



# The Sentinel

Vol. 6 No. 4

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

April 2019

Website: [www.VVA1002.org](http://www.VVA1002.org)

President: John Harrigan

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: John Brady

Secretary: Carl Ohlson

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Walt Hazelman

Chaplin: George Burns

Treasurer: Owen Martin

Sergeant at Arms: Ted Andrews

## **FROM THE MINEFIELD:**

*Submitted by John Harrigan*

Myself, Owen Martin, Bob Gilbert and Walt Hazelman along with the states' other St Patrick's Day Grand Marshalls were presented with a Proclamation Honoring our service to the Irish Civic Association and Causes. We had our picture taken with Assemblyman DeAngelis and then again with the rest of the recipients. It was great having the Chapter receive recognition for all of its good work

Veterans family night is still going strong here at the Church on Wednesday night from 5:30 to 7:00 and there are still openings if you would like to attend.

For those of us who attended the Vietnam Veterans seminar at Sussex Tec on the 18<sup>th</sup> it was once again a great experience for us to tell the Students a little about what happen there 50 years ago. We can't thank Erin Ashton who teaches History there for inviting us for the fifth year to participate in this great event. I'm pretty sure we get more out of talking about what went on than the Students.

At the event they handed out Quilts of Valor to some of the Veterans and the goal is to give every Veteran in the County a quilt. So please let me know if you have not received a quilt yet and I can add your name for the next time.

We finally got everything ready for this years' raffle and it was sent into the State so we can get our number and have our tickets printed. I'm sure Teri Deaver will let you know when the tickets are in.

The annual Chapter can shake will be on May 25 at Mac and Lindys in Vernon. The start time is 9am till ?? This is the only fund raiser we really have for the Chapter

itself and could use some help. You don't have to stay all day just come out and do what you can and Support your Chapter.

On Monday May 27<sup>th</sup> we have been asked to participate in the Memorial Day parade in Newton. The lineup is where we lined up for St Patrick's day and the time is 10am. This is a parade to Honor our Fallen Brothers and Sisters so let's try and have a large turn out to Honor those who did not make it back.

That's it for now, see you at the meeting.

## **1<sup>st</sup> VICE PRESIDENT:**

*Submitted by John Brady*

On Thursday, April 18, we didn't have our usual Vets Helping Vets meeting. Instead, a number of us went to Sussex Vo-Tech for the annual salute to Vietnam Veterans. Some of our group were honored by receiving a Quilt of Valor which is a quilt specifically designed to commemorate a military veteran's service.

Afterwards we split up into groups to speak about specific aspects of the Vietnam War which ranged from the political climate of the time, different aspects of fighting the war, coming home to an ungrateful nation and the after effects of Agent Orange and PTSD. IT was a very rewarding experience for us, especially to see how much the program has grown. The first year there were only six veterans and each had their own station. This time there were three to four at each one which enabled us to share a much broader area of knowledge and experience.

It's sad to find out that the schools stop teaching about wars in history after WWII. This means there is no formal education about not only Viet-Nam but also Korea and

*Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another!*

the Gulf Wars where men and women in the Armed Forces go in harms way to serve our country.

We must have made a good impression because the New Jersey Herald had a picture and article on the front page "above the fold".

## **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

**This caught my eye the other day. Jane can just never get too many awards.**

The issue as to whether or not the town has a right to make decisions for a private entity is relevant, but at least someone made the effort.

Poor Jane keeps having to put up with these mean people, and she has explained so many times how she is sorry that people see her in the wrong light.



As reported April 3 by Caitlin Whyte for *North Country Public Radio*, a resolution to end funding for the Women's Hall of Fame if Jane Fonda was inducted failed to pass a Seneca Falls Town board meeting Tuesday night. But that was only after over an hour of passionate debate between Hall supporters and Vietnam Veterans on the actresses' actions in the 1970s.

Seneca Falls supervisor tries, fails to keep Fonda out of the Women's Hall of Fame

## **BY CAITLIN WHYTE (WXXI) IN SENECA FALLS, NY**

Listen Share

Apr 03, 2019 — A resolution to end funding for the Women's Hall of Fame if Jane Fonda was inducted failed to pass a Seneca Falls Town board meeting Tuesday night. But that was only after over an hour of passionate debate between Hall supporters and Vietnam Veterans on the actresses actions in the 1970s.

