important but rarely mentioned facet of this era is what former Washington Post reporter Susan Jacoby has termed the “mythic nonsense of the conscience-stricken young man who made the agonizing choice to stay home in the classroom while his brothers fought in the jungles of Southeast Asia.” Such ethical gymnastics led Jacoby to wonder whether the millions of men my age who avoided the draft may feel ‘unmanned in a way that no woman can truly understand.’

As an example of the far-reaching impact of Jacoby’s observation, consider Harvard. In World War II, 691 Harvard alumni were killed in action, but of the 12,595 who graduated from Harvard College in the years 1962 to 1972, only 12 died in Vietnam (and this even though ROTC units were in place at Harvard for most of the war). The so-called best and brightest from all the elite schools, whose predecessors had led the way in other wars, stayed home and went to graduate school as their peers marched off to suffer 58,000 dead. The dynamic of their collective but unspoken feeling of guilt, and its transference into a persistent diminution of military service, has never been fully aired in our national discussion, since those high achievers who did not serve soon moved into dominant positions in academia, publishing, film, and the media.

These important social forces came together with a vengeance following the Vietnam War. In its drive for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, the feminist movement saw the military as its optimal “peripheral” battle. To win on the issue of women in combat, the most quintessentially male obligation in any society, would moot all other debates regarding female roles. For many males who did not serve, particularly the high achievers who wished no blemish on their reputations, the “demasculinization” of the military was a natural deterrent to any attack on their manhood as their youthful actions came to be viewed in retrospect.

Others who recognized the illogic of this social experiment, including numerous conservative icons,

remained silent, for to speak out could be self-defeating. Given the nasty tenor of any such debate, their lack of military service would certainly be used against them—not by veterans and military officials, who would have welcomed their support, but by those who wished to stifle dissent.

As these political realities have developed, the military has had to struggle under its own set of unkind realities. Military leaders from their first days in training are steeped in a culture that accepts and believes in civilian control. And they are doers. A policy that was strongly opposed while under consideration will be just as strongly implemented once it is decided upon. Furthermore, generals at the three-star level are selected with (at a minimum) heavy participation from the civilian leadership, and those at the four-star level are chosen at the complete discretion of civilians, allowing politicians to shape the top levels of military leadership. When, as in the present administration, views on the expansion of female roles become a litmus test for advancement, arguments questioning accepted political wisdom are not conducive to the possibility of reaching the very highest levels.

With little support from the outside, and in a culture that demands performance, those “in the ranks” have learned that pointing out the difficulties inherent in an undertaking as politically volatile as the assimilation of women will quickly end a career. At the same time, enormous pressure is exerted on them to accentuate the positive aspects of this social experiment and ignore or diminish the negative. But male members of the military know that things aren’t that simple. As is always true when people are asked to believe in and promote an image they know to be untrue, cynicism soon explodes.

This cynicism feeds a backlash, which increases tensions even in areas where women perform well and where their presence is not counterproductive to the military’s mission.

These hard realities have created the greatest potential cultural change in our military’s history, and if matters are left in this state, we run the risk of destroying all notions of leadership as we have known it. The fundamental disconnect is this:

In many areas where females have been introduced into the military, leaders imbued with the imperative of ethical conduct are constantly challenged to hold back on the truth or risk their futures.

And so politicians and media commentators usually end up arguing over only half the story. They are right to call for investigations of commanders who have not dealt preemptively with sexual harassment and unpermitted sex among members of their command. Women forced into unwilling sexual conduct are put into an inexcusable hell

when their superior is the culprit, and there is no one to whom they feel they can report the crime.

But politicians and the media are blaming the wrong social forces for such problems. They have not been able to hear from those who have firsthand knowledge of what the sexual integration of the military has meant in matters of military conduct. Consider the commander who knows that the culprit in such situations is not one or a half-dozen individuals, but a system that throws healthy young men and women together inside a volatile, isolated crucible of emotions—a ship at sea or basic training, to take two notable examples.

Whom does this commander tell if he believes that the experiment itself has not worked, that the compressed and emotional environment in which these young men and women have been thrust together by unknowing or uncaring policymakers actually encourages disruptive sexual activity?

