

INTERCHANGE ONLINE



THE OFFICIAL ONLINE NEWSPAPER OF THE
NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL

Vol. 34 Issue 01

Veteran's News that needs to be Read

SPRING 2024



In Memorial—May They Rest In Peace



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Please forward your deceased members
with photo, obituary, cause of death to:

Secretary@nyvietnamvets.org

membership@vva.org

WA #20
Earl F. Bonenblust
Frank E. Lazzaro, Sr.
.Gary Lockamyeir
Gary L. Greenwald
Robert C. Orvis, Jr.

WA #77
Charle Infantino
Kenneth Giroux
Thomas Kutas
Richard Martin
Roger Mazikowski
Michael Prenatt
George Thomson
John Tinti
Norbert Wolf
Andrew Young

WA #82
Charles J Lemke
Thomas R Bruch

WA #193
Kevin J. Bohn

WA #268
Gary L. Greenwald

WA #333
Richard Dezago
Jay Fink

WA #421
Kenneth Klingele
Vincent Little
immy Wright

WA Chapter #978
Rev. Bob Lewis

Japanese Prayer

Though moss
will overgrow
my useless corpse,
the seeds of patriotism
no shall ne'er decay.

Kazu naranu
kono mi wa koke ni
umarete mo
yamato-gokoro
tane wa kuchisezu



VVA-NYSC Meeting Dates 2024

January 5, 6, 7
 April 5, 6, 7
 June 14, 15, 16
 September 27, 28, 29

On-Line INTERCHANGE is the Bimonthly publication of the VVA-NYSC. Comments and contributions are encouraged and can be sent to: **VVAINTERCHANGE@AOL.COM**
 8 Queen Diana Ln Queensbury, NY 12804

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of this organization. Individuals with different viewpoints and opinions are invited to submit them to the VVA-NYSC by the **deadline**. Editor reserves the right to edit for length, grammar and reject any libelous or obscene material.

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President's Report

Ned D. Foote

Something ain't right. Francisco wants us to submit our reports for this Spring edition. As I am writing this it is 2 degrees outside. Hmm. Ok I will do it, but this will be short as not much is going on.

We had our January meeting and did not have a quorum. That is the first time that has ever happened and hopefully the last.

Many attendees were sick and others afraid of a pending snowstorm. Whatever, we had to postpone our Memorial Service that we do every January to remember our members who have passed. We do have over 1500 since our Council began that we know of. I suspect there are many more.

So, we will have this in April. If you wonder, why we would have this in January is because January has always been our most attended meeting.

VVA Chapter #377 gave a presentation on the Hmong issue. A little like the issue with Korean Veterans who will now receive VA care. The Hmong's worked with our CIA in Laos and Vietnam.

Should they not be able to obtain care and compensation? VVA Chapter #377 has been working on this issue and they presented the issue to our National organization as this is a National issue and not NY. They did present to the Minority Affairs Committee in January BOD meeting. I do not have knowledge on how that went but hope VVA Chapter #377 wrote something for this edition.

We did present information to all at the meeting, but we did not vote on anything, and we pushed the meeting forward quickly as we could so all could leave after lunch to avoid the snowstorm that did start shortly after.

From what I understand all made it home safely and that is good.

So, as we look forward to Spring, hope to see a good turnout in the April meeting.

HOLD THE PRESS! It is with a heavy heart to report that our VVA-NYSC Chaplain Rev. Bob Lewis passed on February 1, 2024 Arrangements are being worked on and I will be sending out an E-mail to our Chapter leadership. He always had an inspirational message, for all of us, at each State Council meeting. Our sincere condolences to his family.

REST IN PEACE, Brother

(Continue on pg. 5).

New York Vietnam Veterans Foundation



We provide grants to Vietnam Veterans of America-New York State Council, (VVA-NYSC) a veteran's service organization that advocates for legislation at the State and Federal level of government to provide housing, education, health and mental care services to veterans and their families.

We provide funding for VVA-NYSC Veteran's Service Officer program that assist veterans with their military disability compensation and pension claims from the Veterans Administration.

We advocate for better Federal and State veteran's benefits and veteran preferences in government employment. VVA Chapters within New York State, assist widows, widowers, and orphans of our veterans. The organization organizes programs that enrich the lives of Vietnam veterans, as well as veterans from past, current wars, and their families.

We have an active Agent Orange committee that helps Vietnam veterans receive up to date information on prostate cancer, diabetes, and other chemically-related diseases.

We have an updated database of agencies that provide:

- Listings of Veteran Job Fairs offered by county or veteran service organizations;
- Counseling for veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD);
- Outreach programs that support returning veterans' reentry into civilian life;

For disabled veterans, this can be even more difficult than a tour of duty.

We do this all year long, but without your gift and the gifts of other supporters, nothing can be done to help those that are so deserving of it. However, we have much more to accomplish.

We, the New York Vietnam Veterans Foundation, have a mission to keep advocating for and helping these veterans. We ask you to join us in our mission to provide assistance, guidance, training, and education to all veterans of past, present, and future military conflicts.

So let us continue to work together to ensure our national heroes receive everything that they are entitled to receive for their sacrifice and service to our nation.

President	Francisco Muñiz III	Vice President	Ned D. Foote	Treasurer	Grant T. Coates
	Secretary	Nick Valenti	Directors	Sam Hall	
					Stan May

You can send your tax deductible donation, to the extent allowed by law, directly to the Foundation at NY Vietnam Veterans Foundation, 48 March Lane, Westbury, NY 11590-6302.

NOTE: The Foundation has lost its fundraising contract and is in need of funds to support our Service Officer's Program. Please send donation to the above address.

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Secretary Report

Francisco Muñiz III

Ladies and Gentlemen, Communication between the Chapter leadership and State Council President is very important! If State President Ned Foote had known how many Chapters were not going to attend the last State Council meeting, he would have canceled the meeting. It would have saved much needed funds because we did not have a quorum!

Anyway, Spring is just around the corner, can't wait to feel some warmth. This is the first edition for this year 2024. We reached our 34 Volume edition and we have won 4 VVA National Awards. But most important, elections are in June and all positions are open for President, Vice Pres., Secretary, Treasurer, and the four District Directorships. They are open to any Chapter members who qualifies for the position. Check the VVA-New York State Council By-Laws for further information.

We need more Chapters to send in their Chapter Reports in a timely manner. Also, could you add the District you belong on the Subject line along with your Chapter number. I have informed the delegates about this issue but no one is following it. Maybe I need to translate the information. Here goes:

Además, ¿podría agregar el Distrito al que pertenece en la línea Asunto junto con el número de su Capítulo? He informado a los delegados sobre este tema pero nadie lo sigue; hoặc Ngoài ra, bạn có thể thêm Quận mà bạn thuộc về vào dòng Chủ đề cùng với số Chương của bạn không. Tôi đã thông báo cho các đại biểu về vấn đề này nhưng không có ai theo dõi; also please DO NOT SEND PDF files, I can't copy and paste or don't have the program to do it!

We were not able to make any motions, approve the new budget, (thanks to to Pres. Ned Foote who was able to get a substantial grant from the State of New York,) nor were we able to honor our deceased Chapter members. This will be done in April. We have our yearly budget to approve and other important issues. But we had a great presentation from VVA Chapter #377 on the **Hmong Project to attain Veterans Administration Health benefits & access to Claims benefits**. See page 30 for further information. Does this mean that we need to seek the same benefits for the Montagnards who also were at our sides in many battles?

I have another request that is important. When you send me the names of your deceased members, please add the name of the next of kin and address so that we can send the family a VVA-New York State Council sympathy card.. Unfortunately, we get names that are a year old and that doesn't look very well for us or the family to get a sympathy card.

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Western District Report

Bill Paton

VVA Chapters #20, #77, #193, #268, #459, #865, #978

Western District Report

Bill Paton - District Director Bllpaton36@gmail.com 716-208-5211

We're just back from the New York State Council Meeting. As the weather was turning, we ended up not having a quorum so there was no business that could be voted on and advanced.

It was great to see Scott Dieter from Chapter 193 in Warsaw there. Scott has had some significant medical issues over the last year. As he says he's up walking on the right side and taking nourishment and from my perspective looks good from what he's been through. For those of you who know Scott, I'm sure he would appreciate hearing from you.

