



The Sentinel

Vol. 4 No. 10

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

October 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 November approaches we have a few events such as The Salute to Veterans at the Sussex County Fair Grounds on Sunday November 5th, with line up by 11:00.

On Veterans Day, Saturday November 11th we have a small service at the Veterans Cemetery at 12pm and all are invited.

The next day on Sunday November 12th we will be having the annual Veterans Mass at St Francis De Sales at 2pm and as has been said before you do not have to be Catholic to attend. Afterwards there will be refreshments in the Social Hall.

Before you know it our Christmas party will be here on December 2nd in Boland Hall at 2pm. Please let us know if you are attending and how many will be with you including the children and their ages. The Chapter will again be giving a small gift for the Children but we need the names and if they are a Boy or Girl. The sign-up sheet is on the front table or call the Chapter number and let us know. Like I stated before the Chapter will again provide the food and if you could bring a desert and snacks for your table that would be great. We have to know how many are attending by November 22nd so we can order the food.

As in previous years there will be no meeting in December with everyone busy with the holidays and family. Our meetings will resume again on January 28th 2018. We will have a full list of the upcoming meetings in the November News Letter.

As you know we help a lot of people with our Vets Helping Vets on Thursdays and I'm asking if you can now give us a hand.

We still need people to step up and help out with the Committees we have. We are trying to get 2 members on each one so that if someone cannot attend a meeting the other person on that Committee can give the report. It is really not that difficult so please think about it.

The Raffle is drawing to a close so if you have not sent in your tickets please get them to Jack or Sharon. That's it for now see you at the meeting.

John

1st VICE PRESIDENT:

Submitted by John Brady

Just two reminders for upcoming events in November.

First is the Salute to Veterans Parade at the Sussex County Fairgrounds on Sunday November 5. Line-up is at 11:00 and the parade and festivities will begin at 13:00 (1:00 P.M.) As in previous years a fly over is planned (weather permitting) and hot dogs, soda and coffee will be served afterwards. We have always had a good showing and I hope that it continues. Dress code, depending upon the weather, is chapter shirts, jackets and sweatshirts if you have them or other appropriate veteran attire. Covers (hats) are at the discretion of the individual.

Second is the annual Veteran's Mass celebrated at St. Francis de Sales Church at 14:00 (2 P.M.) on Sunday November 12 the day after Veterans Day. There will be refreshments served after but what the Confirmation class has planned I do not know. I know the usual excuse is that the roof of the church will cave-in if I go. Well, it hasn't happened in all the years we've held this Mass so I don't believe it will happen this time.

Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another!

Have a safe and enjoyable Veteran's Day and take advantage of all the free services offered. After all, you earned it.

NOTE: If are confused by the time the lineup is for the parade you are not alone. So here is the story: The parade starts at 1:00 pm so if you intend to march with the group please be at the fairgrounds no later than 12:30 for the final lineup call.

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.

Senate Approves Suicide Oath to NDAA

In September the U.S. Senate approved the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Among its many components is: SECTION 580. ESTABLISHMENT OF SEPARATION OATH FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

This section amends Section 502 of title 10, United States Code by inserting after subsection (a) the following new subsection (b): “(b) Separation Oath.—Prior to retirement or other separation from the armed forces, other than separation pursuant to the sentence of a court-martial, a member of an armed force may take the following oath:

I, _____, recognizing that my oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, has involved me and my fellow members in experiences that few persons, other than our peers, can understand, do solemnly swear (or affirm) to continue to be the keeper of my brothers- and sisters-in-arms and protector of the United States and the Constitution; to preserve the values I have learned; to maintain my body and my mind; and to not bring harm to myself without speaking to my fellow veterans first. I take this oath freely and without purpose of evasion, so help me God.

Maybe this sort of idea goes over my head. No, it definitely does.

White House VA Hotline soon to be Operational 24/7

The VA announced that starting October 15, the White House VA Hotline, 855-948-2311—introduced in June—will be operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The two-month pilot phase had demonstrated that veterans calling the hotline respond best when their calls are answered by fellow veterans and others with first-hand experience on their issues. As a result, VA is targeting highly qualified veterans to staff the hotline going forward, instead of contracting the service to a third-party vendor, and has hired additional VA personnel to complete the planned move to a 24-hour operation

VA Removes Former D.C. Medical Center Director New Accountability Measures Used

On 9/22/17, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that it has fired former Washington, D.C., VA Medical Center Director Brian Hawkins for his failure to provide effective leadership to the D.C. Medical Center.