The commander knows the political mantra for twenty years has been that am” misconduct is simply one more cultural problem, and that, like racial insensitivity, it can be overcome by a few lectures and command supervision. He knows also that this is wrong. But to speak his mind or force the issue would most likely be his undoing.

A case in point is Commander John Carey, who took command of the destroyer Curtis Wilbur after a fast-track start to his naval career. Soon after, Carey observed two female crew members kissing and spoke to the ship’s command chief petty officer of his concern about the disruption such behavior would cause. “Captain,” the master chief replied, according to the *Washingtonian*, “there’s f—ing going on on this ship 24 hours a day, and there’s nothing you can do about it.” Carey tried to do something about it and was soon relieved of command for “physically and verbally abusing his crew.”

This not-so-subtle pressure to look the other way unless conduct is overt and decidedly nonconsensual permeates civilian policy toward the military. In February 1988, shortly before I resigned as Secretary of the Navy, I returned from a trip to U.S. military facilities on Iceland. During a staff meeting with Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci, I reported that I had been informed that 51 percent of the single enlisted Air Force females and 48 percent of the single enlisted Navy females stationed in Iceland were pregnant.

Carlucci, who had announced in the first weeks of his tenure that he wished to remove the Reagan administration’s policy of restricting women from combat, was unconcerned. “What else is there to do on Iceland?” he replied, drawing titillated chuckles from several sycophantic male military officers at the table. Needless to say, there was no follow-up on this or any other systemic failure, and the uniformed military was



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given the word through the grapevine that passes from Pentagon aide to general's aide and on down the line that, no matter what written policies might have existed, the leadership was not concerned about sexual fraternization.

The question becomes: Does it matter? And the answer is: In the military, it does.

It is difficult to explain to those who have not served in the operational military, and even to many military females who do not comprehend the ethos of units in which women do not serve, why the military is, and must remain, different from the civilian world when it comes to these issues. Next to the clergy, the military is the most values-driven culture in our society. I am not speaking of individual morals; many superb soldiers have been known as "liberty risks" when they are not on duty. Rather, it relates to an impeccable group ethos. Those who serve together must behave toward one another according to a set of unassailable and equally enforced standards—honesty, accountability, sacrifice, and absolute fairness in risk, promotions, and rewards.

The military is, in this sense, a socialist meritocracy. It functions not on money but on nonmaterial recognition. Do something good and you receive a good fitness report, an award, a meritorious mast, promotion to higher rank. Do something bad and you are reprimanded, court-martialed, jailed, demoted. You cannot quit your duties if you don't like your job or your boss or the place they're sending you. Even more astounding, you might be asked to die on behalf of a person or a policy you don't even like. In this environment, fairness is not only crucial; it is the coin of the realm. Fairness is the guarantee that puts credibility into rank, awards, and recognition. And such recognition determines a person's future.

The military was the first federal institution to create a truly level playing field for minorities. I grew up as the son of a career military officer in the newly integrated military, and I saw it work even through the difficult period of the late 1960s and early 1970s when I was a serving officer of Marines.

Now, to the extent that it is workable, the military has an obligation to provide the same gateways for females, and we should not lose sight either of the talent that many females bring to our armed forces or the wide array of

federal benefits that are accorded them for their service in appropriate roles.

But neither should we delude ourselves into thinking that assimilation of females into military occupational specialties is the same as breaching racial and ethnic barriers. Eliminating cultural bias requires intellectual conditioning to break down old attitudes. But eliminating or neutralizing an attraction to the opposite sex requires much sterner and more imaginative therapy, and is probably impossible.

But that is exactly what will have to happen if the military is to work without disruption in the operating units where "group cohesion" is the key to performance, not to mention in the isolated environments of long-term deployments or basic training.

In these circumstances, it is essential that favoritism of all types be minimized and eliminated. But we all know there is no greater or more natural bias than that of an individual toward a beloved. And few emotions are more powerful, or more distracting, than those surrounding the pursuit of, competition for, or the breaking off of amorous relations. In the administration of discipline, benefits, and life-threatening risk, it takes an unusually strong personality to set aside passionate feelings in order to deny a spouse or lover a much-desired benefit or to expose that person to great risk. Nor is it possible to decide an issue in favor of a spouse or lover without at least appearing to be judging matters unfairly.