Chapter 20, 77, 865 and 978 were able to make the trip to give our District a good showing. Our next meeting is the weekend of the 5th of April. There will be a lot of business to discuss, plus Remembering Our Deceased/Power Point with a reading from the good Reverend Lewis.

I could go on about the value of a Jeep in the snow, but I might start a back and forth with those driving Trucks, etc.

Be Safe

VVA Chapter #77 Report

Paul Pietrowski

Faces of the Fallen, 250 tiles made by the students of Cheektowaga Middle School and donated to our museum



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VVA #268, Western District

Gordie Bellinger

March of 2023 was the 50th Anniversary that Niagara County Vietnam Veterans Prisoner of War (POW's) came home, General George E. "Bud" Day and Master Sergeant John T. Anderson.

The Vietnam Veterans of America, Niagara County Chapter #268, Had a traveling display in honor of these POW's. Over the past 9 months this display was shown at the following location:

Month of March Niagara County Court House

Wilson Historical Society

Lockport Historical Society

Niagara Falls High School

Niagara Falls Air Force Base

Dale Center, Lockport New York

Niagara County Community College

November 2023 the unveiling of the new Veterans Memorial at Niagara County Community College took place, Chapter #268 played a big part in seeing that this Memorial was a reality.

December 2023 the Chapter #268 took part in placing a holiday wreath at the Niagara Hospice Veterans Memorial.

During these winter days take the time to do a buddy check with your fellow Veteran. We need each other.

**Coach me and I
Will learn
Challenge me and I
Will grow
Believe in me and I
Will win.**

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VVA Chapter Member Profile

Dennis Jordan,

Dennis graduated from South Park High School in Buffalo, New York in 1966 and went to work at Bethlehem Steel. Uncle Sam came knocking at his mailbox in 1968 and he entered the Army. Like most of us from this area, basic was at Fort Dix, NJ.

Went on to Ft Belvoir, VA where he was trained in Generator Repair. His next stop was Vietnam . And guess what? They didn't need any 52B20 (Generator Repair Operators) at the 1st Signal Brigade, Phu Lam Signal Battalion as normal with the Army.

Dennis spent his tour as Special Police guarding the Battalion. He came home as a Specialist 4 with an Honorable Discharge in hand and set his sights on his future.

Dennis attended the University of Buffalo on the GI Bill. After leaving UB he started a career in the Chemical Industry for 38 years as a Business Development Specialist, covering Canada, Mexico and Western Europe.

Dennis has been married to his wife Janet for 47 years. I believe she should get a medal!!!! They have a daughter and two grandchildren.

UPDATE INFORMATION!

Last month we highlighted Joe Pasek. What's important to show is the circle of life of the Vets returning home. Inadvertently some of Joe's family was not highlighted so we'll list all again.

Joe is married to his wife Chris for 52 years. They have 2 daughters, 2 granddaughters, 2 grandsons and 3 great grandsons.



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Veteran Incarcerated in the Justice System

Nicholas C. Valenti

It has taken a while but the new liaison for the Veterans Group of Auburn (VGoA) and myself has taken hold thanks to the contribution of yarn from a 501 (C)(3) not-for-profit locally established yarn organization. They call themselves “Sew What” and have taken the Auburn Correctional Facility Incarcerated veterans under their wing when it comes to supplying the crochet squad with materials that will enable them to continue with their annual Christmas Giveaway held in December of each year.

This year started out with a donation of approximately 170 plus skeins of yarn to be used to making scarves, gloves, hats and toys for veterans and community social enhancement groups that serve the needs of children and families such as food pantry supporters located out of area churches, participating veteran service organizations and local Salvation Army locales. This is just the beginning, but at least we have a base line of activity aimed at developing a network of support for our incarcerated veterans. The donation is culled to ensure no ban colors are submitted in accordance with Department of Corrections guidelines in New York State. The colors being delivered via a gate pass on or about Thursday, January 25, 2024 are: White, Brown, Red, Green, Pink, Purple, and Yellow. All shades of these colors are acceptable. Any other colors would be refused admittance to the facility as the remaining colors could be fashioned in “gang” symbols. Something that Corrections in New York State absolutely rejects.

I will be working with the Imam and anticipate receiving a meeting and activity schedule for the coming year that would entail general meetings, board meetings, multiple veteran observation days and of course the Christmas Giveaway. These efforts when supplemented by support from Vietnam Veterans of America Chapters throughout the state can sustain the working group in their activities and can encourage them to continue to contribute to the betterment of our local communities in other Corrections Facilities. Auburn Correctional has established Monday evenings as a crochet squad night for their members to practice the skill of crocheting.

With the continued support of Sew What – an organization that is dedicated to recirculate usable items constructively, foster education in needlecrafts and provide a community space for all individuals to gather to practice their skills the squad is a perfect match. Coupled with the Sew What mission and the uses of the items made by the incarcerated veterans this fabric weaving, sewing, quilting, crochet, and knitting organization has the ability to breathe fresh air into the Auburn Correctional crochet squad.

I am looking forward to a rewarding working relationship with the new liaison as we consult on future ideas and prospects for the continued existence of the VGoA.

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Central District Report

Nick Valenti

VVA Chapters #85, #103, #377, #480, #704, #708, #803, #827, #896, #944

Central District continues to be a place where things happen. Since our last Interchange distribution in December Chapters have kept me running. My own Chapter #704 is no exception. It began with the annual Wreaths Across America ceremony. I had the privilege of acting as Master of Ceremonies. Just as if it were a mirror image of 2022, the 2023 event hosted by the Saints Peter & John Episcopal Church of Auburn, saw a tremendous outpouring of wreath presenters and local veteran's organizations. We had forty-four presenters with Gold Star and Blue Star families joined by veteran's groups representing the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Italian American War Veterans, Army National Guard, Law Enforcement, First Responders and Ministries all together under the same roof with Vietnam Veterans of America in support of honoring those who have served, are serving and the sacrifices of their respective families and the communities they come from.

It was announced at the end of the ceremony that Cayuga County was beginning a fundraising effort effective the first of the year (January 1, 2024) to establish a joint Gold Star / Blue Star Mothers Memorial. The cost is estimated at \$40,000.00 and the design has been approved by our local American Gold Star Mothers (AGSM) organization. People and organizations wishing to help out can make contributions to "VVA #704, and mail it to P.O. Box 1484, Auburn, New York 13021. Businesses and Corporation can make out their checks to "Cayuga County Veterans Memorial Committee and mail their contribution to P.O. Box 1484, Auburn, New York 13021. Any contributions to the Memeorial Committee will be acknowledged in accordance with IRS guidelines. Please make a notation on the check or money order identifying the contribution as for the American Gold Star Mothers Memorial.

An announcement was made that the Department of New York, American Gold Star Mothers will have their Department Convention on April 26, 2024 at the Holiday Inn, 75 North Street, Auburn, New York 13021 at 7:00 PM. Admission is free. Participating in the ceremony are American Legion Posts – Carnicelli – Indelicato 1776 & Swietoniowski – Kopecheck 1324, Auburn Veterans of Foreign War Post 1975 with our Army National Guard, 102nd MP Battalion.

The next day a Banquet is planned at the same location, tickets are \$50.00 per person. Raffles and cash bar Cocktails at 6PM, Dinner at 7PM. All dinner tickets must be purchased by March 1, 2024. No tickets will be sold at the door.

Just fill out the registration form below and mail to Tammy Bell, 7055 Basswood Road, Auburn, New York 13021. (Next page)

[T.E.A.M.](#)

Together Everyone Accomplishes More

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REGISTRATION FORM

New York State Department
American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.
87th Convention

Deadline for submission: March 1, 2024

GUEST REGISTRATION

Name _____

Friday, April 26, 2024

Memorial Service
(circle one)

Yes No No Cost

Saturday, April 27, 2024

Adult Banquet Buffet Dinner \$50.00 per person

Each Guest must submit a registration form.

Journal Ads is a way to raise money for the convention. AGSM are happy to accept ads from Veterans group, family and friends.

