



The Sentinel

Vol. 5 No. 7

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

July 2018

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

We participated in the Flag Retirement ceremony at the Veterans Cemetery on June 26th and would like to Thank everyone for attending. We again spread the ashes over the Graves of our Brothers and Sisters that are buried there from the Flags that were burned last year at Abby Glenn.

We also attended the Daughters of the American Revolution Christmas in July and had a real nice time. Thanks to all who attended this event.

One of our biggest fund raisers The Sussex County Farm and Horse Show starting on Friday August 3rd to Sunday August 12 will be here before we know it. We will again be in the Veterans tent selling Hats and Raffle tickets for our Scholarship Fund. We need members to step up and help man the table for the 10 days. With the money we make from this and our Chapter can-shakes we are able to have the Picnic and Christmas Party at no cost to the members. We have 3 time slots each day Opening 10 to 2 Middle 2 to 6 and closing 6 to 10. We need 3 people on each shift for a total of 90 people. You can sign up for one or two or all three shifts, and also more than one day if you would like to. We have a great time and a lot of fun. This is one event we need all of you to come out and give your Chapter a hand. So, if you plan on coming to the Picnic or Christmas party sign up and help out. The sign-up sheet will be at the meeting.

See you at the meeting.

John

1st VICE PRESIDENT:

Submitted by John Brady

On April 24, 2018, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) released it's completed "Morbidity Study of Former Marines, Employees and Dependents Potentially Exposed to Contaminated Drinking Water at USMC Base Camp Lejeune: A Summary of Agency of Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) Study Design and Results."

In the 1980"s, contaminants were found in several wells that provided drinking water at Camp Lejeune, N.C. The contaminants included the volatile organic compounds trichloroethylene (TCE), perchloroethylene (PCE), vinyl chloride, benzene and other compounds. It is estimated that the contaminants were in the water supply from the mid-1950"s until February 1985, when the wells were shutdown.

Benefits for Camp Lejeune Veterans and family member include health care for 15 conditions listed in the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012. In addition Veterans can receive disability and health care benefits for eight presumptive disease conditions associated with contaminants in the water of Camp Lejeune.

To be eligible Veterans, National Guard and reserve members, and family members had to have lived on the base for at least 30 days (cumulative) between August 1, 1953 and December 31, 1987.

The following are the health conditions covered for health care and health care funding:

- Bladder cancer
- Breast cancer

Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another!

- Esophageal cancer
- Female infertility
- Hepatic steatosis
- Kidney cancer
- Leukemia
- Lung cancer
- Miscarriage
- Multiple myeloma
- Myelodysplastic syndromes
- Neurobehavioral effects
- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Renal toxicity
- Scleroderma

Eligible Veterans may enroll in VA health care and receive medical services for any of the 15 covered health conditions.

Dependent family members of Veterans who also resided at Camp Lejeune during the qualifying period are eligible for reimbursement of out-of-pocket medical expense related to any of the 15 covered health conditions. They can apply online at www.clfamilymembers.fsc.va.gov or call 1-866-372-1144.

In addition the VA has established a presumptive of service connection for eight conditions associated with exposure to contaminants in the water supply at Camp Lejeune N.C. during the eligible time frame. These are;

- Adult Leukemia
- Aplastic anemia and other myelodysplastic syndromes
- Bladder cancer
- Kidney cancer
- Liver cancer
- Multiple myeloma
- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Parkinson's disease

If a Veteran is diagnosed with one of these conditions, the VA presumes that his/her Camp Lejeune service caused the condition and disability compensation can be awarded.

If you are not registered and wish to be added to the Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water Notification Database or for more information, please visit <http://www.marines.mil/clwater/>. You can also contact the Camp Lejeune Drinking Water Call Center at (877) 261-9782 or e-mail clwater@usmc.mil.