And there is another problem. Consider a ship on a long sea deployment of perhaps 100 days without a port call, a common enough event in our Navy's recent history. Assume, as is likely, that some members of a mixed crew begin sexual relationships while at sea. What of the rest? They will not have the opportunity to find a partner for months. The inescapable feelings of resentment, competition, or anger that follow create a powder keg of emotions that cannot help but affect morale, discipline, and attention to duty.

No edict from above will ever eliminate sexual activity when men and women are thrust together at close quarters. Watching civilian and military leaders struggle mightily not to see this verity, I am often reminded of Douglas MacArthur's observation, shortly after arriving

in postwar Japan, upon being told that a large number of soldiers had taken up with Japanese women. Asked if such conduct should be curtailed, MacArthur demurred. "I would never give an order that I know I can't enforce," he said.

MacArthur knew that soldiers are usually young, physical, and aggressive, and that from time to time they will find ways to relieve their sexual frustrations with consenting females. But at night MacArthur's soldiers returned to their barracks. And when their units were called upon to perform their missions, the objects of their antics and desires were not right there beside them, confusing their notions of duty, discipline, and sacrifice.

Present-day generals and admirals, constantly under political pressure, sometimes unsure of where to draw the line between military and civilian control, often constrained by legal edicts, and wishing to be fair to those females who do perform well, have issued unenforceable orders rather than confront the politicians who dreamed them up. They have muddled about for years from incident to incident while many junior leaders have been forced to deal directly with impossible, ethically compromising positions.

And in one of the supreme ironies of the current debate, the same feminists who have long castigated military men, and even the military culture itself, for recreational antics with foreign women while on liberty, now defend or explain away such conduct if it occurs on post or aboard ship between consenting soldiers or sailors.

Who really wants to expand this continued sexual assimilation? A recent study of soldiers by Harvard researcher Laura Miller suggests that Army women do not. Only 3 percent of the enlisted women surveyed believed they "should be treated exactly like men and serve in the combat arms just like men." Sixty-one percent indicated a belief that sexual harassment would increase if combat billets were opened up to females. An equal percentage believed that women should not be drafted, or should be drafted for service other than close combat. Only 11 percent of enlisted women and 14 percent of the female officers surveyed indicated that they would volunteer for a combat role if one were offered.

These are the realists who have lived in the powder keg atmosphere. They know precisely what they want out of their military service. They also know precisely those circumstances under which unwanted difficulties arise. Many of them have rightly grown weary of being pawns in the grand schemes of sociologists, agenda feminists, and a small core of political-activist military officers, and of having to live with the often sexually abrasive results of such activism.

The time has finally come to cease examining these issues solely from the perspective of how the military

culture should adjust itself to women. While women make valuable contributions on a variety of levels, the military is and always has been a predominantly male profession. Its leaders should demand that any adjustments in sexual roles meet the historically appropriate criterion of improving performance, and should stop salving the egos of a group of never-satisfied social engineers.

A return to normalcy might cause a retrenchment in arm where women serve. The United States might want to learn from other countries with their own experience of women at arms. After World War II, the Soviet army completely abandoned the use of women in the operating military (they had been brought in owing to the loss of some 7 million male soldiers in combat). The Israelis at several points during their recent history have adjusted the roles of females. Contrary to popular mythology, it is against Israeli law for a woman to serve in combat-and "combat" is a term interpreted far more broadly there than it is here.

A logical first, immediate step for the U.S. military to take is that basic training should be sexually separated, as it has been throughout history until just the past few years. Beyond that, each service chief should order, on his own initiative, a full and honest review of the extent to which current sexual practices are damaging traditional standards of command, discipline, fairness, and cohesion. Where damage is being done, policies should be changed. Where sexual mixing does work, policies should be enhanced. Such a review should not be within the power of civilian service secretaries or members of Congress to obstruct, since "good order and discipline" is the ultimate responsibility of each service chief-a responsibility that many would argue has been abandoned in recent decades when it comes to this issue.

If these senior leaders prove too hamstrung, too compromised, or too politicized to take such action, then the present Congress should take steps similar to those of its Watergate-era predecessor and begin the process of dramatic change itself. Except that this time, the change would be for the purpose of preserving military traditions, values, and leadership rather than subjugating them to external political agendas.