Journal Ad Rates

Full Page Ad (8.5 x 11) - \$120.00

Half Page Ad (8.5 x 5.5) - \$65.00

Quarter Page Ads (4 x 2.5) - \$35.00

Please submit a camera – ready ad (jpeg files) to

Holly Baker at hbaker69@roadrunner.com

“In the subject area of the email include the Organization name please.”

Make Checks payable to: AGSM

Mail checks to:

Holly Baker
12850 Dowd Road
Springville, NY 14141

Deadline for ads is March 1, 2024

Please Note: We will be unable to accept ads after this deadline. If you pay for a full-page ad, you will receive a journal (Continue on pg. 12)

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Don't forget the anticipated 2024 Vietnam Veterans National Leadership And Educational Conference this year. It is currently scheduled for August 20th – 24th in Reno, Nevada. Keep your eye out for more information as it becomes available. The Veteran magazine is a great source of information for this Convention.

We aren't finished with 2024, plans are in the works for a concert to be held on Saturday, September 14th at Falcon Park, Auburn, New York 13021. There are plans to have at least three bands each representing a different genre of music. The lead band is "Held Hostage" with an anticipated start time of 3:00 PM. As more information is developed, I will keep everyone updated. A rain date has been set for October 5th.

Chapter #704 is also working with the Italian American War Veterans Post Frank Calimeri Post #9 in Auburn, New York to bring some Christmas cheer to our veterans in a number of Assisted Living locations in the Auburn - Cayuga County area. Currently there are 41 veterans who have accepted overtures to receive Christmas packages from veteran's groups. If all goes well the program will be expanded to include more Assisted Living veterans who voluntarily want to participate.

To round out the year 2024 will see another Wreath Across America ceremony hosted by the Saints Peter & John Episcopal Church. We have been fortunate enough to secure the same location for the ceremony for approximately 15 years with a break due to COVID 19. The 2024 year will be especially good given we have secured sponsors for the wreath presenters. Our local businesses have stepped up and have pre purchased the wreaths necessary for a successful event.

Vietnam Veterans Chapter #377 continues to lead the way in promoting veteran interests in Central New York. Their newsletter comes out on a regular basis with a pictorial presentation of almost a daily awareness of activities supported by photography and a motivated membership. Gary Napieracz will not be outdone by anybody. He has taken up the cause of the Hmong fighters from Vietnam. Leading the same fight that was done on behalf of our Korean allies. Same story different warriors all dealing with the same cause. We will learn more of his efforts when he and representatives from his Chapter, and members of the warriors who fought by our side meet with the Minority Committee chaired by Gumersindo Gomez in Silver Spring, Maryland later in January, 2024. Mr. Gomez and his Committee are coming off a great victory celebrating the signing into Law "The Korean American VALOR ACT." That law signed on November 10, 2023 by the President, will allow Korean American Vietnam War veterans to receive medical services from the VA. Our wishes are for Gary and his supporters to have a successful meeting. Nothing happens overnight. The Korean Americans took six years of advocacy to be successful. This journey has to begin sooner rather than later. The best to Gary and Gumersindo. Your work is cut out for you.

To round out this report I would like to thank VVA Chapter President Tom Buono (#944) for an enjoyable luncheon hosted by his Chapter. In attendance were politicians, law enforcement, area veteran service organizations so numerous I would embarrass myself if I tried to identify them individually. Let's just say Tom has developed a network of support organizations doing the work of helping veterans and their families second to none in Central District. I would also like to thank Chapter President Dan DiFlorio (#103)) he was at the luncheon with me and we celebrated a great day of comradery as we broke bread with our brothers and sister in Central District.

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On another positive note I wish to thank all Chapters in Central District for their hard work on behalf of veterans. We have accomplished so much in such a short period of time. Oneonta (085); Syracuse (103); Dryden (377); Owego (480); Auburn (704); Elmira (803); Herkimer (827); and Utica (944) are examples of veterans living by the mantra *"Never Again Will One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another."* We do because others haven't.

I hope everyone had a beautiful Christmas and a Happy New Year. God Bless and stay safe. I will see you at our next State Council meeting in April, 2024, in Nichols, New York at Tioga Downs. Remember to make your reservations in advance and have your Tax-Exempt forms with you. We have a lot of work to do and I look forward to working with each of you as you see fit.

VVA Chapter #377 Report

Gary Napieracz – President

VVA Chapter #377 participated in the Wreaths Across America at the New York State Veterans Cemetery -Finger Lakes at Romulus, New York on December 16, 2023.

Track VA Claim Appeal Or Decision Review Status On Line. If you have a VA disability claim or appeal or decision review and you are wondering what their status is, you can check on line to find out. The following VA site will give you step by step instructions for checking their status. Go to www.va.gov/resources/how-to-check-your-va-claimappeal-or-decision-review-status-online/

Taps Song, is it?

There is a popular myth about the origin and history of Taps. However, the true story is that in July 1862, after the Seven Days battles at Harrison's Landing (near Richmond), Virginia, the wounded Commander of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Division, V Army Corps, Army of the Potomac, General Daniel Butterfield re-worked, with his bugler Oliver Wilcox Norton, another bugle call, "Scott Tattoo," to create Taps. He thought that the regular call for Lights Out was too formal. Military Taps was adopted throughout the Army of the Potomac and finally confirmed by orders. It wasn't soon after that other Union units began using Taps. It became so popular that even a few Confederate units began using it as well. After the war, Taps became an official bugle call. Col. James A. Moss, in his Officer's Manual first published in 1911, gives an account of the initial use of Taps at a military funeral: "During the Peninsular Campaign in 1862, a soldier of Tidball's Battery A of the 2nd Artillery was buried at a time when the battery occupied an advanced position concealed in the woods. It was unsafe to fire the customary three volleys over the grave, on account of the proximity of the enemy, and it occurred to Capt. Tidball that the sounding of Taps would be the most appropriate ceremony that could be substituted." Even though it's a bugle signal, many started putting words to Taps.

Words to Taps (Note: there are no "official" words to Taps but the most popular Taps Lyrics are see next page)

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TAPS

Day is done, gone the sun,
 From the hills, from the lake, from the skies.
 All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.
 Go to sleep, peaceful sleep, may the soldier
 or sailor, God keep. On the land or the deep, Safe in sleep.
 Love, good night, must thou go,
 when the day, and the night need thee so?
 All is well. Speedeth all To their rest.
 Fades the light;
 And afar Goeth day,
 And the stars Shineth bright,
 Fare thee well;
 Day has gone, night is on.
 Thanks and praise, for our days,
 'Neath the sun, Neath the stars, 'Neath the sky,
 As we go, this we know, God is nigh.

Agent Orange/Dioxin Committee Report

Bill Paton - Chair 716-208-5211 bllpaton36@gmail.com

OPERATION RANCH HAND

There is so much written considering this subject, it's hard to find a starting place. There's a book by William A. Buckingham Jr, The Air Force and Herbicides in Southeast Asia 1961-1971.

This book goes back to the Second World War. Testing that was done at Camp Drum here in New York in 1959 proved the spraying of herbicides, that have been used by the services since the 20's, could be actually used as a defoliant. From 1961 to 1972 the US Army used the herbicide Agent Orange to eliminate food crops and areas of concealment. It caused significant environmental damage, including eroding tree cover. It's estimated Ranch Hand sprayed 19 million gallons of defoliant and herbicides over areas of South Vietnam. Areas of Laos and Cambodia to a lesser amount. The herbicides used were sprayed at up to 50 times the concentration than for normal agricultural use. Monsanto Corporation and Dow Chemical were the main manufacturers.

For most of the war Operation Ranch Hand was based at Bien Hoa Air Base (1966-1970) for operations in the Mekong Delta region. This is where the U.S. Navy patrol boats operated from 1964 to 1971 operated out of Da Nang. This covered the central coast and the Ho Chi Minh trail Regions. (Continue on pg. 15)

(Continue from pg. 14) Agent Orange/Dioxin

I could go on with other bases that were used to cover other areas of South Vietnam.

Now the human aspect. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs 2.6 million U.S. military personnel were exposed and hundreds of thousands of veterans are eligible for treatment for Agent Orange - related illnesses. This is only the beginning of my breakdown of Operation Ranch Hand. Unless something more important comes through I will be concentrating on this subject for this column. There are too many studies for me to say exactly what the final say is. One of our Chapter Member is part of the study. Anyone who reads this and is part of the study would like to share information with me please contact me.