The department undertook this action using authorities provided by the VA Accountability Act, which the president signed into law in June. Hawkins was notified in late August that he was being proposed for removal.

“We at VA will use the authorities available to ensure our Veterans get the highest quality service and care possible,” said VA Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin. “This is the right decision for Veterans in D.C., and employees at the medical center, and underscores our commitment to hold employees accountable if they fail to do their jobs or live up to VA’s values.”

VA initiated the latest action after the VA Office of Inspector General issued a new report finding that Hawkins violated VA policy by sending sensitive VA information from his work email to unsecured private email accounts.

Objects taken from the battlefields of Vietnam are more than souvenirs or war trophies

Maps, stories, after-action reports, pictures, military items may have a story that could result in finding the location of missing war dead. If you have any of the above that you are willing to part with contact the Veterans Initiative at:

Veterans Initiative
Vietnam Veterans of America
8719 Colesville Rd., Suite 100
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
vi@vva.org

Navy Exchange opens to Veterans on Veteran’s Day in 2017

Beginning this Veteran’s Day, November 11, 2017, all honorably discharged veterans of the U.S. Military, even if you weren’t lucky enough to be in the Navy, can



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shop online from the exchange. Visit VetVerify.org to establish your authentication and sign up. The shopping site is www.shopmyexchange.co. When I signed up I received an email saying I was part of the testing and could order early. I have looked a few times and it appears that the prices are sometimes less than you would find on Amazon for the same item, but I haven't actually ordered anything.

WOMEN VETERANS:

Submitted by Walt Hazelman

Vietnam-era women veterans: The Unknown

Trauma

posted on March 10, 2016

By Mary Dever

Study shows women veterans from the Vietnam era are at increased risk of PTSD.

There were approximately 265,000 women who served in the U.S. military during the Vietnam War, with nearly 11,000 serving in parts of Southeast Asia. A new study is showing the lingering psychological effects their service has caused.

According to "Prevalence of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Vietnam-Era Women Veterans: The Health of Vietnam-Era Women's Study," published in JAMA Psychiatry, a publication of the Journal of the American Medical Association, these women veterans suffer significant rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) decades after the war, partly because of the sexual harassment and discrimination they faced.

"At that time in the Women's Army Corps, we were taught to be ladies first and soldiers second," said Carmen Bennett, an Army soldier who served in a clerical position during the Vietnam War from 1967 to 1968. "It was different then. We didn't know what was considered 'rape,' and so that caused a lot of guilt."

Bennett was raped on Aug. 24, 1968. The assault resulted in a pregnancy, which forced her out of the service.

"That really killed me," Bennett said. "My parents and my family were so disappointed in me. I carried around the guilt and shame for a very long time. I still carry it."

The study, funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs, is based on surveys and phone interviews of more than 4,000 Vietnam-era female veterans.

"Vietnam service significantly increased the odds of PTSD relative to U.S. service; this effect appears to be related to wartime exposures, especially sexual discrimination or harassment and job performance pressures," the study concludes.

According to the VA, women veterans who use VA health care and report a history of sexual trauma while in the military also report a range of negative outcomes, including poorer psychological and physical health, more readjustment problems following discharge and a greater incidence of unemployment due to mental health problems.

Though she lived with the symptoms of PTSD, it was a long time before Bennett was formally diagnosed.

"Every year on the anniversary [of my trauma], on Aug. 24 and 25, I was on the phone with my friend who went through it with me. Every year. It was like I was stuck," said Bennett. "I went through a lot of emotional trauma and guilt and everything. I had a lot of tears. I did a lot of crazy things. It changed me drastically in a lot of ways that weren't good."

Bennett sought help through DAV. It was then, 40 years after her assault, that she started therapy for PTSD and military sexual trauma (MST). "It wasn't until [my DAV Service Officer] told me he'd seen in some of my records that there were some things that made him concerned. And he thought that maybe I should be checked out for PTSD.

