



The Sentinel

Vol. 4 No. 5

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

May 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

As the warm weather approaches so will our Saturdays of selling Raffle tickets to support our Scholarship fund. In case you don't know this is, I think, the fourth year we are able to give out one thousand dollar scholarships to four graduating students. Jack and Sharon are in charge of this fundraiser and cannot do it alone so please step up and help them out on a Saturday. You can find the dates and locations of each in the newsletter and on the web site

This past Thursday myself and some other Chapter members attended a Tribute to Veterans at Vernon High School which was given by the Middle school. They raised money for the Veterans Cemetery and will donate it to us before school ends

We had a lot of fun at Casino night with great food and prizes and those in attendance had a ball. Our attendance was down from last year but still made a profit.

We had our Chapter Can shake at Mac and Lindys yesterday and I would like to Thank everyone who came out to help.

On this Monday we will be having a ceremony at the Veterans Cemetery commemorating Memorial Day to honor our Fallen Brothers and Sisters. The service will start at 11am and we will dedicate the brick pathway and the monument that our Eagle Scouts had completed for us, the plantings that the Bayer Corporation planted this past week, and also the plantings by the Girl Scouts.

We are still very active on Thursdays with or Vets Helping Vets and always have a packed room. If you haven't been down on Thursday come over for a good laugh. That's about it so see you at the Meeting.

1st VICE PRESIDENT:

Submitted by John Brady

To some people this coming Memorial Day weekend is the unofficial "start of summer", but among all the picnics, barbecues and parades let's remember the real reason for this "holiday". It was established to remember and honor those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

Let's also remember those who served even during peacetime because their sacrifice of service helped maintain that peace.

Let's also remember those who served in wartime and who bear the physical and emotional scars they carried over into civilian life.

I'll always remember the reply a Marine Gunnery Sergeant gave to a chaplain when asked what he wanted most in life, "for the Armed Forces all over the world, in every country, to be unemployed".

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 is put together by vets and plays music from the Vietnam era, roughly from the late 1950's till 1975 when Saigon fell. Plus the Adventures of Chicken Man. TUNE IN.

US Parks Service Senior Pass

Seniors (meaning those over 62) can obtain a National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass for \$10.00. A pass covers entrance, standard amenity fees

Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another!

and day use fees for a driver and all passengers in a personal vehicle at per vehicle fee areas. The pass is good for the lifetime of the holder.

The fee for the pass is scheduled to go up to \$ 70.00 at the end of the year so this is the time to get it.

If you order it online it ends up costing \$ 20.00, but you can purchase it in person for the \$ 10.00. I bought mine at Wallkill and you have to pay by check, they don't take cash.

Go to the National Parks Service web site at <https://www.nps.gov> and search for senior pass.

Bradley Manning is out of prison, collecting benefits and posting picture of his "new" look

In one of those quirky things that happens regarding "the system," Bradley Manning, who served about 7 years of a 35 year sentence for disseminating classified documents, was released early as then President O Bama commuted his sentence. But as an earlier appeal is still pending, Manning will still collect health benefits and some commissary, etc. benefits until the appeal is resolved.

As his sentence was commuted and not pardoned, he will received a dishonorable discharge and then not be eligible for the "gender Dysphoria" treatments at government expense he has been receiving. So there is a somewhat appropriate ending to this travesty.

VA and GAO Agree: Appeals Reform Needed: Current legal process detrimental to Veterans

In response to a report released by the Government Accountability Office's (GAO), "VA Disability Benefits: Additional Planning Would Enhance Efforts to Improve the Timeliness of Appeals Decisions," the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) released the following statement:

This report confirms that the current law and process for adjudicating appeals is not consistent with the commitment made to our nation's Veterans.

"Veterans are waiting far too long for decisions in our current appeals process," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. David J. Shulkin. "We have made bold changes to remove the bureaucratic red tape that has caused Veterans to wait an average of three years before they get a decision."