Eastern District Report

Sam Hall

VVA Chapters #8, #49, #79, #140, #333, #541, #869

VVA Chapter #333 Report

Roy Tschudy Past president 2020-2022 ldtrt16@aol.com

Since I am not quite sure when the information requested for the VVA. State INTERCHANGE NEWSLETTER is due, I am do a preemptive "strike" as the snow is falling along with time at hand.

CHAPTER 333 NEWS/UPDATE

Greetings to all with well wishes for a happy and healthy 2024 New Year for members and their loved ones as well. The 2023 year ended with a "Bang" for chapter 333 as we welcomed three new lifetime members as a direct result of our continued fund raising efforts, in total we added nine new members for the calendar year.

Looking back on 2023 as a whole, our chapter had yet another successful time on a host of items. The SCHOOL MEMORIES OUTREACH PROGRAM led by members Howard Goldin & Ed Frank inclusive of many chapter members volunteering taught the MEMORIES PROGRAM at both Nanuet HS and Felix Festa Middle School (20 years and counting!) to students and faculty alike. Both a teaching and learning process intertwined for both the members as well as students and staff.

Our yearly JUNE PIG ROAST was attended by a large group of veterans and supporters that numbered over 300! Music was provided by the band BEAUTY AND THE GREASE performing OLDIES HITS FOR OLDIES IN ATTENDANCE! Two band members happen to be chapter members as well, Bass Guitar is Don Pillar along with Al Dagistino playing the Drums, both are accomplished musicians who are blessed with wonderful singing voices. A grand time was had by all that day, all except the guest of honor, Mr. Oinker himself who made the ultimate sacrifice for the event, R.I.P. Porky.

A congratulations is in order on two accounts, the first for MARK WOODS an Iraq combat war veteran

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(Continue from pg. 15) VVA Chapter #333 Report

who was selected by chapter 333 for consideration and ultimately elected/chosen as THE ROCKLAND COUNTY VETERAN OF THE YEAR. Mark has and continues to perform many functions aiding veterans in need, a humanitarian with compassion for those in military as well as those simply looking for help, well deserved!

Second, congratulations to chapter member MARCUS ARROYO, who was just recently, received a CONGRESSIONAL PROCLAMATION from the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES via CONGRESSMAN MIKE LAWLER. For any who may be interested in learning of the credentials of MARCUS, please go ahead and Google MARCUS ARROYO NAVY SEAL PURPLE HEART. You will read and learn why he was honored; Hollywood makes movies about military personnel like him.

Over this past summer, fairly new member PETER MATTHEWS who joined our chapter upon a chance meeting during one of our fund raisers at the Palisades Mall, was the subject of a Netflix video along with a Chanel 2 expose. Peter served in Vietnam 1966-67 with the 1st Battalion 12th Cavalry as a rifleman, he came across and found an enemy K.I.A Diary after a skirmish. The Diary in and of itself was beautifully written and illustrated by the dead NVA soldier. Peter had kept his item in his possession for over 55 years not knowing who or where to turn it to. After discussing this with a few chapter members, Peter was directed and did find via the internet and I believe GRANT COATES (STATE VVA K.I.A. REP.) where to return the diary.

Long story short, Peter and his wife was invited by the Government of Vietnam to visit (all expense paid by the Vietnamese) He completed the task meeting with the family of the enemy soldier. Peter has said the entire story from beginning to end has proven cathartic to for him. A wonderful story, we are all proud to have Peter as a member of our chapter.

Chapter 333 has been most fortunate to be led over the past 2 years by our president, RAY FURLONG. It will be near impossible for the next president to equal the job Ray has done as president. Ray is devoted to all members past and present, pays attention to all matters big or small, he handles everything with calm and compassion, I am sure that I speak for all of us in the chapter when I say, THANK YOU RAY!!!

In the month of May our chapter WATCHFIRES and as is always the case led by the WATCHFIRE commanders, is SECOND TO NONE. Our fires are lit along the HUDSON RIVER same as General George Washington himself directed back during the REVOLUTIONARY WAR. This 24 hour event located in four separate areas is well attended by hundreds of people, veterans and civilians respectfully showing their patriotic side.

In 2023 the chapter HANDCYCLE PROGRAM was retired and is now part of our legacy. Over a ten year period the program with the assistance of just about each and every member at one time or another contributed via fund raising and or donations raised (Over \$100,000) 14 HANDCYCLES, donated to veterans with leg amputations/spinal cord injuries to disabled veterans from N.Y. to Tennessee to Florida to California. In addition to the 14 cycles, we also sent 2 Trike Bikes, 2 Mountain Bikes, 1 Canoe, 1 Kayak along with special equipment needed. We are both proud yet humbled to have aided our "Brothers & Sisters" in need and hopefully have made a small positive impact on each of their lives.

In 2023 Chapter 333 implemented a 2nd year of a "529 Education Program" directed to our very own

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grandchildren via even more fund raisers completed. This is a legacy program for our loved ones, after all, we aid and help so many others for as assortment of things, it was time to look after our very one for a change, so far to date another successful endeavor by our chapter. Not to mention, we also provide SCHOLARSHIPS for veterans attending a local Community College, HS. students as well as those in a middle school for showing pride and patriotism to and for our Country.

2024 is now upon us! Our very first meeting in January has produced yet another new member. We continue to grow as a chapter, we continue with the mantra of our brother organizations,

NEVER AGAIN WILL ONE GENERATION OF VETERANS ABANDON ANOTHER!

**Tom Carroll sent the following information
Rockland County Veterans Service Agency**

We wanted start the year by highlighting a valuable resource for veterans who are actively enrolled in VA Healthcare and become hospitalized outside of a VA Medical Facility.

In response to the increasing number of veterans facing hospital stays and subsequent challenges after their discharge from the hospital, we wanted to make sure you all knew about the VA's Coordinated Transitional Care Program (CTRAC). This program is intended for veterans who are currently hospitalized and will be discharged to their home and need assistance with that transition, including health care at home, rehabilitation, etc. To be screened for the program, the veteran must reach out to their VA doctor, nurse, or social worker and request a referral to the CTRAC program. To learn more, call 845-831-2000 for Andrea or extension 214129 for Patricia.

Additionally, if you or a veteran you know is hospitalized, please remember to notify the VA within 72 hours from the start of the stay to ensure reimbursement for the emergency care.

If you have any questions or concerns, or need additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out to our office at 845-6385244.

Sincerely, Elizabeth (Lisa) Rubio
Veterans Service Officer

The Joseph P. Dwyer Veteran Peer Support Program is named in honor of Joseph P. Dwyer, a US Army Medic in the Iraq War who, in the earliest days of the invasion in 2003, was pictured cradling a wounded boy while his unit was fighting its way up the Euphrates to Baghdad. Dwyer's post-war struggles with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) resulted in his untimely and tragic death in 2008.

The Dwyer Program was created by then-New York State Senator Lee Zeldin. It began in Suffolk County and has expanded to every county in New York state. Zeldin served four years in the Army active duty, deployed in 2006 to Tikrit, Iraq. Beginning in 2012, the Program now offers peer to peer counseling for Veterans suffering from PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and any Veteran looking to reintegrate into civilian society.

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Advancing Workforce Equity (AWE) is designed for people with disabilities, Veterans, and the formerly incarcerated to provide training for jobs in high growth industries. Attached is a Flyer for our new AWE (Advancing Workforce Equity) program. Please share it with the people you serve. This is a great opportunity to receive free job training in high-growth industries along with work clothing, supplies and transportation.

Check with:

Ismael (Izzy) Quintana
Veteran Outreach Coordinator
Joseph P. Dwyer
Veteran Peer Support Program
Rockland County (Vet to Vet)
Cell: (845) 587-6497



The Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) is looking to develop a birth defects "registry" of Vietnam veterans' children that were born with "problems".

Please pass this along to other Vietnam veterans on your mailing list.

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DWYER Hosts a Radio Show “Thank You for Your Service” on WRCR 1700 AM. It will be hosted by Rockland County Joseph P. Dwyer Peer to Peer Support Director Mark Woods and our next show is scheduled for today at 9:30 am. We will discuss Veteran issues with special invited guests and promote various upcoming Veteran events in and around Rockland County.