Last week Town Supervisor Greg Lazzaro proposed a resolution, which would end town financial donations for events associated with the Hall, because of Fonda's nomination.

Vern Brewer was one of the many Vietnam Veterans who were at the meeting to protest the nomination of Fonda. They say seeing her travels to North Vietnam during the war were disrespectful, and says the hall should honor more women connected to the war.

"I'm here basically today to ask these feminists why they don't care about the mothers, the daughters of the dead."

Brewer was standing with Ken Lisk, a fellow veteran who called Fonda a "war mongerer."

"I watched her in North Vietnam when I was in South Vietnam; it was not a good picture."

But there were supporters of the hall as well, many who said the town doesn't have a place to decide who does or doesn't get inducted.

Susan Souhan from Seneca Falls supports the hall of fame.

"I am here also to support our veteran's because they fought in a war that most people did not like but they did what their government told them to. And I have nothing against the vets, I just think what our town supervisor has done is unfair to the hall."

Jill Byington, holding a sign of support says the hall of fame is "A place for the world, it's not a place for just this town."

In the end, the resolution failed with three votes against it, one vote by the town supervisor in favor, and one board member who opted not to vote.

Former President of the Hall Betty Brayer said she was relieved, but says the meeting just showed a need for more communication between the hall and the town.

"There's a lot of history and emotion in the room, and one of the things that struck me was how much dialogue is missing."

The community center in Seneca Falls was buzzing as Vietnam veterans, residents of the town and everyone in between gathered to discuss the induction of Jane Fonda into the hall of fame.



# The Sentinel

Vol. 6 No. 4

Vietnam Veterans of America – Chapter 1002 – Wallkill Valley

April 2019

Website: [www.VVA1002.org](http://www.VVA1002.org)

## What a difference a week makes

### VA Ordered to Lift Hold on Blue Water Navy Appeals

VA was recently ordered to lift its hold on Blue Water Navy appeals as a result of the recent Procopio v. Wilkie court decision. The Procopio decision clarified that Blue Water Navy Vietnam War veterans are eligible to receive presumptive disability compensation benefits for health conditions associated with exposure to Agent Orange. After the decision was issued on January 29, 2019, VA requested a stay, which places a hold on Blue Water Navy claims and appeals while the agency deliberated whether to appeal the decision. VA's request to stay Blue Water Navy claims was denied and VA is now forced to start taking action on appeals.

This means veterans affected by the Procopio decision may see activity on their appeals in the near future. The VFW urges Blue Water Navy veterans who receive notice of action on their claims to contact a VFW-accredited Service Officer at: [www.vfw.org/NVS](http://www.vfw.org/NVS). The Department of Justice still has until April 29, 2019, to formally appeal. Moreover, the Procopio decision still leaves certain questions unanswered for Blue Water Navy veterans and others exposed to Agent Orange.

#### AND THEN

### VA to Drop Fight Against Blue Water Navy Veterans

26 Mar 2019

Military.com | By Patricia Kime

The Department of Veterans Affairs will not appeal a January court ruling that ordered it to provide health care and disability benefits for 90,000 veterans who served on Navy ships during the Vietnam War, likely paving the way for "Blue Water Navy" sailors and Marines to receive Agent Orange-related compensation and VA-paid health care benefits.

VA Secretary Robert Wilkie told members of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee on Tuesday that he will recommend the Justice Department not fight the decision, handing a victory to ill former service members

who fought for years to have their diseases recognized as related to exposure to the herbicide Agent Orange.

Last year, the House unanimously passed a bill, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act, to provide benefits to affected service members. But Wilkie objected, saying the science does not prove that they were exposed to Agent Orange. Veterans and their advocates had argued that the ships' distilling systems used Agent Orange-tainted seawater, exposing sailors on board to concentrated levels of dioxin.

### Legislation introduced to add nine more diseases presumed to be caused by Agent Orange

A group of lawmakers introduced legislation that would add nine more diseases to a list of conditions presumed to be caused by the chemical herbicide Agent Orange, giving veterans who suffer from them a fast-track to Department of Veterans Affairs disability compensation and health care.

