



The Sentinel

Vol. 5 No. 2

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

February 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

February has come to a close and for the Chapter it was a quite month.

As March approaches we will start to become a little busier with the St Patrick's Day parade on March 17th in Newton. The lineup will be at 11 a.m. just down the street from the Newton Theater, with the start of the parade at 11:30. This is not a long parade and we really get a nice ovation when we march. If at all possible please come out and march with the Chapter and show your support.

The scholarship essays are starting to come in and will be given to Rich Predmore and his group for review with the winners receiving their checks at our June meeting. As it stands now this will be the last year we will be giving out the Scholarships as no one has stepped up to take it over. The only thing that has to be done is getting the tickets printed and setting up the can shakes. With a membership of over 200 it is a little disappointing that no one is willing to take on the worthy cause. If anyone is interested please let me know and I'm sure Jack will show you what has to be done.

See you at the meeting and hopefully the parade.

John

1st VICE PRESIDENT:

Submitted by John Brady

I don't know about anyone else but the weather this winter is just crazy. One week we're enduring subfreezing temperatures, then it begins to warm up (at least for

February), then the temperature drops just long enough to get an overnight snowfall but then warms up to 40+ degrees with bright sun to melt the snow and all this will culminate in possibly reaching 70 degrees by midweek. Who says nature doesn't have a sense of humor!

Hopefully, the weather will stay good for the St. Patrick's Day parade in Newton on Saturday, March 17. Yes, unbelievably the parade actually falls on St. Patrick's Day!

Our Chapter will be participating again this year. I know it's been mentioned that some of us are getting a little "long in the tooth" to march in parades. However, this parade isn't too long and relatively flat. So I ask all who are able to join us.

Since I've been away on vacation I don't know if we were able to get the wagon and tractor that we've had in the 4th of July parade. If so at least some of us can ride.

If you're unable to do either come out to support and cheer for your fellow vets along the parade route.

SERVICE OFFICER:

Submitted by Skip Kays

No report.

WOMEN VETERANS:

Submitted by Walt Hazelman

**We're Failing Our Female Veterans.
How Can We Turn It Around?**

More females than ever are joining the ranks of our nation's armed forces. As of April 2017, 15% of active

Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another!

duty military personnel were women—a 4% increase from 1990.

Despite this trend, services to support female veterans at home are still woefully inadequate. Suicide statistics for female veterans are harrowing. And Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities are underequipped to treat the unique mental and physical needs of female veterans.

Suicide rates among female veterans are surging. More than 7,000 veterans take their own lives each year, which adds up to nearly 20 lives lost per day. Female veterans account for a disproportionate number of these tragedies. According to the latest VA statistics, male veterans were 19% more likely to take their own lives than their civilian counterparts. For women, that rate is an astonishing 250% higher.

These rising suicide numbers are one tragic result of inadequate mental health services. Many veterans, both men and women, experience mental health issues upon returning from service. Post-traumatic stress disorder—which impacts an estimated 20% of all veterans—is the number one complaint among women treated at VA facilities. Depression and hypertension rank closely behind.

The likelihood of experiencing sexual trauma while serving exacerbates these problems for women. According to the latest VA screenings, one of every 100 males experienced military sexual trauma. For women, that number is one in four.

Unfortunately, VA facilities are unable to offer the care that women require. Female veterans in Virginia and North Carolina, for example, can expect to wait an average of 26 days to see a mental health professional. What's more, many VA facilities don't offer services unique to women's needs—like prenatal care or mammograms.

Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin has taken steps to boost access to these necessary services for female veterans. In May, for example, the secretary axed burdensome VA guidelines that make it difficult for women to receive mammograms. He also has started publishing VA wait times online to increase transparency and accountability.

Iowa Sen. Joni Ernst, a combat veteran herself, has long been an advocate of bolstering veterans' services. Just last year, Ernst led the Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act through Congress. Her bill—which was signed by President Obama on July 1, 2016—requires the VA to analyze and establish “effective mental health and suicide prevention programs for our female veterans.”

Still, as rising suicide rates would indicate, these efforts are far from enough. The last place our female veterans should feel left behind is at home.

POW/MIA:

Submitted by Bob Gilbert

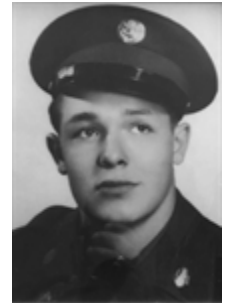
Funeral Announcement For Soldier Missing From The Korean War (Shepard, O.)

January 31, 2018 — The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, recently accounted for from the Korean War, are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Army Sgt. Ollie E. Shepard, 22, of Hugo, Oklahoma.



Funeral Announcement For Soldier Killed In Korean War (Cushman, R.)

January 26, 2018 — The Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of a serviceman, recently accounted-for from the Korean War, are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Army Sgt. 1st Class Richard G. Cushman, 18, of Springville, Utah.