The hourly show will be aired on the 4th Monday of each month at 9:30am. Veterans can call in and ask questions. The number to call in is: 845-429-1700. Please tune in to listen and spread the word throughout our Veteran community!

Archived episodes of podcasts can be listened to via BRIDGES website or SPOTIFY at:

<https://www.bridgesrc.org/programs-services/vet2vet/>

https://open.spotify.com/show/5Z1ShsGpvO9drQJBECorIK?go=1&sp_cid=af24acb4488155bfd3ace360d9e8dc2&utm_source=embed_player_p&utm_medium=desktop&nd=1

Somatics - Therapy

Dana Kregel, certified Somatic Therapist, former BRIDGES employee and Rockland County Re-entry Task Force Coordinator, guest presenter at Dwyer MBHT, currently living in Italy with her husband who is serving in the US Army, has offered the Rockland Dwyer community, an opportunity to explore Somatic concepts and techniques.

Somatic Therapy, also known as body psychotherapy, places importance on what we experience in the mind and the body as well as the connection between the two. This is an additional tool in our Wellness Toolbox. Dana is willing to hold Zoom sessions.

Please let us know if you are interested. Mark Woods can be contacted at mwoods@bridgesrc.org, office phone (845) 624-1366 ext 104 or cell phone (845)-521-9440.

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Southern District Report

John Rowan

VVA Chapters #11, #32, #72, #82, #126, #421

Southern District Director

John Rowan

On 12/4/23 I attended a monthly meeting of Nassau County Chapter #82 of Vietnam Veterans of America. There was a good attendance and I introduced myself and discussed the history of VVA. I remarked on the great things we have accomplished for the Post 9/11 veterans and how proud we can be of what we have accomplished.

On 12/21/23 I joined a few other members of Queens Chapter #32 of VVA and the Chapter bus to assist Council Member Robert Holden to deliver donated coats to the Borden Avenue Veterans

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Residence. This also gave us the opportunity to meet the new operators of BAVR, ICL the Institute for Community Living. Because they were closed to the public due to COVID we had stopped doing events at the facility. With the new operators we hope to start assisting them again in the future.

VVA Chapter #11 Report - Suffolk

Clarence F. Simpson

-VVA 11 donated a Christmas tree to the Hospice and CLC nursing home at the Northport VAMC.

-Dr. Antonio Sanchez, Director, Northport VAMC, and VSO leaders get a tour of services offered to veterans and the Patchogue Community Based Outreach Center (CBOC).



Chapter 11 donated a full Holiday Dinner to our veterans whom are residents in the Northport VAMC Rehabilitation Unit.

-VVA 11 VP Clarence Simpson with Vanessa Brown, Chief of OEF OIF IEF veteran service at Northport VAMC, Rogerlyn Velez ESQ of Angel For Warriors, Law Offices. Accepting Christmas gifts for our War On Terror veterans and their family.

- Chapter 11 has awarded its first recipient \$ 1000.00 from the VVA11 / PFC Garfield M. Langhorn Memorial Scholarship Fund.

-VVA 11 was requested to participate in the Inauguration Ceremony of Suffolk County Executive. The Greenjackets had the honor of doing the Pledge Of Allegiance.



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- VVA 11 will induct 2 members of the chapter into the Chapel Of The Four Chaplains; Joseph Cognitore , Thomas Wharton in February 2024.

- Chapter 11 will also participate in the East Islip St. Patrick's Day Parade March 2024.

- VVA 11 will donate refreshments, snacks and music entertainment at the Long State Veterans Home at Stony Brook NY, for our veterans in residence at this facility.

VVA Chapter #32 Report - Queens

Linda Robins

As a follow up to our last report

Nov 17th – Veteran's Lunch at Councilwoman Vickie Palladino's office – we present her with a plaque her continued support of veterans.

Dec 2nd – Chapter Christmas Party – we had over seventy-five people in attendance which included many politicians from Brooklyn and Queens.

President Leonard Williams was elected Grand Marshall for the 2024 Memorial Day Parade sponsored by the United Veterans.

The Chapter took part in a coat drive sponsored by Bob Holden's office for the Borden Avenue Veteran's Homeless Shelter. We also brought toiletries donated by Sam Berger's office.

We are presently in the process of collaborating with local politicians to bring toiletries and clothing to St Albans's NYS Veterans' nursing home and the Borden Avenue Homeless Shelter for Valentine's Day.

Future Plans – we are also in the process of planning get together for the residences of St Albans's and Borden Avenue.

VVA Chapter 72 Report - Brooklyn, NY

Danny Friedman - President

VVA 72 initiated a meeting with the new director of the New York Harbor Healthcare System of which Brooklyn VAMC is part of. Director Tim Graham clarified that when the Domiciliary reopens it was not going to be a shelter for homeless veterans, but part of the VAMC's substance use disorder program, the next step after detox and 15 West (inpatient rehab). He also advised us the new MRI room is opening soon, the Women's Clinic has added a monographer, and Brooklyn VAMC has a new acupuncturist.

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We have received thankyou letters from the VAMC for the pizza parties we sponsored for our fellow veterans rehabbing in 15West, and for the holiday party we held there with Santa distributing gift bags of warm clothing. We also provided the same items for the homeless veterans at the SUS Bushwick Veterans Shelter, and we received a very nice thankyou letter from them along with photos of grateful veterans. We bought about \$1500.00 worth of new clothing items requested from the VAMC CDCE to distribute to needy veterans.

The week of February 11th is the National Salute to Veteran Patients. We are getting together Tuesday, February 13th at our office in Room 5-219 to stuff 55 gift bags with warm hats and thermo-socks and then visit the 55 in-patients at the VAMC to hand the gift bags out. We feel the personal connection is important so that our fellow veterans know they are not forgotten. In addition, we are providing another pizza party for 15 West on Valentine's Day.

VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) Report

Danny Friedman - Chair

As noted previously VAVS has been rebranded by the VA as CDCE (Center for Development and Civic Engagement. Strange that the geniuses in DC didn't think that the part of the VAMC's that work almost solely with volunteers, did need the word "volunteer" in its title. Brooklyn CDCE is building up to the activities for The National Salute Veteran Patients, another rebranding from DC of what has always been the National salute to Hospitalized Veterans. NY Harbor has finally brought aboard a new director after a vacancy of more than a year. Greg Porter is his name and he hails from the Red Cross.

There were no reports received from any other VAVS representatives.

VVA Chapter #82 Report

Richard Guevara—1st Vice Pres.

On December 2, 2023 ten members of our chapter were honored at the reunion of the Long Island Honor Flight at the Museum of American Armor.

On December 4, 2023 John Rowan, Southern District Director, attended our monthly chapter meeting. He spoke to the attendees and answered all their questions.

On December 7, 2023, our color guard and members of our Chapter participated in the Annual Pearl Harbor dropping of the rose's ceremony at the American Airpower Museum. These roses were loaded on a plane and dropped off the waters of the Statute of Liberty in remembrance of Pearl Harbor.

On January 2, 2024 Chapter 82 donated monies raised to the Nassau County Veterans fund for its food bank.

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On January 3, 2024 the Chapter President Steve Bonom and Vice President Rich Guevara were invited to attend, and did attend, the 2024 inauguration of the Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor and Town Board.

On January 4, 2024 Chapter 82 made a donation to the Hagedorn Little Village school, an annual donation, which the chapter makes during the holiday season.

On January 9, 2024 three grandchildren of our members received scholarships at our monthly meeting: Kyle Geddes, Ronan Mac Gilvray and Spenser Jacobs. In addition, Jim White and Joe Dubon were awarded a plaque in recognition of their contributions to the Chapter as chairmen of the Poppy and Membership Committees respectively.

THE HAGEDORN LITTLE VILLAGE SCHOOL

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 82
PO Box 412 Hicksville. NY 1 1801

Dear Veterans:

On behalf of everyone at The Hagedorn Little Village School. Jack Joel Center for Special Children, we would like to thank you for the very kind and generous gift of \$1000.00.

Your generosity and thoughtfulness has enabled Little village to provide many programs and services that are needed to help our students reach their maximum potential'

Thank you again for helping to make a difference in the lives of our Childrens!

