



The Sentinel

Vol. 4 No. 6

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

June 2017

Website: www.VVA1002.org

President: John Harrigan

1st Vice President: John Brady

Secretary: Carl Ohlson

2nd Vice President: Walt Hazelman

Chaplin: George Burns

Treasurer: Owen Martin

Sergeant at Arms: Ted Andrews

FROM THE MINEFIELD:

Submitted by John Harrigan

Can shakes have started and I would like to Thank all those who attended the one in Newton, and especially Jack and Sharon Ratzner for taking the lead in organizing all of this. Without you volunteering to do this we would not be able to continue our Scholarship Program so please check the newsletter for the location of the next one.

Myself and five Chapter members attended Sussex Tech on June 6th and did a presentation on the Vietnam War. This is the third year we have done this and the students ask a lot of questions and are really interested. It is good to give them a firsthand account of the War and as they said it is better to talk to someone who was there than to read it out of a book. Hopefully we will continue to do this for years to come. Keep it in mind for next year as we can always use more Vets to man the stations.

Once again we have been invited to attend the Sparta 4th of July Parade which will be held on Sunday July 2nd with line up at 10 am and the parade kicking off at 11. Once again this year, Thanks to Linda we will have Chuck driving the tractor and for those of us who have trouble walking will be riding in the wagon that he will be pulling. This is always a good parade and we do get a lot of recognition when marching. We always have a good turnout for this one so please come out and show your support for the Chapter by marching with up. Sign-up sheets will be at the front table.

We will also have some sign-up sheets for the Chapter Picnic in August. We only have one more meeting before then and need to know the amount of people attending.

Well it looks like we dodged a Bullitt with the Veterans affairs Secretary saying he will leave the

Individual Unemployability alone and not remove any Veterans from their 100% rating. This would have affected the majority of Vietnam Veterans and knocked their ratings down to 60 to 90 % and taken away the benefits earned with the 100%. Thanks to testimony from our Veterans Organizations like VVA, VFW, AL, DAV and all the other groups we were able to stick together and beat this proposal. This is why it is so very important to become a member of as many Veteran's Organizations as you can so we can continue to show our strength in numbers and keep what we have earned.

That's about it see you at the Meeting.

1st VICE PRESIDENT:

Submitted by John Brady

Many of you may have read the article in the VVA Veteran magazine but for those who haven't on March 22 the VA approved disability benefits for veterans who have one of eight diseases and who served for thirty or more consecutive days at Camp Lejeune, N.C. between August 1, 1953 and December 31, 1987.

These eight diseases are: kidney, liver, or bladder cancer, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, adult leukemia, multiple myeloma, Parkinson's disease, aplastic anemia and other disorders in which the bone marrow can no longer produce enough healthy blood cells.

While this is good news it doesn't cover all the diseases associated with the problem at Camp Lejeune. There are a total of fifteen illnesses that presumptively qualify for full VA medical care, but only these eight that also qualify for disability benefits. The VA says that only those eight conditions "are the only ones for which there is sufficient scientific and medical evidence to support the creation of presumptions."

Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another!

At this point there is no clear avenue or administrative process for veterans who have filed disability claims before this ruling. Nor are there provisions for assistance to the children (now adults) who live at Camp Lejeune during that time period whose health was harmed.

Submitted by Skip Kays

No report.

Submitted by Walt Hazelman

No report.

Submitted by Bob Gilbert

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December (TBD-Christmas Party)



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Website: www.VVA1002.org

Calendar of Events:

Visit www.VVA1002.org for information on upcoming events.

June:

24th – Shop Rite Warwick – can shake

July:

1st – Shop Rite Franklin – can shake

2nd – Parade in Sparta – lineup at 10:00am

14th-16th – DAR Christmas in July, Wantage

15th – Walmart Franklin – can shake

29th – Walmart Newton – can shake

August:

12th – Shop Rite Newton – can shake

26th – Acme Sussex – can shake

September:

16th – Walmart Franklin – can shake

October:

7th – Shop Rite Warwick – can shake

21st – Shop Rite Franklin – can shake

NEW MEMBERS:

“WELCOME HOME”

No report

PASSINGS:

No report.