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

VVA Applauds House Passage of Blue Water Navy Act; Calls on Senate to Follow Suit ASAP (Washington, D.C.) – “VVA applauds the passage of H.R. 299, The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2018, and we call on the Senate to delay no further and pass the companion bill, S.422, as amended in the House. For far too many years, despite the overwhelming support of House members on both sides of the aisle, Blue Water Navy Vietnam veterans have been thwarted in their quest to be accorded the same service-connected healthcare and benefits as their fellow ‘boots-on-the-ground Vietnam veterans,’ ” said John Rowan, National President of Vietnam Veterans of America. “Now, after today’s vote on H.R. 299, these ‘forgotten’ sailors and Marines can see the light at the end of their tunnel growing bright for the first time in a long while,” said Rowan. This bill, introduced by Rep. David Valadao (R-CA), would restore eligibility for VA healthcare and disability compensation for some 90,000 Blue Water Navy veterans, ensuring that those who served in the Navy off the coast of Vietnam will receive the medical treatment and compensation due to their exposure to Agent Orange.

Physical Disability Board of Review: If you are a veteran who was medically separated from service between Sept. 11, 2001, and Dec. 31, 2009, with a rating of 30 percent or less and feel the rating is inaccurate, you now have the ability to file an appeal through the Physical Disability Board of Review (PDBR). The result of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, the PDBR provides veterans a way to appeal their initial Department of Defense disability ratings, and often results in a medical discharge being upgraded to a medical retirement. Learn more about the application process. SEE THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE

Tax Glitch Affects Veterans: A recent Pentagon audit revealed that more than 130,000 veterans who were medically separated as a result of injuries sustained in combat, and received a disability severance, may be



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entitled to a significant tax refund. Under federal law, disability severance paid as a result of combat injuries is intended to be tax-free. However, from 1991 to 2016, the automated payment system maintained by DOD failed to properly identify those payments as being tax exempt and withheld between 20-25 percent of the payment, resulting in an overpayment of federal income tax. If you feel that you may be entitled to a refund, you can find more information including how to file an amended income tax return through the Internal Revenue Service.

WOMEN VETERANS:

Submitted by Walt Hazelman

WAC veteran, blogger Helen Miller dies at 96

By RICHARD CHIN | Star Tribune (Minneapolis) |

Published: July 6, 2018

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. (Tribune News Service) — When Helen Miller became one of the first women to serve in the U.S. Army during World War II, she promised her parents she wouldn't volunteer for overseas duty.

Still, she stepped forward when the Army needed women soldiers in England to support the D-Day invasion. The Woodbury woman later appeared in an Emmy-winning documentary about her military service. In her 90s, she became a blogger with thousands of followers interested in her stories about a full life and active aging.

Miller died June 17 in a Woodbury hospice. She was 96.

Throughout her life, Miller responded to challenges with a cheerful resiliency. She was born in a house on Grand Avenue in St. Paul and moved 19 times as a child, according to her son, David Christiansen. As a young woman, she survived a life-threatening case of scarlet fever. Later in life, she survived breast cancer.

"I'm a tough old bird!" she wrote of herself.

"She has been a tested soul," said Margaret Wachholz, a friend. "She was like Teflon. No matter what happened to her, she bounced back."

During World War II, Miller joined the Women's Army Corps (WAC), a pioneering unit created in 1942. It was the first time women who weren't nurses were allowed to serve in the Army.

Miller was shipped to Great Britain on the Queen Mary, a passenger liner converted to troop ship, which zigzagged across the Atlantic to dodge U-boat attacks.

She was stationed in the U.S. Army Air Forces 8th Fighter Command headquarters outside London, where she helped plot the position of Allied fighter planes on missions to Europe, including D-Day. "She just wasn't really afraid of anything," her son said.

Discharged after nearly three years, she returned to St. Paul and married a Navy veteran named Leo Christiansen. Their two sons both served in the military. After her first husband died in 1979, she remarried in 1983 to George Miller. He died in 2009.

When she moved into the Woodbury Senior Living facility, she threw herself into activities including painting, playing poker and planning and performing in skits. She followed the Twins and rooted for a Tiger Woods comeback. An avid golfer, she hit a hole in one when she was 70. She was in her 90s when she caught a 31-inch northern pike.

"She engaged in life wholeheartedly and also lightheartedly," Wachholz said.