Jon Feingold, Ph.D
Executive Director

It was great seeing you!
Thanks for all your support!



Homeless Veterans Committee Report

Jay Book – Chair

2023 Homeless Veterans review.

Goal #1 – House 38,000 homeless veterans

Goal #2 – Ensure that the housed veterans do not return to homelessness or if they do become homeless again to get them housed again.

Goal #3 – Enable the housed veterans to stabilize their lives and remain stable.

The VA met it's 38,000 goals before the end of the year using what they are calling a one team approach across the country.

www.va.gov/homeless

Where are the VA Homeless Veterans specialists located. Not the VA Regional Offices (RO), the VA local clinics or the VA Medical Centers (MC). They are located in the areas as the RO and MC but in the location of the homeless population.

Message From Monica Diaz, Executive Director, VHA Homeless Programs Office

Practicing intentional gratitude and appreciation is always important, but this time of year really brings those reflections into sharper focus. Every person deserves a safe and affordable home. Without it, every other aspect of their life suffers — their health, employment, and overall well-being.

I'm grateful for the team we have working to end Veteran homelessness and improve the lives of those who have served. And I'm truly appreciative of our collective efforts to help our Veterans find housing and stay housed — today and every single day of the year.

State of Women Veteran Homelessness

This past month, we looked at the State of Women Veteran homelessness by sharing a few stories from women who have served and how homelessness affected their lives.

Over the years, we've spotlighted Veterans [Kimberly Carrillo](#), [Natasha McCoy](#), and [Alex Dobson](#), and they illustrated just how homelessness can impact the lives of female Veterans.

Thankfully, these women are among the over 1 million Veterans and their family members whom VA has connected with permanent housing or with services that prevented them from falling into homelessness since 2010. This includes more than 25,000 female Veterans served in fiscal 2023 through VA's Homeless Programs.

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But we recognize that VA needs to accelerate efforts to provide [housing solutions](#), [health care](#), and [community employment services](#) to address some of the unique challenges faced by nearly 2 million female Veterans — the fastest growing segment of the Veteran population — and their families.

Reducing and preventing homelessness among female Veterans begins by recognizing some of the contributing factors unique to this population. This includes trauma, [military sexual assault](#), [intimate partner violence](#), poverty, and single parenthood.

Female Veterans not yet connected to VA should know that they matter and deserve a safe place to call home. We know that homelessness doesn't always look the same for men and women, and so the solutions need to adapt to those differences.

What is universal in our approach is a focus on [Housing First](#). Evidence shows that this is the most effective way to end Veteran homelessness. Our goal is to help Veterans get or stay housed and connect them to other wraparound supports needed to remain housed — health care, job training, legal and education assistance, and more.

To assist in these efforts, VA has programs for female Veterans with children; [free, confidential, specialized care for women survivors of MST and other trauma](#); gender-specific health care services; community employment services; and much more.

Combatting Misperceptions

Let's talk about false perceptions and myths when it comes to homelessness. The LA Times [recently highlighted an opinion article](#) on drug use and homelessness. It sought to combat some of the stereotypes around this topic, like that substance abuse is one of the leading causes behind the loss of housing. Interestingly, research has debunked this myth — specifically, the [California Statewide Study of People Experiencing Homelessness](#), which consisted of more than 3,200 adults. The study found that “50% of [homeless individuals] have not used any drugs (methamphetamine, cocaine, crack cocaine or nonprescription opioids) in the last six months.”

It's important to spotlight and combat these misperceptions so that the facts can be understood, and stakeholders can come together to develop appropriate solutions. The article [noted](#) that “by gaining a more accurate picture of drug use among unhoused people, policymakers and community groups can provide better harm-reduction and treatment services, and housing resources to those struggling to get by.”

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And that's exactly what we strive for here at VA, consistently working to understand, build, and improve a system of resources and programs that supports our nation's heroes and continually evolves to meet them where they are at.

PTSD Committee Report

Tom Harris – Chair

Loneliness and/or being lonely is getting a lot of press lately especially since the US Surgeon General warned of a 'loneliness epidemic'. I'm thinking that there could be a correlation with loneliness and PTSD symptoms. Maybe not. Loneliness is not rooted in a traumatic event. But isolation is a symptom of PTSD.

Loneliness has many causes that can include changes in your life's circumstances. Loneliness can show itself in feelings of sadness, emptiness and being disconnected. You can feel loneliness in a crowded room.

Covid pandemic certainly doesn't help the feeling of loneliness. During the last three years (or is it four now?) I have stopped participating in many activities that once filled my need to be social thanks to my covid-phobia. I'm not complaining about the decisions I've made regarding staying semi-isolated. It's a health issue for me but does slide up to being a mental health issues as well. I did notice early on during the covid pandemic that I had become disconnected from friends, especially when my part time retirement job as a fitness instructor ended. Those forced to work at home also either liked or disliked working from home. The main complaint I heard was the disconnect from friends issue.

Being alone is not the same as being lonely. Being alone can be defined as not being around others. The APA would emphasize "that feeling lonely refers to the discrepancy you feel between desired and actual social relationships" Loneliness is an unwanted feeling. Being alone or solitude is a choice. Sometimes we all like some quiet time.

One report shows that loneliness can have an effect on long term health such as cardiovascular health (increase in higher blood pressure, heart attacks and strokes and even susceptibility to colds. When loneliness is overwhelming or crosses the line into chronic depression or hopelessness you should seek help. (Think about it-seeking outside help when you're already feeling the effects of loneliness). Okay, so if you thinking you or someone you know maybe in having a problem caused by loneliness what can be done? First, make sure they chose to be alone or just not like being certain groups.

If possible, when practical, one should get back into having more social connections. This doesn't mean all in-person contacts, this could be phone calls (do people still do these?), texting, meetings et. al. I've noticed that when I need a boost I reach out old Navy friends going as far back to boot camp days. Getting outdoors walking also is mood lifter on many different physical and mental areas. Please stay clear of alcohol-it really doesn't help.

Of course, staying involved with your VVA chapter, state council and fellow members is a win-win situation.

Thanks for listening. Stay healthy and happy.

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Data Snapshot: Veteran Suicide in New York State (2012–2021)

New York State is home to more than 580,000 military veterans.^[1] Although New York has one of the lowest veteran suicide rates in the nation, suicide remains a persistent challenge.

Recent data from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs show that the rate has remained stubbornly high over the last 10 years despite numerous federal, State, and local investments in prevention efforts.

New York veterans die by suicide at a rate nearly 2x as high as civilians. This rate has remained relatively unchanged since 2012, despite some annual decreases.

Younger veterans (under the age of 55) consistently experience the highest rates of suicide in New York.

Veterans in New York State: VA statistics

Total	747,157
Wartime Veterans	548,237
Gulf War	241,791
Vietnam Era	237,394
Korean Conflict	61,090
World War II	19,278
Peacetime	198,921
Female	64,482
Male	682,676

I was not able to place the graphs in the report due to lack of expertise. Here is the link that you can see the graphs on suicides by veterans in New York State.

[Data Snapshot: Veteran Suicide in New York State \(2012–2021\) - New York Health Foundation](#)



Goals

Your value does not decrease based on someone’s inability to see your worth

Health Awareness Committee

Tom Harris - Chair

I sit here writing my thoughts regarding health issues facing older veterans in 2024 and the first thing I notice on my desk is the record on my blood pressure readings. So, let me start by saying “do as I say, not as I do’. Here’s my top health driven thoughts for 2024 or lessons I’ve learned the hard way.

It’s the holiday season (well, it was). Plan accordingly, don’t get hung up on ‘the day’.

Winter is tough is our old souls and bodies. Accept this as fact and winterize your thinking. Write out your goals, have to plan to achieve these goals and create incentives. If you’re on the fence about starting something new figure out a way to just tiptoe around it until you’re ready. Face your fears.

Beware of ‘Seasonal Affective Disorder’. If you suffer with PTSD be mindful that you need to amp up your defenses. Take note of what and how much you’re eating during these dark months. Drink more water.

Set realistic goals for the moment. I try not to use the word ‘resolutions.’ They’re too easily broken by me-not to be taken seriously. So I try to set specific and measurable goals. Thoughts like “I’ll be a kinder person’ just don’t work for me.