"I went through a lot [with my family]; they disowned me. It really hurt; it broke my heart," she added. "But now, I'm thinking my PTSD played a huge part in the way they acted toward me. I think the PTSD played a big role in my life."

In 2010, Bennett was awarded 100-percent service connection for PTSD based on the trauma she endured in

1968. It took 42 years of quietly suffering before someone finally recognized her disability. Stories like hers are why the VA is making a huge push for additional research and studies into what Vietnam-era women veterans really endured.

“In this situation, the veteran has lived with the after effects of her trauma for more than four decades,” said DAV Assistant National Legislative Director Shurhonda Love. “Women veterans played a significant role in the Vietnam conflict, yet so many of them don’t know or understand what types of benefits and support systems are available.”

According to the National Center for PTSD, “Given the alarming prevalence rates of sexual harassment and sexual assault among military veterans, VA has responded actively to meet the health care needs of veterans impacted by these experiences.”

MST screening and related services are mandated to be available at every VA medical center for both women and men. Women Veterans: The Long Journey Home, DAV’s comprehensive study of the many challenges women face, reports that one in five women enrolled at the VA screen positive for MST.

The Vietnam-Era Women’s Study shines the light on what has been a little-examined part of the nation’s experience in Vietnam. The study examines not just what women veterans of the Vietnam era were faced with, from MST to life and death decisions made by nurses, but how those experiences shaped their lives.

“PTSD is with me,” said Bennett. “It’s never going to go away.

POW/MIA:

Submitted by Bob Gilbert

Soldier Captured During The Korean War Accounted For (Lejeune, K.) October 10, 2017 — Army Sgt. Kermit J. Lejeune, captured during the Korean War, has now been accounted for.

Airmen Killed During World War II Accounted For (Brady, J., Chandler, A., Liekhus, J., Shoemaker, R., Younger, B.) October 5, 2017 — Tech Sgt. John F. Brady, Tech Sgt. Allen A. Chandler, 1st Lt. John H. Liekhus, Staff Sgt. Robert O. Shoemaker and Staff Sgt. Bobby J. Younger have all been accounted for.

Marine Killed During The Korean War Accounted For (McAfee, J.) October 5, 2017 — Marine Corps Reserve Sgt. Johnson McAfee, Jr., killed during the Korean War, has now been accounted for.

Marine Killed During World War II Accounted For (Hannon, H.) October 5, 2017 — Marine Corps Pfc.

Harold P. Hannon, killed during the battle of Tarawa in World War II, has now been accounted for.

USS Oklahoma Sailor Killed During World War II Accounted For (Eakes, W.) October 4, 2017 — Navy Storekeeper 3rd Class Wallace E. Eakes, killed during the attack on the USS Oklahoma in World War II, has now been accounted for.

USS Oklahoma Sailor Killed During World War II Accounted For (Johnson, J.) October 3, 2017 — Navy Seaman 1st Class Joseph M. Johnson, killed during the attack on the USS Oklahoma in World War II, has now been accounted for.

Soldier Killed During The Korean War Accounted For (Blue, W.) October 2, 2017 — Army Pfc. Willie E. Blue, killed during the Korean War, has now been accounted for.

USS Oklahoma Sailor Killed During World War II Accounted For (Olsen, E.) October 2, 2017 — Navy Storekeeper 3rd Class Eli Olsen, killed during the attack on the USS Oklahoma in World War II, has now been accounted for.

USS Oklahoma Sailor Killed During World War II Accounted For (Goodwin, C.) October 2, 2017 — Navy Seaman 1st Class Clifford G. Goodwin, killed during the attack on the USS Oklahoma in World War II, has now been accounted for.

Soldier Missing From The Korean War Accounted For (Baer, D.) September 29, 2017 — Army Cpl. Donald L. Baer, missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for.

Also there are 25 more Mia’s accounted for in September since my last report. These men need the same respect as the above listed. The DPAA is doing a fantastic job as the numbers of the MIA’S accounting goes faster every month.

AGENT ORANGE:

Submitted by Owen Martin

No report.

COMMUNITY/PUBLIC AFFAIRS:

Submitted by Lou Storms

No Report.