In 2014, Miller's story was included in a television documentary called "Women Serving In War" that was produced by Twin Cities Public Television and the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs. Seventy years after her Army days, she could still sing the WAC marching song about their symbol, Pallas Athena, Greek goddess of war. The show won a regional Emmy.

"I absolutely loved her," said producer Stephanie Halleen.

"She kind of liked her 15 minutes of fame. She wasn't bashful at all," Christiansen said.

In 2016, she started "Helen's Corner," a blog about her life on the Face Aging MN website. It was followed by 10,300 people, Christiansen said.

In a Face Aging MN video recorded near the end of her life, Miller said, "There's not much of me left, but what's left is still kind of feisty."

Besides her son David, of Oakdale, survivors include another son, Dan Christiansen, of Woodbury; a sister, Georgia Adkins, of Inver Grove Heights; seven grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren and one great-grandchild.



POW/MIA:

Submitted by Bob Gilbert

No report.

AGENT ORANGE:

Submitted by Owen Martin

The information below is from the VHA HANDBOOK 1302.1, that President Clinton signed into law, that states "A doctor of the VA or Private DR is required by law to write a letter for you, in support of your claim on his letterhead. This product is to nail down your claim related to Agent Orange diseases. The info shown is only a part of the booklet. It can be found in its entirety on the internet by looking up VHA Handbook 1302.1

Department of Veterans Affairs
VHA HANDBOOK 1302.1
Veterans Health Administration
Transmittal Sheet
Washington, DC 20420

1. PURPOSE

This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook sets forth clinical and administrative procedures related to the maintenance of the VHA Agent

Orange Registry (AOR) program of physical examinations for eligible, concerned, Vietnam veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam between 1962 and 1975, veterans who served in Korea during 1968 or 1969, and any United States (U.S.) veterans who may have been exposed to dioxin, or other toxic substance in a herbicide or defoliant, during the conduct of, or as a result of, the testing, transporting, or spraying of herbicides for military purposes.

2. AUTHORITY

a. Under Public Law (Pub. L.) 102-585 (1992) Section 703, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may provide, upon request, a health examination, consultation, and counseling to a veteran who is eligible for listing or inclusion in any health-related registry administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Under this authority, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) must provide registry examinations to veterans who served in Korea in 1968 or 1969, and/or any other U. S. veteran who may have been exposed to dioxin, or other toxic substance in a herbicide or defoliant, during the conduct of, or as a result of, the testing, transporting, or spraying of herbicides, and who requests an AOR examination. The results of such an examination are to be included in the AOR.

b. Pub. L. 100-687, the Veterans' Judicial Review Act of 1988, requires the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to organize and update the information contained in the VA AOR, enabling VA to notify Vietnam era veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam of any increased health risks resulting from exposure to dioxin or other toxic agents. NOTE: VA will continue to meet this mandate and extend it to include all other veterans who qualify for inclusion and participation in the AOR.

10. EH CLINICIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

The EH Clinician is responsible for clinical management and serves in an advisory capacity for the administrative management of the program. Major responsibilities include:

a. Counseling. The EH Clinician advises the veteran that the examination cannot detect the presence of dioxin in the body nor determine whether adverse health effects or potential health problems are related to Agent Orange.

b. Documenting the Physical Examination. NOTE: If a compensation examination is performed for a veteran and the veteran requests inclusion in the AOR, it is not necessary to perform an additional registry examination as long as the demographic and medical information is sufficient to adequately complete the AOR worksheet in website <http://vaww.registries.aac.va.gov> for transmission to the Austin Automation Center (AAC). The EH Clinician must:



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(1) Conduct and document the physical examination in the veteran's health record at the time of the visit.

(a) Perform a complete medical history to include information about:

1. Family;
2. Occupation;
3. Social history noting tobacco, alcohol, and drug use;
4. Civilian exposure to possible toxic agents; and
5. Psychosocial history.

(b) If a non-VA doctor diagnoses a veteran with a significant health problem, the veteran is to be encouraged to contact a VA medical center to include the diagnoses in the veteran's health record.