Setting fitness goals is a bit easier. Set a regular schedule. (Exercise is proven to reduce stress and increase your overall mood.) For example we should be exercising 150 minutes a week. I break that down to a day’s walk. If it’s not safe out I substitute walking at the mall or big box. Walking backwards, yup, backwards according to someone, burns more calories and strengthens back muscles-try it but safely. Be brave enough to suck at something new.

Do something that uses your mind in a positive way. Read more.

Try to limit the negative drama in your life. Plato once said (to me) “Please my friends, be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle”. Two things here; You have limited time in life to do something really silly that will make you laugh. Laughing is great for you on many levels. Second, I try to memorize this, I don’t have to attend every argument I’m invited to.

SO, let’s summarize:

Get more exercise, even though it’s winter. Forgot to mention be careful shoveling.

Exercise your mind. Learn something new and try to rid yourself of negative thoughts.

Have some fun.

I try to find a ‘purpose’ in my day. Doesn’t always work but I need something to look forward to as a jump starter.

Be on guard regarding your health-get vaccinated, drink water, better diet, Use your brain!

Stay healthy friends

Faces Of Freedom - Refer a Veteran

Uncle Sam Wants You!! Are you a veteran or do you know of a veteran, from any conflict, who would like to participate in the Faces of Freedom project?

Face of Freedom is only as good as its last photo and oral history. My hope is to make this a living exhibition that continues to grow.

Please contact me at walterl1_22@yahoo.com. 1860-558-1072

Dust Child

by Nguyễn Phan Quế Mai

A richly poetic and suspenseful saga about two Vietnamese sisters, an American veteran and an Amerasian man whose lives intersect in surprising ways, set during and after the war in Việt Nam.

The Mountains Sing

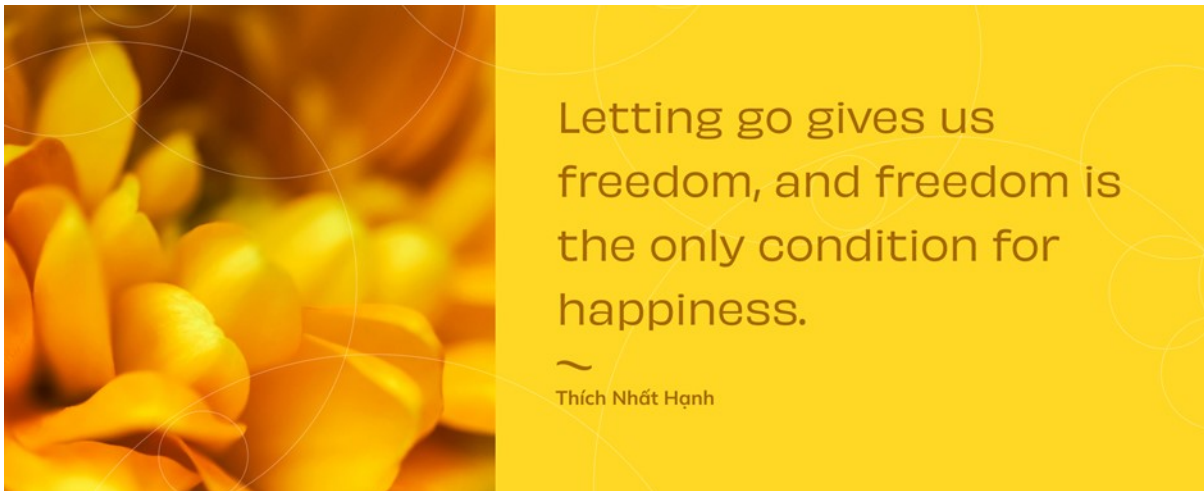
by Nguyễn Phan Quế Mai - Fiction, Historical Fiction

THE MOUNTAINS SING tells an enveloping, multigenerational tale of the Trần family, set against the backdrop of the Vietnam War. Trần Diệu Lan, who was born in 1920, was forced to flee her family farm with her six children during the Land Reform as the Communist government rose in the North. Years later in Hà Nội, her young granddaughter, Hương, comes of age as her parents and uncles head off down the Hồ Chí Minh Trail to fight in a conflict that tore apart not just her beloved country, but her family as well

Exit Wounds (A Vietnam Elegy)

Lanny Hunter, MD

An intimate, boots on the ground memoir that chronicles one Captain's brutal experience in the Vietnam War.

**Goals**

The Winds of Change

Adam Danyal

Adaptive leaders who quickly adjust strategy, communicate proactively, and empower teams can successfully guide organizations through challenging transformations and turbulent change.

Hmong Project to attain Veterans Administration Health benefits & access to Claims benefits

VA Health Care and Claim Benefits for the Hmong SGU Fighters in Laos

Trip Report – Chapter 377 attends VVA State Council Meeting at Tioga Downs then Attend the National VVA Conference in Silver Spring,MD

R. Paul Moore – Member, Finger Lakes Chapter 377

President Gary Napieracz introduced member Paul Moore to Hmong Special Guerrilla (SGU) fighter Phoxay, pronounced (FOH-SY) Rattansengachanh (pronunciation not needed now!) on July 15th, 2023. We were invited to Tioga Downs to present our research to the State Council. This was a draft presentation on Saturday, June 6th whose purpose was to educate the Council and to obtain questions and feedback from the Council to better prepare for the National meeting on January 19th.



Members Paul Moore, Phoxay Rattansengachanh
Member Jim Evener, President Gary Napieracz



Paul Offering
Draft presentation

On January 19th, we separately awoke 0400, prepared to leave, converged at Paul's home and departed south at 0545. We arrived at 1300, were lucky enough to be able to check in, rested a bit, and went to the Minority Affairs Committee, chaired by Gumersindo Gomez. All committee members but one were present. The chair offered about 40 minutes for our presentation. Including questions it probably lasted 1 ¼ hours and was very well received. After resting and meeting many attendees.

At 1800 Phoxay and Gary were in the side of the large 250 person capacity room for a meeting, awards and the celebration of the American Korean VALOR Act. President Biden signed it in early November. Many certificates and photographs were given and taken. Jennifer, a member of the White House staff, arrived and waited until her turn. We exchanged contact information. She read and presented two Certificates to the leader of the approximately 50 Korean veterans in attendance and to the President of VVA. The night could have been over, yet it was just starting.

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Korean Fighters, Phoxay & Gary veterans of Vietnam



White House Staff Assistant

Phoxay & I were talking with other people in the lounge area. Frank (last name I forgot) from Manhattan had offered some great comments in the morning meeting. Frank, Barbara, (a passionate advocate staffer and a lawyer who'd worked with Gumersindo nearly all of the 6-8 years preparing for this success and I talked 1-2 hours more.

From 0100 until 0510 on Sunday morning, I worked through our notes, researched some Federal Regulations and made a 10-point summary of my entire presentation and next steps. After 80 minutes of deep sleep: breakfast.

I sat with the John(sorry about last names!), President of the Florida Council, then attended the Government Services Committee meeting. There are many committed people on the committee (about 20 sitting at the long table) working on a variety of committees aiming towards many quality goals to attain. I was impressed. There were also about 15 of us, sitting along the edges listening to the proceedings. I placed my 9 pages of notes in my bag, met some more people, had 20 minutes to pack and load the car, and moved to the final meeting.

It started at 1000. The first half was about attendance, motions, past business, future business, etc. A break was called at 1030, for us to be back by 1045. There were 3 presentations, ours the 1st, about Hmong fighters and the VA. Gumersindo came to me and told me to stand next to him once he called on me. He introduced me. I talked for 3-5 minutes, got choked up as I talked, because of my now deep connection with Phoxay and the many people he had introduced me to. I was feeling quite angry inside, with my eyes getting teary and my voice break up a bit. I probed: how so many could be ignored for so long? AI asked for their consideration of our project and thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak with them. Almost all of the Directors started to clap. I definitely felt heard. I pray that our project will expeditiously move forward.