Political and military leaders must have the courage to ask clearly in what areas our current policies toward women in the military are hurting, rather than helping, the task of defending the United States. We have now endured two decades of experimentation, and data on the experiment's results would be voluminous if they were allowed to be examined. It has been a long time since a military leader of virtually any rank was free to speak openly about this without fear of retribution. And the difficulties surrounding the good order and discipline of our armed forces will not abate until the leaders





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themselves are encouraged not only to point to areas in which the new policy is working, but to speak honestly and straightforwardly about where they are not.

### **WOMEN VETERANS:**

*Submitted by Walt Hazelman*

#### **First Black military woman elected to Aviation Hall of Fame**



Brenda Robinson: Brenda Robinson became the first Black female pilot in the military to be inducted into the Women in Aviation International Pioneer Hall of Fame.

"There is no time to be afraid," Brenda Robinson said about carrier landings, "you just do it!"

Robinson, a retired Navy Reserve lieutenant commander, was the first Black female pilot certified to land on an aircraft carrier – the USS America – in January 1981. Six months earlier, she broke the navy's gender-race barrier when she earned her wings.

Robinson was inducted into the Women in Aviation International (WAI) Pioneer Hall of Fame during WAI's 27th annual convention in Nashville, Tennessee March 10-12. She is the first female military aviatrix to be inducted. Other Black inductees include pilots Bessie Coleman (1995), Willa Brown (2003), Janet Harmon Bragg (2003), and astronaut Mae Jemison (2003); all were listed in WAI's 100 most influential women in aviation.

WAI was formed in 1990 as a nonprofit organization encouraging the advancement of women in all aviation

fields. Astronauts, pilots, navigators, maintainers, engineers, airport managers, and other careers are represented among its 13,000 members.

Inside the Gaylord Opryland's Presidential Ballroom, WAI founder and president Peggy Chabrian jubilantly announced WAI had crested \$10,000,000 in scholarship giving since 1996. Over \$661,000 was awarded during the Nashville convention.

Four of Robinson's Black aviation school classmates accompanied her, including retired Navy Capt. Donnie Cochran, the first Black pilot and commander of the prestigious Blue Angels demonstration team. Cochran escorted Robinson onstage to receive the award.

Robinson grew up in North Wales, Pennsylvania; she had great friends, but also played easily by herself. Wearing her Sunday's best for her first plane ride – to visit relatives in Chicago – Robinson thought, "I would do anything to travel like that." Robinson studied hard and took advantage of educational opportunities to realize her dream.

While attending North Penn High School near Philadelphia, she learned about air traffic control in a career program at nearby Wings Field. At Dowling College in Oakdale, New York, she was the only Black woman majoring in aeronautics. During her first summer, she took flight lessons at MacArthur Airport in Islip, New York. There she met and flew with a woman pilot for the first time.

After college, Robinson was the only Black woman – one of 10 nationwide – selected for boot camp followed by naval flight training. On June 6, 1980, she became the navy's 42nd woman to wear "wings of gold."

After 34 years in the sky, the retired American Airlines pilot is more concerned about grooming the next generation of aerospace professionals, founding the Aviation Camp for the Carolinas in 2014 to encourage youth about aviation careers. Robinson authored two books: "Success is an Attitude, Goal Achievement for a Lifetime"; and "FOUND! The Lost Owner's Manual for Growing African Hair". She is working on her autobiography, "The Very First Raven" – her Navy call sign.

“We’ve come a long way,” Robinson said, turning her Hall of Fame acceptance speech into praise for the 2,000-plus banquet attendees. “You are the ones who are making me smile; you are confident, and you are dignified, and you are professional; you are making me proud . . . Thank you, I’m honored.”

## **POW/MIA:**

*Submitted by Bob Gilbert*

### **News Releases**

**Archive: April 2016**

#### **Soldier Missing From Korean War Accounted For (Evans)**

April 18, 2016 — The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing from the Korean War, have been identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Army Cpl. Dudley L. Evans, 24, of Greenville, Mississippi.