The Keeping Our Promises Act, introduced last week, adds prostate cancer, bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, hypertension, stroke, early-onset peripheral neuropathy, AL amyloidosis, ischemic heart disease and Parkinson-like syndromes to a list of diseases presumed to be caused by Agent Orange exposure during the Vietnam War.

Researchers with the National Academy of Medicine released findings in November that there was "suggestive" evidence that eight of the diseases could be caused by Agent Orange. For hypertension, researchers found that "sufficient" evidence exists.

VA experts have begun a "formal, deliberative review" of the National Academy of Medicine's latest report. The review is expected to be complete in the summer, at which time the agency will make recommendations about presumptive conditions, he said.

During a Senate hearing March 26, Richard Stone, the executive in charge of the Veterans Health Administration, guessed the review would be complete within 90 days.

The VA previously recommended that some of the conditions be added. After the last National Academy of Medicine report in 2016, the VA took 20 months before it

sent recommendations to the White House that bladder cancer, hypertension, hyperthyroidism and Parkinson's-like tremors be added to the list.

The recommendation hasn't made it past the White House's Office of Management and Budget. But some lawmakers don't want to wait on the executive process. They are trying to use a legislative route.

The bill is likely to face an uphill battle in Congress, where veterans and advocates have fought for years to prove toxic exposures and secure VA benefits.

### **Man Who Pretended to be Blind Sentenced for Defrauding VA**

DENVER — A Colorado man has been sentenced to a year in prison for defrauding the Department of Veterans Affairs out of nearly \$1.3 million by pretending to be blind.

Mike Blea, of Northglenn, was sentenced Wednesday and ordered to pay the VA \$1,273,180 in restitution.

Investigators say Blea is a Vietnam veteran who started getting VA disability payments in 1969 for visual impairment. He did have a minor problem with his eyesight but started to exaggerate how bad it was.

Blea had eye exams outside of the VA system that showed his vision was correctible to 20/30 in one eye and 20/40 in another. He also had a driver's license and drove regularly.

U.S. Attorney Jason Dunn said after the sentence that "justice may be blind, but Mr. Blea isn't."

### **WOMEN VETERANS:**

*Submitted by Walt Hazelman*

#### **Veteran Of The Day Army Veteran Ellen Ainsworth**

Posted on Wednesday, April 10, 2019 6:00 pm Posted in Veteran of the Day by Paola Santiago



*Veteran of the Day graphic created by Tenzin Chomphel for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.*

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Army Veteran Ellen Ainsworth. Ellen served during World War II from 1942 to 1944.

Ellen was born in Glenwood City, Wisconsin. She graduated from the Minneapolis Eitel Hospital School of Nursing in 1941 and joined the Army Nurse Corps in March 1942. Her first duty station was at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas until early 1943, when she was reassigned to the 56th Evacuation Hospital at Fort Sam Houston. The unit subsequently deployed to Tunisia before being relocated to Anzio, Italy. On Feb. 10, 1944, the Battle of Anzio reached the hospital where Ellen was on duty, and she sustained severe wounds from the artillery fire. Ellen remained calm and began to move her patients to safety. She died six days later due to the injuries sustained and was buried at the Sicily American Cemetery in Italy.

For her courageous service, Ellen was awarded the Silver Star, the Purple Heart, American Campaign Medal, Europe/Africa/Middle Eastern Campaign and the World War II Victory Medal.

We honor your service, Ellen.

#### **Nominate a Veteran for #VeteranOfTheDay**

Do you want to light up the face of a special Veteran? Have you been wondering how to tell your Veteran they are special to you? VA's #VeteranOfTheDay social media feature is an opportunity to highlight your Veteran and his/her service.

It's easy to nominate a Veteran. All it takes is an email to [newmedia@va.gov](mailto:newmedia@va.gov) with as much information as you can put together, along with some good photos. Visit our blog post about nominating to learn how to create the best submission.

Veterans History Project

This #VeteranOfTheDay profile was created with interviews submitted to the Veterans History Project. The project collects, preserves, and makes accessible the personal accounts of American war Veterans so that future generations may hear directly from Veterans and better understand the realities of war. Find out more at <http://www.loc.gov/vets/>.