Funeral Announcement For Soldier Killed During WWII (Lobdell, L.)

January 26, 2018 — The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that a U.S. serviceman, missing from World War II, has been identified and is being returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Army Pfc. Lloyd J. Lobdell, 23, of Elkhorn, Wisconsin.





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[Funeral Announcement For Soldier Killed During World War II \(Sconiers, E.\)](#)

January 18, 2018 — The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, recently accounted-for from World War II, are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Army Air Forces 1st Lt. Ewart T. Sconiers, 27, of DeFuniak Springs, Florida.



[Funeral Announcement for USS Oklahoma Sailor Killed During World War II \(Savidge, J.\)](#)

January 18, 2018 — The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, recently accounted-for from World War II, are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Navy Seaman 1st Class John E. Savidge, 20, of Linden, New Jersey.

[Funeral Announcement for USS Oklahoma Sailor Killed During World War II \(Wright, P.\)](#)

January 18, 2018 — The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, recently accounted-for from World War II, are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Navy Reserve Chief Water Tender Paul R. Wright, 41, of Meadville, Missouri.

[Funeral Announcement For Soldier Killed During The Korean War \(Leonard, J.\)](#) January 17, 2018 — The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, recently accounted-for from the Korean War, are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Army Pfc. James J. Leonard, Jr., 22, of San Francisco.

[Funeral Announcement For Soldier Killed During Korean War \(Colley, E.\)](#) January 02, 2018 — The Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting

Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of a serviceman, recently accounted-for from the Korean War, are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Army Sgt. 1st Class Eugene J. Colley, 48, of Edenton, North Carolina.

[Funeral Announcement For Airman Killed During World War II \(Stegnerski, S.\)](#)

January 17, 2018 — The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, recently accounted-for from World War II, have been identified and are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Stanley F. Stegnerski, 25, of Chester.



[Funeral Announcement For Marine Killed During World War II \(Hannon, H.\)](#)

January 05, 2018 — The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, recently accounted-for from World War II, are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Marine Corps Pfc. Harold P. Hannon, 28, of Scranton, Pennsylvania.



[Funeral Announcement For Soldier Missing From World War II \(Eichelberger, L.\)](#) January 05, 2018 — The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, recently accounted-for from World War II, are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Army Pfc. Lonnie B.C. Eichelberger, 20, of Waco, Texas.

AGENT ORANGE:

Submitted by Owen Martin

No report.

COMMUNITY/PUBLIC AFFAIRS:

Submitted by Lou Storms

Our next trip to Lyons for dinner service for the PTSD Unit will be on March 13th. Anyone wanting to join us can sign the sheet up front or call me.

Scheduled Meetings:

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

2018

25th February

25th March

22nd April

27th May

24th June

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.

March 17th - St Patrick's Day parade in Newton;
line-up at 11:00 a.m.

May 26th - Chapter can shake at Mac & Lindys in
Vernon

NEW MEMBERS:

“WELCOME HOME”

No report.

PASSINGS:

No report.

CONGRATULATIONS/CONCERNS:

Happy Anniversary:

Brenda & George Gunderman

Happy Birthday:

MEMBERS CORNER:

Submitted by Walt Hazelman

VVA To Military Sexual Trauma Survivors: Stand Up and Speak Out, Be Heard

(Washington, DC) – “Vietnam Veterans of America has been at the forefront, fighting for justice for the women and men of our armed forces who have suffered incidents of sexual trauma and harassment,” said John Rowan, VVA National President. “As veterans, we know only too well the power and constraints that military commanders can--and often do--exert on those who have come forward to report the circumstance of their assaults and indignities. More often than not, these crimes go unreported; silence has been the only safe recourse for these active-duty men and women who have been betrayed by their own. This disturbing climate in our military is unacceptable and has existed for far too long.”

“Military Sexual Trauma is pervasive; it continues to erode the unity of force, its mission capability, our service members’ trust in one another, and the honor of all those who serve our nation in uniform,” said Rowan. “We at Vietnam Veterans of America urge all those victimized by sexual assault to step forward and seek the counseling and care critical to their health, safety, and well-being.”

Despite claims by military leadership of “zero tolerance” for sexual assault, the reporting rate has only increased one and a half percent. DoD’s FY 16 Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military finds that only one in three survivors report their assault, belying the fact that the men and women who serve in our military do not have confidence in their command or the justice they would receive. In FY16, female service members reported sexual assault at a rate two and a half times greater than male MST survivors; however, more men reported the crime than ever before.

“As we listen to the tragic stories of sexual assault from survivors in the entertainment industry, the political arena, and the media, we cannot and must not ignore



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those who have answered the call to defend our Constitution,” said Rowan. “Vietnam Veterans of America will continue to advocate on behalf of these men and women survivors of MST, so that they receive fair and judicious outcomes, and most importantly, to ensure their health and well-being.

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 18th by email: skelle@ptd.net or by snail-mail to:

Linda Skellenger
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