



The Sentinel

Vol. 4 No. 2

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

February 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

I start this month's column with sad news by telling you of the passing of two of our Members, Keith Rowe, and Bob Trowse. Keith and Bob have been members since our inception and will be greatly missed. Our sympathy goes out to both families.

At our March 26th meeting Gilead Sciences in partnership with VVA and Veterans Health Council and our Chapter, will give a talk on Hepatitis C. They are traveling from Williamsburg VA to educate us about the risk of Hepatitis C in Vietnam Veterans. This is not just for our Chapter but for any other organization that is interested in educating people on the Risk of Hepatitis C. If you belong to other Veterans groups please let them know about this informative program.

We are starting to get some things in the fire and have some events lined up. The first is the VVA State Council meeting that Chapter 327 and 1002 are hosting at the Elks in Mine Hill on Sunday March 19th at 11am. All of our members are welcome to attend and see what goes on at other Chapters.

Next is St Patricks' Day Parade in Newton at 11am on Saturday March 18th. Please try to attend as we always get a great reception there.

Next up is the Veterans Tribute at Vernon High School given by Glen Meadow School. This is set for May 25th at 7pm.

On Saturday May 27th around 9 am we will have the Chapter can shake at Mac and Lindys in Vernon. This is the first of the year so come out and have a few laughs and also support the Chapter

The DAR Christmas in July has been moved to July 14,15 and 16th. We usually set up a table with hats and

info so if you're free one of those days come out and give us a hand.

Our Raffle will be a little different this year with 3 or 4 prizes this will give more people a chance to win, so keep watching the website or the newsletter for the date's when we will be out selling the chances.

That's all for now and our members will be reporting more information about Veterans issues at the meeting. See you there

John

1st VICE PRESIDENT:

Submitted by John Brady

On Sunday, February 19, I attended an exhibition called "Treasures of the Church" It consisted of a number of Holy Relics of the churches saints and heroes such as bits of clothing, small pieces of bone and so on.

I couldn't help feeling at the time that veterans have their own "Holy Relics" of our own heroes. People had to wait to see the exhibition of the churches treasures but ours are all around us at all times. These are the remains, bodies and ashes, of our brothers and sisters buried in cemeteries all across this nation and also in foreign lands.

Just as the saints dedicated their lives to spreading the word of God, they dedicated their lives to spreading freedom and liberty around the world. Some by making the ultimate sacrifice, our martyrs, and others by giving up a part of their lives to serve either in war or peace.

Also, as the church continues to have modern day saints such as Mother Theresa and Pope John Paul II, we also have our current saints, the men and women now serving in our Armed Forces.

I could go on making comparisons but I think you get the idea. Just as we venerate the churches saints let's not

Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another!

forget the veterans who sacrificed to protect the freedom of religion that the church now enjoys.

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

Donations of used prosthetics / artificial limbs

I have spoken with a man I know who builds artificial limbs and prosthetics and he said that he is willing to take any donated devices. He will provide a receipt for a tax deduction and will re-use the parts that are able to be used. Contact me with any inquiries and I will provide his contact information.

Vietnamvetradio.com

This is an Internet radio station that 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. 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 and day use fees for a driver and all passengers in a personal vehicle at per vehicle fee areas (or up to four adults at sites that charge per person). Children age 15 or under are admitted free.

A friend who works for the government says 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.

The pass is good for the lifetime of the holder. 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.

The closest location for us in Sussex County to buy the pass in person is the Wallkill Rive Refuge. 973-702-7266 Sussex NJ
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/wallkill_river/. Washington's headquarters in Morristown also sells them.

New tax breaks in New Jersey for veterans and seniors

A series of changes to the New Jersey tax code took effect on January 1 designed to help offset the rise in the gas tax. Starting with this 2017 tax year these two changes help most veterans and seniors (of which we are both):

Expanding tax deduction for retirees

A married couple filing their taxes jointly can currently exclude their first \$20,000 in retirement income from state income taxes. But beginning in 2017 and phased in over four years, that amount will ultimately increase to \$100,000 for joint filers, \$75,000 for individuals and \$50,000 for those married who are filing separately.