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Scheduled Meetings:

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

22nd October

26th November

2nd December – Christmas Party

Calendar of Events:

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

5th November – Salute to Veterans: Sussex Co.

Fair Grounds: Line up at 11:00 am

11th November – Service at the Veterans

Cemetery at 12:00 pm

12th November – Veterans mass at St. Francis

De Sales at 2:00 pm

2nd December – Christmas Party at St. Francis

De Sales at 2:00 pm

NEW MEMBERS:

“WELCOME HOME”

Russell Sheeler

David Soltis

PASSINGS:

No report.

CONGRATULATIONS/CONCERNS:

Happy Anniversary:

Happy Birthday:

Audrey Magnus (11/13)

United States Marine Corps "SEMPER

FIDELIS" Nov 10, 1775

MEMBERS CORNER:

1. *Submitted by* Walt Hazelman

Bergen County veterans' housing complex opens in Emerson

EMERSON— At least six months away from a liver transplant and fed up with his landlord, Frank Sgobbo needed a change of scenery.

The 57-year-old Marine Corps veteran, whose illnesses prevent him from working, said he and his Yorkie, Gucci, found what they were looking for: a fully furnished apartment behind American Legion Post 269 on Main Street.

"They call it an apartment," Sgobbo said on Wednesday morning, "but, to me, it's a little house. Besides my children being born, this is the best thing that ever happened to me."

Sgobbo is one of more than a dozen disabled or homeless veterans now living in an apartment complex dedicated just for them – a project that affordable-housing advocates tout as the first of its kind in Bergen County.

In front of hundreds of guests on Wednesday, the Housing Development Corporation of Bergen County — the nonprofit arm of the Housing Authority of Bergen County — officially opened the project, known as Emerson Veterans Supportive Housing, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Speaking to a crowd gathered under a tent in the complex's parking lot, Bergen County Executive James Tedesco praised the project, calling disabled and homeless veterans a priority.

"You took part of your life and put it on hold for us," Tedesco said. "The least we can do is give you a pillow to put your head on and a safe and affordable place to call home."

What makes the \$3.1 million project unique is that it is the only affordable-housing project run by the county dedicated to veterans with special needs.

Lynn Bartlett, executive director of the Housing Development Corporation, said the project was primarily financed by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, which provided \$2.8 million. The rest was paid for by the Housing Development Corporation.

The apartments are leased to veterans whose household income is less than 50 percent of the area median income.

Funding, labor and materials to furnish the apartments was donated by the American Legion post, the Bergen County Division of Veterans Services, Making-It-Home and corporate and nonprofit sponsors.

The 2.2-acre tract — once a farm — was donated by the American Legion post. The land was worth a small fortune, but Post Commander John Hogan said local veterans no longer had the wherewithal to maintain the property.

Hogan said former state Assemblywoman Charlotte Vandervalk asked if the post would consider a different use for the land when she was the Housing Development Corporation's director of development.

"She put the bug in my ear," Hogan, a Navy veteran of the Korean War, said. "It's a wonderful project, and we're happy the land was put to good use."

Vandervalk's successor, John Biale, said the post's generosity should serve as a template for all veterans organizations.

Biale said planning for the project started three and a half years ago. Construction started in November 2015.

Designed by Arcari + Iovino Architects, the seven-building complex has 14 apartments, each measuring 650 square feet.

The air-conditioned units feature bedrooms, kitchens and living rooms that also function as dining rooms. They also come with washing machines and dryers, and their bathrooms are handicap-accessible.

"Besides my children being born, this is the best thing that ever happened to me."

Frank Sgobbo, Marine Corps veteran

One of the beneficiaries is James Frazier, 57, who attended Wednesday's ceremony. Before moving in, he lived in a homeless shelter for veterans in Garfield.

"I felt like I was 18 again," Frazier, an Army veteran, said about the strict rules he was forced to grow accustomed to at the shelter. "I couldn't wait to get out."

Mayor Louis Lamatina welcomed the borough's newest residents, saying the project fosters "inclusion, not exclusion" and "assimilation, not isolation."

"You are the true VIPs of this occasion," the mayor told the veterans.

2. Submitted by Owen Martin



Knights of Columbus gave the cemetery a donation.

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



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

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