#### **Higher Rate of Minor Birth Defects in Children of Women Gulf War Veterans**

04/13/2019

Women who served in the 1990-91 Gulf War have had an increased risk of bearing children with minor birth defects, reports a study in the April issue of the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

The study by Melvin Blanchard, MD, of Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, and colleagues, included 788 children born to 522 Gulf War-era veterans. Major and minor birth defects, diagnosed by direct



# The Sentinel

Vol. 6 No. 4

Vietnam Veterans of America – Chapter 1002 – Wallkill Valley

April 2019

Website: [www.VVA1002.org](http://www.VVA1002.org)

physical examination, were compared for offspring of veterans who were and were not deployed during the Gulf War. Women accounted for 28.5 percent of veterans in the study.

Rates of major birth defects were similar for children of deployed versus non-deployed veterans, overall and on analysis of first-born children. There was also no difference in major birth defects among children whose mothers were deployed.

However, minor birth defects were more frequent among children of deployed women: 22 percent, compared to about five percent of children born to non-deployed women. The odds of having a child with a minor birth defect were about five times higher for deployed women. The difference was mainly related to an increased incidence of minor eye and musculoskeletal abnormalities.

Congenital ptosis, or "drooping eyelid," was the most common birth defect: 13 percent for deployed women versus about two percent for non-deployed women. Exposure to mustard gas and nerve gas were significant predictors of minor birth defects.

Since the mid-1990s, there has been concern that children born to Gulf War veterans might be at increased risk of birth defects, possibly due to toxic exposures during deployment. The new study is unique because birth defects were diagnosed by physical examination, rather than reported by parents.

Although the study shows no increase in major birth defects, it does find a higher risk of minor birth defects in children born to women veterans who were deployed during Gulf War. Dr. Blanchard and colleagues conclude, "Our data emphasize the need to perform a meticulous physical examination looking for birth defects, especially eye and musculoskeletal anomalies, in children born to war veterans who are referred for evaluation of different medical problems."

## **POW/MIA:**

*Submitted by Bob Gilbert*

No report.

## **AGENT ORANGE:**

*Submitted by Owen Martin*

Please see the page 8 for the report.

## **COMMUNITY/PUBLIC AFFAIRS:**

*Submitted by Lou Storms*

No report.

## **Scheduled Meetings:**

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

### 2019

28<sup>th</sup> April

26<sup>th</sup> May

23<sup>rd</sup> June

29<sup>th</sup> July

25<sup>th</sup> August

22<sup>nd</sup> September

27<sup>th</sup> October

24<sup>th</sup> November

**December – TBD – Christmas Party**

## **Calendar of Events:**

Visit [www.VVA1002.org](http://www.VVA1002.org) for information on upcoming events.

May 25<sup>th</sup> – Can shake a Mac & Lindys, Vernon at 9:00 a.m. until ???

27<sup>th</sup> – Memorial Day Parade, Newton 10:00 a.m.

## NEW MEMBERS:

“WELCOME HOME”

No report.

## PASSINGS:

No report.

## Homeless Committee (new):

*Submitted by John Drinkard*

### **Samaritan Inn**

**24 Hour Emergency Hotline / Motel Shelter 973-940-8869**

Samaritan Inn provides emergency food and temporary shelter to homeless families in Sussex County as well as a program of counseling and skill building in family maintenance and growth.

Call the Samaritan Inn for emergency assistance of food and shelter. Samaritan Inn is the only shelter service that responds on a 24 hour / 7 days a week basis. The hotline is available during evening hours, weekends and holidays to arrange safe shelter for families experiencing a sudden homeless emergency until Sussex County Social Services and Samaritan Inn's offices are open for regular business hours.

The goal of Samaritan Inn Emergency Hotline/ Motel Shelter Program is to provide one night of safe haven, until other services can be accessed. This program also helps to decrease mental health concerns in clients by reducing fears and anxieties through providing emergency shelter. The emergency hotline/ motel program is a multiple service provider for emergencies, consultation, community case management, and a referral source for community members.

Samaritan Inn will also provide supportive guidance, information and referrals to link callers to services. The agency will continue collaborative teamwork with resource agencies to engage chronic clients in appropriate services to meet their long term needs, and end dependence on emergency services.