Tax deduction for veterans

The tax deal introduced a \$3,000 tax deduction for veterans. The law defines veterans as those who are "honorable discharged or released under honorable circumstances from active duty in the Armed Forces of the United states, a reserve component thereof, or the National Guard of New Jersey in a federal active duty status."

Obama commuted the sentence of Bradley Manning on his way out

This is old news by now, and none of the Veteran's organizations that I am aware of had kind words for this.

What was noteworthy was that he did not pardon Bowe Bergdahl for his desertion in the war zone. One would have thought that was right up the ex-president's alley. So instead of taking a walk, Bergdahl gets his hearing at courts martial.

WOMEN VETERANS:

Submitted by Walt Hazelman

Remembering a patriot: Lt. Col. Luta "Cornie" McGrath

A story that was shared in April 2016 on World War II retired Lt. Col. Luta "Cornie" McGrath – one of the oldest known women Veterans, who passed away April 14, 2016, in her home in Annandale, Virginia. She was 108 years old.

On Oct. 31, a large group of family and friends gathered at the Old Post Chapel, Ft. Myer, Va. to say a final goodbye to our beloved comrade. Cornie, as most of us knew her, was a legend, known for her dedication to her country, her community and her church.

Her military service began as a private in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in 1943, and continued until she retired in 1961 as a lieutenant colonel. Initially assigned to an Ordnance Corps position at the Red River Ordnance Depot, Texarkana, Texas, she had many repeat assignments with ordnance. She was the first woman inducted into the Ordnance Corps Hall of Fame in 1985.

She continued serving in retirement, supporting community, Army and Veterans, and church activities. She was a frequent speaker or guest at Memorial and Veterans Day events, and at World War II Memorial



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activities, and attended bi-annual women Veterans' luncheons until shortly before her death.



Services for Lt. Col. McGrath began at the chapel with a memorial mass and brief eulogy from Ordnance Corps representative, Col. Sean Davis, who came from Ft. Lee, Virginia. Transfer from the chapel to the grave site was by caisson with full military honors. Graveside honors included a three volley rifle salute, a bugler playing taps, and the folding and presentation of the flag.

Following the graveside services, a reception was held at the Women's Memorial. A brief program featured Brig. Gen. Wilma Vaught, president emeritus of the Women's Memorial Foundation, and Col. Davis who both lauded Lt. Col. McGrath's dedication and long service.

Thanks to Col. Pat Jernigan who provided the details and photos for this final farewell. Cornie will be missed by so many but her legacy will always be with us.



POW/MIA:

Submitted by Bob Gilbert

USS Oklahoma Sailor From World War II Accounted For (Walkowiak) February 6, 2017 — Fireman 3rd Class Robert N. Walkowiak, missing from World War II, has now been accounted for. On Dec. 7, 1941, Walkowiak was assigned to the USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl [MORE](#)

Airman Missing From World War II Identified (Mumford) January 18, 2017 — Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. John D. Mumford, missing from World War II, has now been accounted for. On June 6, 1944, Mumford, while serving with the 318th Fighter Squadron, 325th Fighter Group, 15th Air [MORE](#)

USS Oklahoma Sailor from World War II Identified (Pribble) February 15, 2017 — Remains of Navy Fire Controlman 3rd Class Robert L. Pribble, killed in the attack on the USS Oklahoma during World War II, have now been identified. On Dec. 7, 1941, Pribble was assigned to the USS [MORE](#)

USS Oklahoma Sailor From World War II Identified (George) February 9, 2017 — Remains of Navy Seaman 2nd Class George T. George, killed in the attack on the USS Oklahoma during World War II, have now been identified. On Dec. 7, 1941, George was assigned to the USS Oklahoma, [MORE](#)

USS Oklahoma Sailor from World War II Identified (Larsen) February 9, 2017 — Remains of Navy Musician 1st Class Elliot D. Larsen, killed in the attack on the USS Oklahoma during World War II, have now been identified. On Dec. 7, 1941, Larsen was assigned to the USS Oklahoma, [MORE](#)

USS Oklahoma Sailor From World War II Identified (Kennedy) February 8, 2017 — Navy Fireman 1st Class William H. Kennedy, killed in the attack on the USS Oklahoma during World War II, has now been accounted for. On Dec. 7, 1941, Kennedy was assigned to the USS Oklahoma, which was [MORE](#)