VA has developed sound and aggressive plans regarding hiring, training and mitigation strategies that are already being aggressively implemented. In addition, VA recognizes the importance of effective management practices for the development of information systems to help integrate and streamline the appeals process. Our new Casflow system will help us anticipate new information requirements, allowing us to quickly address challenges and provide our employees the support they need.

There is broad consensus that the current VA appeals system is broken and in urgent need of reform. Our proposal for a new appeals process was designed in conjunction with Veterans Service Organizations and other key stakeholders. VA strongly disagrees with GAO about the need for any type of piloting, which would only unnecessarily delay the implementation of the bold changes Veterans expect us to make.

"We have a number of reports and studies, including this one from GAO, which have helped us clearly identify the problems in the current system," said Acting Under Secretary for Benefits Tom Murphy.

VA is working to make as many changes to the system allowed by current law.

Preneed Burial Planning through the VA

Instead of waiting until after you have passed away, it is possible to work out arrangements ahead of time how. This should make it much easier to speak on your own behalf, and remove some stress from your family.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) implemented the pre-need burial eligibility determination program to assist anyone who would like to know if they are eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery. VA is promoting pre-need eligibility determinations to encourage Veterans and their eligible family members to plan in advance to use VA burial benefits that Veterans have earned through their military service. Planning in advance for a Veteran's or loved-one's final resting place can eliminate unnecessary delays and reduce stress on a family at a difficult time. Veteran families will have increased confidence that their loved ones are eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery at their time of need.

If pre-need eligibility has not been determined, upon the death of the Veteran or his or her spouse or dependent (also called the time of need), family members should locate the Veteran's DD-214 or other discharge papers if readily available and click "Schedule a Burial" to begin the process. Then make arrangements with a funeral home, National Cemetery Scheduling Office, or directly with a VA national cemetery.

Use VA Form 40-40007, PRENEED BURIAL PLANNING

Go to <https://www.cem.va.gov/cem/pre-need/index.asp>

MI Senator Co-sponsors Blue Water Navy Bill

In March of this year, U.S Senator Gary Peters (D-MI), a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, recently announced that he is cosponsoring the bipartisan Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act to help ensure that Vietnam veterans who served aboard deep-water naval vessels, known as "Blue Water" veterans, are eligible for the disability and health care benefits for illnesses linked to exposure to Agent Orange.



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VA Launches New Wait Time Transparency Site

The Department of Veterans Affairs rolled out a new website that will enable veterans to track which VA facility has the shortest appointment wait times, as well as to compare the quality of care between different VA facilities and private-sector providers. Veterans who reside in urban areas will benefit more from the new online comparison tool than veterans in rural areas simply because they have more VA facilities from which to choose, provided they are willing to travel the extra distance. VA also responded to questions regarding data accuracy, since everything listed is compiled from information received from the field, and no veteran nor the department wants a repeat of the secret waiting lists debacle from three years ago. VA gave assurances that there is only one tracking system now, which is constantly measured. The new VA site is expected to be improved over the coming weeks.

Go to <http://www.accesstocare.va.gov/>

WOMEN VETERANS:

Submitted by Walt Hazelman

VA New Jersey Health Care System

Women Veterans:

Eligibility Criteria

Women veterans who have received an honorable or general under honorable discharge from the military may be eligible for care. Usually there is no charge if you receive care for a service-connected disability, have CHAMPVA, or if your income is below a certain amount. A DD214 or a VA medical card from any VA Medical Center will be necessary at the time of registration. Visit our Websites:

- VA NY/NJ Veterans Healthcare Network:
www.nynj.va.gov/womenvets.asp
- Women Veterans Health Care Program:
www.womenshealth.va.gov

If you would like to make an appointment or obtain more information, please call:

Women Veterans Program Manager: (973) 395-7108 East Orange Gynecology Clinic: (973) 676-1000 x3145 Lyons Gynecology Clinic: (908) 647-0180 x4507

About the Program

The Women Veterans Health Care Program is an integral part of the VA New Jersey Health Care System (VANJHCS) and the Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN3). While we offer services and programs that meet the needs of all veterans, we pay special attention to women veterans. Our focus is on health promotion, disease prevention and management, and the emotional well being of women veterans. Our goal is to present diverse and innovative programs that care for, educate, and support our patients during all phases of their lives. Our patient Education Resource Center (PERC) is available at the East Orange and Lyons campuses to provide you with the most current health resources.