**Soldier Missing From Korean War Accounted For (Buckley)** April 07, 2016 — The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing from the Korean War, have been identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Army Cpl. Dennis D. Buckley, 24, of Detroit, will be buried April 14.

#### **Airman Missing From World War II Accounted For (Halfpapp)**

April 07, 2016 — The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing from World War II, have been identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Army Air Forces Capt. Arthur E. Halfpapp,



23, of Steelton, Pennsylvania.

#### **Soldier Missing From Korean War Accounted For (Vaughn)**

April 05, 2016 — The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing from the Korean War, have been identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Army Pfc. Aubrey D. Vaughn, 20, of Union, South Carolina.



#### **Airman Missing From World War II Accounted For (Gossett)**

April 04, 2016 — The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing from World War II, have been identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Army Air Forces Flight Officer Dewey L. Gossett, 23, of Spartanburg, South Carolina.

## **AGENT ORANGE:**

*Submitted by Owen Martin*

**Wednesday, April 13, 2016**

### **Ortho to stop using chemicals considered to be harmful to bees**

Ortho, the insect control product maker, said Tuesday it would begin “to transition away” from using chemicals that are harmful to honeybees and other pollinators, responding to growing pressure from environmental advocates.





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The Marysville, Ohio-based company, which is a subsidiary of ScottsMiracle-Gro, will discontinue neonicotinoid-based pesticides for outdoor use. The move follows Lowe's and Home Depot's announcements last year that they will stop selling neonicotinoid-based products in their garden care sections.

Ortho also plans to work with the Pollinator Stewardship Council, an advocacy group that supports beekeepers, to start a customer education program and lobby for the use of label language that clarifies the purchase of non-neonic pesticides.

"This decision comes after careful consideration regarding the range of possible threats to honeybees and other pollinators," said Tim Martin, general manager of the Ortho brand. "While agencies in the United States are still evaluating the overall impact of neonics on pollinator populations, it's time for Ortho to move on."

"We encourage other companies and brands in the consumer pest control category to follow our lead," he said.

Ortho has previously worked with the Pollinator Stewardship Council to support pollinator habitat, and its new multiyear program will use online channels and social media to "develop homeowner education related to the responsible use of pesticides where pollinators can be found," Ortho said.

"Bees and butterflies are essential to our ecosystem and are increasingly facing a struggle to survive," Michele Colopy, program director of the Pollinator Stewardship Council, said in a statement. "We join Ortho in asking other consumer pest-control brands to also transition away from the use of neonics."

In January, ScottsMiracle-Gro announced a program that will result in the creation of 75 pollinator gardens in the U.S. this year.

## **COMMUNITY/PUBLIC AFFAIRS:**

*Submitted by Lou Storms*

A Reminder - We have a fund raiser for the cemetery coming up this Saturday (April 30<sup>th</sup>). It's Casino Night here at St. Francis. The \$45.00 ticket includes dinner, desert and \$50.00 in play money. So put on your lucky shirt and come out to support a good cause and have a fun evening.

Also - We will be going to Lyons for dinner service on May 10<sup>th</sup>. The sign-up sheet is up front for anyone wanting to join us.

I would like to thank Ken Fuchs wife and the ladies of The American Sewing Guild for all the time they put into making walker and wheelchair tote pouches for the veterans at the Lyons Hospital. They are always appreciated by the vets.

## **Scheduled Meetings:**

Meetings are held at 2:00 p.m. the 4th Sunday of each month unless otherwise **noted**.

### **2016**

24<sup>th</sup> April

22<sup>nd</sup> May

26<sup>th</sup> June

24<sup>th</sup> July

**28<sup>th</sup> August (subject to change for picnic)**

25<sup>th</sup> September

23<sup>rd</sup> October

27<sup>th</sup> November

**3<sup>rd</sup> December (Saturday – subject to change)**

## **Calendar of Events:**

Apr. 30<sup>th</sup> – 5:50 pm - Casino Night – St. Francis De Sales Church to benefit the Cemetery

May 26<sup>th</sup> – Sussex Tech Fashion show to benefit the Cemetery

May 28<sup>th</sup> – can shake at Mac & Lindys, Vernon

Memorial Day Parade – Vernon – date & time not yet available

July 4<sup>th</sup> – Sparta Parade – time not yet available

Visit [www.VVA1002.org](http://www.VVA1002.org) for information on upcoming events.