USS Oklahoma Sailor From World War II Identified (Cyriack) February 8, 2017 — Navy Storekeeper 2nd Class Glenn G. Cyriack, killed in the attack on the USS Oklahoma during World War II, has now been accounted for. On Dec. 7, 1941, Cyriack was assigned to the USS Oklahoma, which [MORE](#)

USS Oklahoma Soldier from World War II Identified (Neuenschwander) February 7, 2017 — Navy Gunner's Mate 1st Class Arthur C. Neuenschwander, killed in the attack on the USS Oklahoma during World War II, has now been accounted for. On Dec. 7, 1941, Neuenschwander was assigned to the [MORE](#)

Soldier Missing From Korean War Identified (Noehren) February 7, 2017 — Army Sgt. Donald D. Noehren, missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. In late November 1950, Noehren was a member of Headquarters and Headquarters Service Company, 2nd Engineer Combat [MORE](#)

USS Oklahoma Sailor From World War II Accounted For (Galajdik) February 6, 2017 — Fireman 1st Class Michael Galajdik, missing from World War II, has now been accounted for. On Dec. 7, 1941, Galajdik was assigned to the USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, [MORE](#)

AGENT ORANGE:

Submitted by Owen Martin

Monday, January 30, 2017

Judge rejects Monsanto's bid to block state from listing chemical as cancer causing

By Robert Rodriguez
brodriguez@fresnobee.com

A Fresno County Superior Court judge has ruled against chemical giant Monsanto in its fight to prevent California regulators from listing the key ingredient in its popular weed killer Roundup as a carcinogen.



The tentative ruling, issued Friday by Judge Kristi Culver Kapetan, was welcomed by environmental advocates, their attorneys and those who say they got cancer from using the weed killer.

"I don't want anyone to go through what I have gone through," said John Barton, a Bakersfield farmer who believes the use of Roundup caused his non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

Monsanto, a multinational agrochemical company, has denied any link to cancer through the use of glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup, one of its most widely used products.

It sued the state's Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment last January after the agency issued a notice of intent to add glyphosate to its Proposition 65 list of chemicals known to cause cancer.

Monsanto and its lawyers have said the state is out of step with other regulatory agencies, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the European Food Safety Authority, in listing glyphosate as causing cancer.

"The agency's flawed and baseless proposal to list glyphosate under Proposition 65 not only contradicts California's own scientific assessment, but it also violates the California and U.S. constitutions," said Samuel Murphey, a Monsanto spokesman. "Monsanto will continue to challenge this unfounded proposed ruling on the basis of science and the law."

COMMUNITY/PUBLIC AFFAIRS:

Submitted by Lou Storms

We'll be making our bi-monthly trip for dinner service to the Impatient PTSD Unit at Lyons Hospital on Tuesday March 14th. The sign-up sheet is up front for anyone wanting to join us.

Scheduled Meetings:

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

26th February
26th March
23rd April
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.

March:

18th – St. Pat's Parade – Newton

19th – State Council – Elks in mine Hill

May:

27th – Can Shake – Mac & Lindys, Vernon

July:

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

NEW MEMBERS:

“WELCOME HOME”

Dayton Gunderman

David William Leckel

PASSINGS:

Keith Rowe

Bob Trowse



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CONGRATULATIONS/CONCERNS:

Happy Anniversary:

Feb. 10 - Brenda & George Gunderman

Happy Birthday:

Mar. 16 - Don Schultz

MEMBERS CORNER:

Troops Who Cleaned Up Radioactive Islands Can't Get Medical Care

By [DAVE PHILIPPS](#) JAN. 28, 2017

(Excerpt from The New York Times – to read the full article go to:

https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/28/us/troops-radioactive-islands-medical-care.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&clickSource=story-heading&module=second-column-region®ion=top-news&WT.nav=top-news&_r=1

RICHLAND, Wash. — When Tim Snider arrived on Enewetak Atoll in the middle of the Pacific Ocean to clean up the fallout from dozens of nuclear tests on the ring of coral islands, Army officers immediately ordered him to put on a respirator and a bright yellow suit designed to guard against plutonium poisoning.