CONGRATULATIONS/CONCERNS:

Happy Anniversary:

Rich & JoAnn Strader

Jim & Georgette Fox

Happy Birthday:

UNITED STATES ARMY JUNE 14, 1775

John Harrigan – July 8

Jerry Magnus – July 13

George Knorr - July 24

Jim Cahill - July 24

MEMBERS CORNER:

Very interesting facts about some notable people...

Why Did Mr. Rogers Wear A Sweater?

Captain Kangaroo passed away on January 23, 2004 at age 76, which is odd, because he always looked to be 76. (DOB: 6/27/27). His death reminded me of the following story.

Some people have been a bit offended that the actor, Lee Marvin, is buried in a grave alongside 3 and 4-star generals at Arlington National Cemetery. His marker gives his name, rank (PVT) and service (USMC).

Nothing else.

Here's a guy who was only a famous movie star who served his time, why the heck does he rate burial with these guys?

Well, following is the amazing answer:

I always liked Lee Marvin, but didn't know the extent of his Marine Corps experiences.



In a time when many Hollywood stars served their country in the armed forces often in rear echelon posts where they were carefully protected, only to be trotted out to perform for the cameras in war bond promotions, Lee Marvin was a genuine hero. He won the Navy Cross at Iwo Jima. There is only one higher Naval award, the Medal of Honor!

If that is a surprising comment on the true character of the man, he credits his sergeant with an even greater show of bravery.

Dialog from "The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson": His guest was Lee Marvin...

Johnny said, "Lee, I'll bet a lot of people are unaware that you were a Marine in the initial landing at Iwo Jima, and that during the course of that action you earned the Navy Cross and were severely wounded."

"Yeah, yeah. I got shot square in the bottom and they gave me the Cross for securing a hot spot about halfway up Suribachi. Bad thing about getting shot up on a mountain is guys getting shot hauling you down. But, Johnny, at Iwo, I served under the bravest man I ever knew. We both got the Cross the same day, but what he did for his Cross made mine look cheap in comparison.

That dumb guy actually stood up on Red beach and directed his troops to move forward and get the hell off the beach. Bullets flying by, with mortar rounds landing everywhere and he stood there as the main target of gunfire so that he could get his men to safety. He did this on more than one occasion because his men's safety was more important than his own life.

That Sergeant and I have been lifelong friends. When they brought me off Suribachi we passed the Sergeant and he lit a smoke and passed it to me, lying on my belly on the litter and said, "Where'd they get you Lee?" "Well Bob..." "If you make it home before me, tell Mom to sell the outhouse!"

Johnny, I'm not lying, Sergeant Keeshan was the bravest man I ever knew.

The Sergeant's name is Bob Keeshan. You and the world know him as Captain Kangaroo."



On another note, there was this wimpy little man on PBS, gentle and quiet.

Mr. Rogers is another of those you would least suspect of being anything but what he now portrays to our youth.

But Mr. Rogers was a U.S. Navy Seal, combat-proven in Vietnam with over 25 confirmed kills to his name. He wore a long-sleeved sweater on TV to cover the many tattoos on his forearm and biceps.

He was a master in small arms and hand-to-hand combat, able to disarm or kill in a heartbeat.



After the war Mr. Rogers became an ordained Presbyterian minister and therefore, a pacifist. Vowing to never harm another human, he also dedicated the rest of his life to trying to help lead children on the right path in life. He hid away the tattoos and his past life and won our hearts with his quiet wit and charm.

America's real heroes don't flaunt what they did. They quietly go about their day-to-day lives, doing what they do best. They earned our respect and the freedoms that we all enjoy. Look around and see if you can find one of those heroes in your midst. Often, they are the ones you'd least suspect, but would most like to have on your side if anything ever happened.

Take the time to thank anyone that has fought for our freedom.

With encouragement, they could be the next Captain Kangaroo or Mr. Rogers.





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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.

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.



Editors Corner:

By Linda Skellenger (AVVA)

Please have information to be included in the July newsletter to me by Sunday, July 16th (email skelle@ptd.net) or by snail-mail to:

Linda Skellenger
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