Our Mission

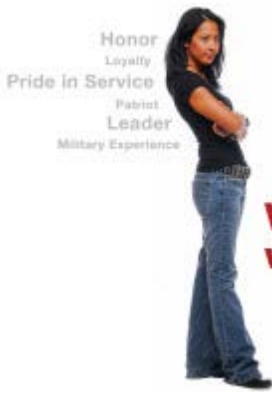
We are committed to providing accessible and comprehensive health care of the highest quality to women veterans in a safe, comfortable, and private setting. We are determined to be responsive to gender-specific needs by making available or arranging for all authorized services for women veterans.

Services

The following services are available throughout the VANJHCS, VISN 3, but may vary from site to site. We invite you to take advantage of our special programs for women veterans. Your active and vocal participation in the health care process is important to our success. We value the opinions of veterans and want to listen and respond to your health care concerns. Our Women Veteran Program Manager (WVPM), Amelia De Asa-Weiland, is available to assist you.

Our Women Veterans Program Manager advises and advocates for women Veterans. She can help coordinate all the services you may need, from primary care to specialized care for chronic conditions or reproductive health. VA health care for women Veterans includes:

- Preventive Health Screening
- Supportive Services
- Primary Care



VA knows women Veterans
 what's invisible to most
 is visible to VA

AGENT ORANGE:

Submitted by Owen Martin

On Cinco de Mayo, there was pesticide drift that stopped farmworkers from harvesting southwest of Bakersfield in Kern County. The workers were in the process of harvesting cabbage when they began to get sick. According to a television news report, the pesticide odor came in from a mandarin orchard west of the cabbage field that was sprayed the night previous with Vulcan, an organophosphate-based chemical. About 12 people reported symptoms of vomiting, nausea and one person fainted. In the end, more than 50 farmworkers were exposed.

The shocking and sad part is that the active ingredient in the insecticide the workers were exposed to is chlorpyrifos, which was slated to be banned by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Obama administration. However, in March that ban was canceled. The EPA said there wasn't enough solid evidence. Chlorpyrifos is reported to cause severe neurotoxic symptoms in humans if touched, inhaled, or eaten.

For more than 15 years, it was banned for residential use, but can still be used in agriculture. This cannot go on.

Many people do not realize that people who are exposed to pesticides working in agricultural fields are at a higher risk of getting cancer.

This is an issue that hits home for me. In 2002, my father, Sebastian Sanchez, who worked in the Salinas Valley agricultural fields, died due to non-Hodgkin lymphoma — a cancer associated with pesticide exposure. As a former farmworker who also worked in the Salinas Valley agricultural fields, I have firsthand experience with how farmworkers were, and are still, impacted by pesticides. I remember one day when I and other workers were sprayed while working in the fields. I thought it was starting to rain, but I looked up to see a small plane overhead spraying pesticides.

I will always fight for a worthwhile cause that has no voice. In essence — I am a farmworker in spirit. I miss my father so much — he fought so hard to beat non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

As consumers — as human beings — we must take action with the EPA, bombard them with calls, letters to stop using these dangerous chemicals that affect the entire community.