A military film crew snapped photos and shot movies of Mr. Snider, a 20-year-old Air Force radiation technician, in the crisp new safety gear. Then he was ordered to give all the gear back. He spent the rest of his four-month stint on the islands wearing only cutoff shorts and a floppy sun hat.

“I never saw one of those suits again,” Mr. Snider, now 58, said in an interview in his kitchen here as he thumbed a yellowing photo he still has from the 1979 shoot. “It was just propaganda.”

Today Mr. Snider has tumors on his ribs, spine and skull — which he thinks resulted from his work on the crew, in the largest nuclear cleanup ever undertaken by the United States military.

Roughly 4,000 troops helped clean up the atoll between 1977 and 1980. Like Mr. Snider, most did not

even wear shirts, let alone respirators. Hundreds say they are now plagued by health problems, including brittle bones, cancer and birth defects in their children. Many are already dead. Others are too sick to work.

The military says there is no connection between these illnesses and the cleanup. Radiation exposure during the work fell well below recommended thresholds, it says, and safety precautions were top notch. So the government refuses to pay for the veterans’ medical care.

Congress long ago recognized that troops were harmed by radiation on Enewetak during the original atomic tests, which occurred in the 1950s, and should be cared for and compensated. Still, it has failed to do the same for the men who cleaned up the toxic debris 20 years later. The disconnect continues a longstanding pattern in which the government has shrugged off responsibility for its nuclear mistakes.

On [one cleanup](#) after [another](#), veterans have been denied care because shoddy or [intentionally false](#) radiation monitoring was later used as proof that there was no radiation exposure.

A [report](#) by The New York Times last spring found that veterans were exposed to plutonium during the cleanup of a 1966 accident involving American hydrogen bombs in Palomares, Spain. Declassified documents and a recent study by the Air Force said the men might have been poisoned, and needed new testing.

But in the months since the report, nothing has been done to help them.

For two years, the Enewetak veterans have been trying, without success, to win medical benefits from Congress through a proposed [Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act](#). Some lawmakers hope to introduce a bill this year, but its fate is uncertain. Now, as new cases of cancer emerge nearly every month, many of the men wonder how much longer they can wait.

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:

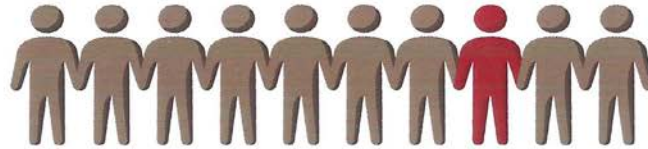
By Linda Skellenger (AVVA)

Please have information to be included in the March newsletter to me by Sunday, March 19th (email skelle@ptd.net) or by snail-mail to:

Linda Skellenger
174 Lewisburg Rd.
Sussex, N.J. 07461



1 IN 10 VIETNAM VETS HAS HEPATITIS C AND MANY DON'T EVEN KNOW IT



LEARN ABOUT YOUR RISK FOR HEP C AT AN IMPORTANT EDUCATIONAL EVENT

Vietnam Veterans, especially those born 1945–1965, are at high risk for having Hep C. That's why **you and your spouse or partner are encouraged to attend this free educational event**, co-hosted by Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter #1002.



DATE: Sunday, March 26, 2017

TIME: 2:00 PM

LOCATION: 614 County Rd 517, Sussex, NJ 07461

RSVP: John Harrigan at 973-271-2413

THE HEP C FACTS

- Hepatitis C (Hep C) is a serious virus that infects the liver. It is the #1 cause of liver cancer and liver transplants in the U.S.
- Vietnam Veterans, especially those born 1945–1965, are at high risk for having Hep C
- Vietnam Veterans could have been exposed to Hep C due to unsterile vaccination procedures, or by coming into contact with contaminated blood during combat
- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs recommends all veterans born 1945–1965 get tested for Hep C
- **If you have Hep C, it can be cured**

For more information, talk to your **healthcare provider**, visit **HEPCHOPE.COM**, or call **844-9-HEPCHOPE**

Veterans Health Council[®]
improving veterans health through information and education
Free Educational Program



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