1. This diagnosis must be submitted over a non-VA physician's signature and on official letterhead.
2. These private physician's registry examination data needs to be reported to the AAC via website <http://vaww.registries.aac.va.gov>.

(2) Review and complete if necessary the registry examination worksheets at website <http://vaww.registries.aac.va.gov>.

(3) Review the records of every veteran examined to ensure that a complete physical examination was performed and documented.

(4) Personally discuss with each veteran the:

(a) Findings of the physical examination and completed diagnostic studies. NOTE: The interviews are to be conducted in such a way as to encourage the veteran to discuss health concerns, as well as those of family members, as they relate to herbicide exposure. This information must be documented in the veteran's health record.

(b) Need for follow-up examination (not a consultation, but an additional registry examination) either recommended by the EH Clinician or requested by the veteran.

(c) Preparing and Signing Follow-up Letter. The EH Clinician must ensure that an appropriate personalized follow-up letter, explaining the results of the examination and laboratory studies, has been

signed and mailed to the veteran (see Apps. A, B, and C). NOTE: It is essential that this letter be written in language that can be easily understood by the veteran. Inappropriate wording could unduly alarm or confuse the veteran. A great deal of sensitivity and care must be exercised in the preparation of this correspondence.

1. Follow-up letters must be mailed to the veteran within 2 weeks of the initial examination appointment. The only exception to this timeframe is when a consultation at a specialty clinic is requested as part of the initial examination process. This exception suspends, but does not remove, the requirement for the follow-up letter. The follow-up letter must be sent within 2 weeks after the consultation.

2. A dated copy of the follow-up letter must be filed in the veteran's administrative record or scanned to an appropriately titled progress note in Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS).

3. The follow-up letter must explain that:

a. If the veteran examined has no detectable medical problems, the follow-up letter needs to so indicate and suggest that the veteran contact the nearest VA health care facility if health problems appear later.

b. If it is determined upon examination that the veteran does have medical problems, it is not necessary to specify the problems in the letter. The veteran needs to be advised in the letter that the recent examination indicated a health condition and/or problem, which may require further examination and/or treatment. NOTE: Depending on the seriousness of the condition identified, the EH Clinician should phone the veteran to discuss the examination findings. Clinical judgment needs to be exercised. If the veteran is eligible for VA medical treatment, the letter needs to so state and provide the name of a contact person, including telephone number, within the facility.

c. If the veteran is not eligible for VA treatment, the letter needs to recommend that the veteran contact the EH Coordinator's office or a Veterans Benefit

Representative (VBR) at the VA facility or Regional Office for further information. NOTE: Another point of contact is the local Enrollment Coordinator or Health Benefits Service Center 1-877-222-VETS (8387) for those found not eligible for VA treatment, in order to ensure appeal rights are given.

d.. If the problem(s) is (are) not necessarily related to possible Agent Orange exposure, the letter needs to explain that there is considerable research underway to learn more about the possible long-term health effects of Agent Orange exposure. Currently, the following conditions have been presumptively recognized as service connected (SC) for the treatment of veterans who were exposed to herbicide agents during service:

COMMUNITY/PUBLIC AFFAIRS:

Submitted by Lou Storms

On July 10th, myself, Bob Lewis, Carl Ohlson, Norm Seider, Ken Geer, John Drinkard and Bob Cubby, went to Lyons VA Hospital to once again serve dinner, supplied by ShopRite of West Milford, to the PTSD Inpatient Unit and the 3 Floor Ladies Unit. As always, the food was great.

We are still waiting to hear if Inserra/ShopRite will be sponsoring the program for another year. If they continue, we will be going to Lyons again on Tuesday September 11th. Anyone wanting to join us can sign the sheet up front or contact me.

Scheduled Meetings:

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

2018

22nd July

26th August

23rd September

28th October

25th November

1st December – Christmas Party (TBD)

Calendar of Events:

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

50/50 Can Shakes:

Aug. 18	Acme – Sussex
Aug. 25 (3:00 p.m.)	Chatterbox
Sept. 15	ShopRite – Franklin
Sept. 22	Walmart – Franklin
Oct. 6	Acme – Vernon
Oct. 20	ShopRite – Warwick

NEW MEMBERS:

“WELCOME HOME”

No report.