POW/MIA:

Submitted by Bob Gilbert



DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING AGENCY
 FULFILLING OUR NATION'S PROMISE

HOME FAMILIES OUR MISSING NEWS & STORIES

RECENT NEWS AND STORIES

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Soldier Missing From World War II Identified (Aiello)

May 15, 2017 — Army Staff Sgt. Michael Aiello, missing from World War II, has now been accounted for. In September 1944, Aiello was a member of Company G, 401st Glider Infantry Regiment (GIR), which was attached to **MORE**

Soldier Missing From Korean War Identified (Kritzwisser)

May 15, 2017 — Army Cpl. Glen E. Kritzwisser, missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. In early February 1951, Kritzwisser was a member of Battery C, 15th Field Artillery Battalion, 2nd Infantry **MORE**

Soldier Missing From Korean War Identified (Sandoval)

May 15, 2017 — Army Cpl. Frank L. Sandoval, missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. In early February 1951, Sandoval was a member of Battery A, 15th Field Artillery Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division, **MORE**

Soldier Missing From Korean War Identified (Lane)

May 15, 2017 — Army Cpl. John Lane, missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. In late July 1950, Lane was assigned to Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 19th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry **MORE**

Soldier Missing From Korean War Identified (Seadore)

May 15, 2017 — Army Cpl. Richard Seadore, missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. In December 1950, Seadore was a member of Company D, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, when **MORE**

Soldier Missing From World War II Identified (Eichelberger)

May 11, 2017 — Army Pfc. Lonnie B.C. Eichelberger, missing from World War II, has now been identified. In February 1942, Eichelberger was a member of Company I, 371st Infantry Regiment, 92nd Infantry Division. In an **MORE**

Remains of USS Oklahoma Marine Identified from World War II (Gaver)

May 5, 2017 — The remains of Marine Corps 2nd Lt. Harry H. Gaver, Jr., killed in the attack on the USS Oklahoma during World War II, have now been identified. On Dec. 7, 1941, Gaver was assigned to the USS Oklahoma, **MORE**

Marine Missing From World War II Accounted For (Bussa)

April 21, 2017 — Marine Corps 2nd Lt. George S. Bussa has now been accounted for. In November 1943, Bussa was assigned to Company F, 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines, 2nd Marine Division, which landed against stiff Japanese **MORE**

Soldier Missing From Korean War Identified (Piper)

April 19, 2017 — Army Pvt. Walter F. Piper has now been accounted for. Piper, assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 38th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, was reported missing in action, Feb. 13, **MORE**

Sailor Killed in World War II Identified (Surratt)

April 17, 2017 — Seaman 1st Class Milton R. Surratt has now been accounted for. Surratt, assigned to the USS Oklahoma, was killed Dec. 7, 1941 in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Interment services are pending. For more information **MORE**

News and Stories

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COMMUNITY/PUBLIC AFFAIRS:

Submitted by Lou Storms

On May 9th, myself, Bob Lewis, Carl Ohlson and John Fedynich went to Lyons to bring dinner to the PTSD Inpatient Unit and the Ladies Unit on the 3rd Floor. Once again the food was supplied by Shop-Rite of West Milford and enjoyed by all. We had a great time socializing with the vets. This trip there were several Vietnam veterans which of course, we had a lot in common to talk about. Our next visit to Lyons will be on July 11th. Anyone wanting to join us, please give me a call at 973-728-3859 or sign-up at the June meeting.

Scheduled Meetings:

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

- 28th May
- 25th June
- 23rd July
- 27th August (Picnic – subject to change)
- 24th September
- 22nd October
- 26th November
- December (TBD-Christmas Party)

Calendar of Events:

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

- May:
 - 27th – Can Shake – Mac & Lindys, Vernon
- July:
 - 14th-16th – DAR Christmas in July, Wantage

NEW MEMBERS:

“WELCOME HOME”

No report

PASSINGS:

No report.

CONGRATULATIONS/CONCERNS:

Happy Anniversary:

Jo & Larry McDermott – June 10th

Don & Rosemary Johnson – June 13th

Happy Birthday:

Bea Harrigan – June 14th

Rosemary Johnson – June 21th

Kathy Schultz – June 30th

MEMBERS CORNER:

Nothing submitted this month.

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 June newsletter to me by Sunday, June 18th (email skelle@ptd.net) or by snail-mail to:

Linda Skellenger
174 Lewisburg Rd.
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