Samaritan Inn  
901 Swartswood Road  
Newton, New Jersey 07860  
973-940-8872  
www.samaritaninn.org  
John V. Drinkard  
[jvdrinkard3@verizon.net](mailto:jvdrinkard3@verizon.net)  
973-865-0605

## CONGRATULATIONS/CONCERNS:

Happy May Anniversaries:

Kathy & John Brady

Happy May Birthday's:

Linda Skellenger

Bob Caggiano

Don Johnson

Dave Lambert

Kathy Brady

## MEMBERS CORNER:

## 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



# The Sentinel

Vol. 6 No. 4

Vietnam Veterans of America – Chapter 1002 – Wallkill Valley

April 2019

Website: [www.VVA1002.org](http://www.VVA1002.org)

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](mailto:FinalTaps@gmail.com).



## **Editors Corner:**

By Linda Skellenger (AVVA)

Please have information to be included in the May newsletter to me by Sunday, May 19<sup>th</sup> by email: [skelle@ptd.net](mailto:skelle@ptd.net) or by snail-mail to:

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

## AGENT ORANGE (continued from page 5):

### **To file a claim for the child of a veteran, you will need the following:**

1. The father's and/or mother's DD214;
2. The marriage certificate of the child's biological parents;
3. The child's birth certificate (the child must have been born after parent's tour in-country);
4. The child's medical records (from birth to current diagnosis);
5. A completed VA Form 21-0304, "Benefits for Certain Children with Disabilities born of Vietnam and Korea Veterans."
6. A completed VA Form 21-22, "Appointment of Veterans Service Organization as Claimant's Representative." This form ensures that you have POA for the parent as well as the child. If the child is over 18 years of age and is competent, the child would file and sign the forms.

Copy the above documents with the VA date stamp; Scan and enter them into VetPro; Keep a copy of the documents in a secure location.

- Send the completed children's claims to the Denver VA Regional Office/Children of Vietnam Veterans Claims.
- Send a copy of the claim to us at National: Vietnam Veterans of America | Attn: Ch. 18 Claim  
8719 Colesville Road | Suite 100 | Silver Spring, MD 20910

It is recommended that a claim for helpless child is also submitted. Using the above logic, file a VA Form 21-526ez for a helpless child with the regional VBA office of jurisdiction. For the Helpless Child claim, include as additional evidence the social security record showing that the individual was totally disabled prior to 18 years of age.

### **To file a claim for the grandchild of a veteran, you will need the following:**

1. Follow Steps 1-3 for the CHILD'S CLAIM (Above);
2. The marriage certificate of the child born to veteran with Boots on the Ground;
3. The birth certificate of the grandchild of the biological grandfather/grandmother;
4. The child's medical records (from birth to current diagnosis);
5. A completed VA Form 21-0304, "Benefits for Certain Children with Disabilities born of Vietnam and Korea Veterans."
6. A completed VA Form 21-22, "Appointment of Veterans Service Organization as Claimant's Representative." This form ensures that you have POA for the parent as well as the child. If the child is over 18 years of age and is competent, the child would file and sign the forms.

Copy the above documents with the VA date stamp; Scan and enter them into VetPro; Keep a copy of the documents in a secure location.

- Send the completed children's claims to the Denver VA Regional Office/Children of Vietnam Veterans Claims.
- Send a copy of the claim to us at National: Vietnam Veterans of America | Attn: Ch. 18 Claim  
8719 Colesville Road | Suite 100 | Silver Spring, MD 20910

*It should be noted that for both the child and the grandchild claims, there is a 90+ percent chance that you will get an administrative denial based on the fact the "mother" did not serve in Vietnam. Follow up with a reconsideration and include medical evidence and a supporting medical opinion that links the birth defects with exposure. We know the grandchildren's claims will be denied, however we are intent on ensuring the grandchild's claim (record) is either made in a separate VBMS folder or is in the folder with the biological grandparent's C-File. This logic must also be followed with the children's claims.*



Semper Fi — Marc McCabe

8719 Colesville Road, Suite 100 | Silver Spring, MD. 20910  
(301) 585-4000 | vva.org

*"Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another."*



*Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another!*