PASSINGS:

Bob Phillips

CONGRATULATIONS/CONCERNS:

Happy August Anniversaries:

Kathy & Tony Alia

Happy August Birthdays:

United States Coast Guard,

August 4, 179“SEMPER PARATUS”

Tony Alia

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MEMBERS CORNER:

See page 8. Submitted by William Grohoski.

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)



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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 August newsletter to me by Sunday, August 19th by email: skelle@ptd.net or by snail-mail to:

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

Vietnam Memorial replica to visit Newburgh

By Leonard Sparks

Times Herald-Record

CITY OF NEWBURGH – As a combat photographer during Vietnam, Dave McTamney experienced the emotion of watching injured friends whisked away – and years of wondering what happened to them.

So his trip to Washington, D.C., to visit the Vietnam Veterans Memorial when it first opened in 1982 represented closure as he searched the names of the 58,000 Americans killed and discovered among them some of those friends.

"You were able to put your hand on his name and bid him goodbye," he said. "It was real closure."

Other local veterans will get their chance to do the same on Aug. 2, when the "Wall That

Heals," a 250-foot-long replica of the memorial, makes a three-day stop in the City of Newburgh as part of a 38-stop national tour.

The exhibit will be set up at "The People's Park," a city-owned waterfront property at 1 Washington St., from Aug. 2 to Aug. 5, and will be open to visitors 24 hours a day.

Newburgh was chosen from among more than 100 communities that applied to host the exhibit.

"These are people, young and old, who answered the call of their country and they said, 'I will serve,'" said state Sen. Bill Larkin Jr., an Army veteran who served in World War II and the Korean War.

A motorcycle escort will accompany a trailer carrying the wall into Newburgh and down Broadway to the waterfront, said

Rus Vernon, one of the visit's organizers.

Members of local unions will then assemble the exhibit.

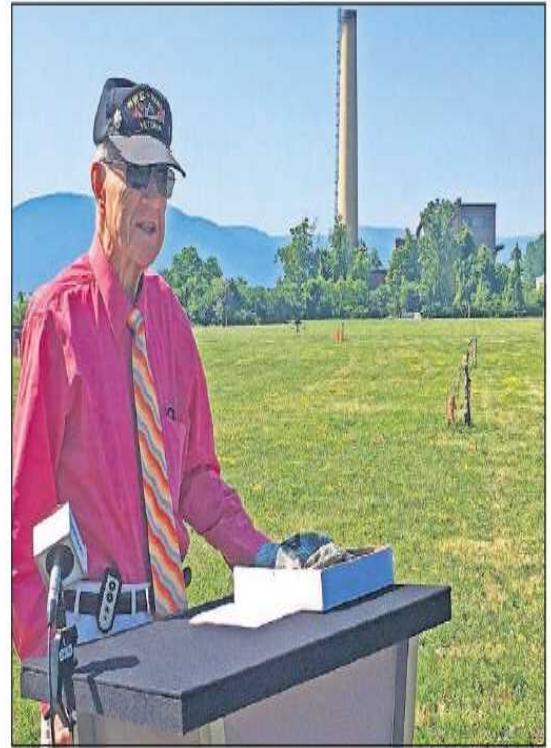
Along with the names of the men and women killed during Vietnam, the exhibit includes an education center with photographs, letters and a chronological history of the war.

Returning Vietnam veterans were "not warmly received," and the wall be part of their healing process, Vernon said.

"Instead of being greeted with words of encouragement ... they were spat upon, called names that were unconscionable and made to believe their service was not honorable," he said.

"It is about time that every Vietnam veteran be treated with respect."

lsparks@th-record.com



State Sen. Bill Larkin Jr. announces Monday that a mobile replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. will be on display in Newburgh next month. [LEONARD SPARKS/TIMES HERALD-RECORD]

Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another!