## **NEW MEMBERS:**

### **“WELCOME HOME”**

No Report.

## **PASSINGS:**

No report.

## **CONGRATULATIONS/CONCERNS:**

No report.

## **MEMBERS CORNER:**

Please see the last page for the bus schedule to East Orange & Lyons and Castle Point.

## **MISCELLANEOUS:**

1. **Special Note: If you are a veteran in emotional crisis and need help RIGHT NOW, call (toll free 24/7) 1-800-273-8255 and tell them you are a veteran. All calls are confidential.**
2. Jackets (\$60 (summer) & \$70 (winter)); t-shirts (\$15); hats (\$10); golf shirts (short sleeve \$28; long sleeve \$33) are still available. See Owen Martin for purchases or to place an order (pre-payment for orders are appreciated).
3. Important note to families of deceased veterans, and/or requestors:

*Submitted by Bob Caggiano*

It is the right of every deceased Veteran to have a Military honors team attend the graveside service, to present the Flag at no charge to the family. Honors Teams are sent out, at the expense of the US Government.

In January 2000, Congress passed legislation guaranteeing Veterans the right to at least two uniformed servicemen, a flag ceremony, and the playing of TAPS at their funeral. Unfortunately, there are not enough buglers to play TAPS, so the historic melody has been played on a CD player at many Veterans' last ceremony, or more currently on a bugle that plays Taps using an electronic insert. The volunteer organization "Bugles Across

America" (a.k.a. BAA) was created to honor the service of veterans by providing Taps live by a bugler using a real instrument (such as a bugle, trumpet, cornet, or flugelhorn) at funerals or any other ceremony requiring a bugler. There are currently over 7500 volunteer buglers nationwide in all 50 states, and some overseas who stand ready to serve. BAA volunteers perform Taps as a free service.

2012 marks the 150th anniversary of Taps, with special services being held throughout the country including a special playing of Taps by hundreds of buglers at Arlington National Cemetery.

As a Vietnam era veteran member of VVA Chapter 1002 and a BAA volunteer bugler, I am available to play for anyone who needs a bugler for Taps (or other appropriate bugle calls) for any honorable discharged veteran or related military ceremony. In the event I cannot play because of a scheduling conflict, I can generally still provide a substitute bugler so please contact me - Bob Caggiano, USAF Veteran, (973) 222-7591 (cell) or FinalTaps@gmail.com.



## **FUN ACTIVITIES:**

No report.

## **Chapter Fundraisers:**

### **Clothing Bins (on-going):**

Clothing Bins locations are: Montaque Township Recycling Center, Vernon Township Recycling Center and the Nautilus Gym at the corner of State Hwy 206 and Halsey Road (2 miles North of Newton, behind Fairclough Fuel). They accept used clothing, shoes and stuffed toys. If you know of a location as to where additional bins can be placed, a place where they can be accessed easily, let Ted Andrews know, cell 973 570 5023. Also, call him if you notice that the bins are full and he will contact the vendor.

## **Editors Corner:**

By Linda Skellenger (AVVA)

Please have information to be included in the May newsletter to me by Sunday, May 15<sup>th</sup> (email skelle@ptd.net) or by snail-mail to:





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April 2016

Linda Skellenger  
174 Lewisburg Rd.  
Sussex, NJ 07461



# COUNTY OF SUSSEX

Department of Social Services

**Skylands Ride**  
John S. Jackson  
*Operations Coordinator*

## Schedule of Services for January thru June 2016

### East Orange & Lyons

January 7  
January 14  
January 28

February 4  
February 11  
February 25

March 3  
March 10  
March 24  
March 31

April 7  
April 14  
April 28

May 5  
May 12  
May 26

June 2  
June 9  
June 23  
June 30

### Castle Point

January 21

February 18

March 17

April 21

May 19

June 16

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Mailing Address: One Spring Street      Location: 201 Wheatsworth Rd.      Telephone: 973-579-0480  
Newton, NJ 07860      Hamburg, NJ 07419      FAX: 973-579-0489  
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