As the next presentation was starting, the three of use quietly left the room, towards car lot to leave. Gumersindo stopped us in the hallway. We shook hands. I thanked him and asked: "was I too emotional there? I was surprised as that happened." He smiled, put his hand on my shoulder and smiled: "Paul, you touched a lots of hearts. That will move this project forward. Thanks!" We shook hands again. He went back into the meeting. I turned and saw Barbara nearby. "Excuse me, Barbara, I have something for you, I called." You told me last night to get 3 good points to sell. I worked 5 hours and could only get 8. Here's a 1st draft. I hope you like it. And, yes, let's talk soon! **(Continue on pg. 32)**



Gumersindo Gomez, Chair
Minority Affairs Committee



Paul Moore, Member
Finger Lakes Chapter 377



Paul presents created 8-Point List to Barbara in lobby

Here are those eight (8) points to consider:

Respecting Lao Hmong Special Guerilla Unit Fighters for what they did for us.

The U.S. Government contracted, trained, financed, equipped and supported the Hmong Special Guerilla Fighters in Laos from 1960 through at least 1975

70,000 North Vietnam soldiers were diverted from fighting American soldiers by the Hmong SGU.

35,000 Lao / Hmong SGU fighters died throughout the Laos fighting, meaning 35,000 Americans lived!

The VA, failed 3 aspects of their core mission: “commitment, advocacy, respect” as they sub-optimally transferred the package to C/MSRB

A May 29, 2014 from the DoD, Civilian / Military Service Recognition Board to the two entities noted in this letter were cut-from conceiving of becoming labeled as in “Military service” to obtain VA benefits.

The 2 groups who asked for guidance, assistance and support obtained no hope and gave up.

Today, the tools used by the C/MSRB to evaluate the packet, especially only in comment, were dated

DoD 1000.20 (Process for the Civilian / Military Service Review Board decides) is 20 years out of date.

32 CFR 47.1 (How military service is defined) is 13 years out of date.

“The Battle for Recognition: Granting Hmong Special Guerilla Unit (SGU) Veterans Access to VA Benefits”, published 2021 Note, specifically addresses all points of the incorrect 2-page letter. sent from C/MSRB Executive Secretary

Presently 260,000 Hmong live in the US 3rd largest indigenous tribe in the US, after Navajo and Cherokee

CA – 80,000, Minnesota – 70,000, WI – 50,000

MI, CO, NC, SC, FL, MO, OH, RI, WA - the remaining 60,000

Medical problems in Laos are very similar to Vietnam: Agent Orange exposure, undetonated ordinance, etc.

Filipino veterans have been brought under the VA Umbrella, this may be a model for Hmong

May we remember this generation of Veterans. May we never forget them

VVA's Founding Principle: “Never Again Will One Generations of Veterans Abandon Another”

Project of VVA Chapter #333 Triips to Vietnam

Howard Goldin

Schools To End Poverty (S.T.E.P)**STEP presentation to SV Rotary & VVA-333 re: trip November 2023 Humanitarian Effort**

November 7 met in Da Nang with the Seattle Washington District 5030 group led by Son Michael Pham, AG of the District and founder of KWB. We also met with the incoming President of the DaNang Rotary Club Michael Roberts and two club members who traveled with us to our first location and first donation site. This was a big moment as it meant that Vietnam is allowing open meetings, a requirement of Rotary.

We are meeting up with CHIA (Children's Hope In Action) to present 30 bikes to At Risk Children and four wheelchairs to children afflicted by Agent Orange, 4th generation. How are children selected for bikes & wheelchairs..vetting process between CHIA and STEP. Bikes & wheelchairs get a Rotary Sticker placed on it and Rotarians present the children with their gift of a bike or wheelchair. We traveled 3 hours into the back country where no westerners travel.

That evening we met with the entire **DaNang Rotary Club** and enjoyed a dinner at their **Cocoon Project** (explain). During presentations at this dinner a \$500.00 donation was made to the Cocoon project.

After this two of our Vietnamese scholarship students joined us in DaNang to continue traveling with us for the remainder of our trip to mingle with our group and answer any questions raised.

On November 9 along the Mekong Delta, we held a Memorial Service for the names given into STEP for a remembrance. We also remembered the 58,281 US members killed along with the 3 million Vietnamese killed during the war. Our Vietnamese College students had a reading about the late Mr. Pham, who helped Dorothe Flieger start the Scholarship Program. Every participant read a letter/poem about someone lost and there wasn't a dry eye.

November 10, was our next Humanitarian effort with our NGO partners called Pacific Links, ADAPT who deals with High at Risk Children along the Cambodian border. 30 bikes were distributed along with STEP Frisbees and a request for us signing the students books as if we were STARS. In the evening we had dinner with Nguyen Nho and her staff to brief us on what is going on with ADAPT.

We were supposed to have a 2nd ceremony but we were waived off as it was too close to the Cambodian border and our safety. The ceremony was taped and our team saw ourselves on TV that night explaining our bike give-away in that area.

November 15 saw us arrive in DaLat and traveled to the Gan Reo school, which was built with the help of the Ward/Perino grant, Felix Festa & Suffern Middle schools and donations from Rotarians. We were entertained with ethnic dancing from the eight different tribes of Montagnard's **(Continue on pg. 34)**

(Continue from pg. 33)

November 16, we arrived to a large welcome by Dragons leading us into the Trong Bong Hong Rose School, our first project. We also had 3 Police Officials with us and brought them up on stage with us to show them we were no threat to their area and what we do. We also got a demonstration from the staff during a class on the use of the Smart Board to teach the students.

November 17 we were back in Saigon to meet with the children & Staff at Te-Phan Orphanage (history) a \$500.00 medical emergency fund was paid for by SV Rotarian ensuring no child who becomes ill will not see a medical doctor. STEP also has an annual feeding program that cost \$7,000 a year to feed 89 children. That night we took the children out to dinner..explain

November 18 we were invited to a Vietnamese wedding at the Pham compound and afterwards we held our **scholarship ceremony** where 34 children received scholarships started by Dorothe Flieger. 28 bikes were distributed to students who came from single parent or no parent homes. A financial donation was made to the Nguyen 5 (these are boys who was orphaned five years ago when their parents drowned in a fishing accident, leaving the boys homeless). After the ceremony we had lunch with the students and they spent time learning about us and we about them.

After lunch we met with the Dominican Sisters to presented STEP with a future expansion plan to be considered.

STEP our Journey continues.

Memorial Service 2023

Dedicated to ALL THE WONDERING SOULS, both LIVING & DEAD FROM THE VIET NAM (American) WAR. The US lost 58,281 men & women. The Vietnamese lost 3 million. This service is dedicated to all those lost to War; during and after. (Larry Beckerle)

PH = Purple Heart, KIA = Killed In Action

PFC Darrell Trojan, USMC, 19 yrs. old Nanuet New York, HQ Co. 5th Marines, 1/3rd KIA Feb. 7, 1968 Small Arms Fire in Thua Thien Province PH (Raul Lopez)

LCPL John (Jack) Paul Moriarty USMC. Was wheelchair mobile for a long time and died young, another victim of Agent Orange. (Barbara Blakey)

Sgt. Marvin Lyle Franklin Jr. Army, 21 years old of Oklahoma City Ok. A Co.2nd BN, 8th Cavalry, 1 Cav Div. KIA August 31, 1967, multiple fragmentation wounds, Binh Dinh Province PH, Bronze Star V (Barbara Smith)

(Continue on pg. 35)

(Continue from pg. 33)

PFC John David Harper, Jr. Army, 20 yrs. old, Coolidge, Georgia. D Co. 1st Bn. 7th Cavalry, 1st Cav. Div. KIA March 25, 1968 multiple fragmentation wounds, Thau Thien Province **PH (Nancy Harrison)**

Seaman UDT Luco William Palman, 19 yrs. old, Tewksbury Mass, River Patrol Force TF-116, KIA September 18, 1970 Quang Nam Province, **PH (Christine Bailey)**

CPL. Gerald Jason Roberts, Jr. Army, 21 yrs. old, Torrington, Ct. A Co, 2nd Bn, 8th Cavalry, 1st Cav. Div. KIA August 31, 1967 Binh Dinh Province, **PH (Astri Braaten)**

Sgt. Angelo Carmelo Santiago, Army, 22 yrs. old, Philadelphia, Pa. 545th Trans Co, 57th Trans Bn Cam Ranh Bay, 1st Log Cmd, KIA June 6, 1968 Phu Yen Province **PH (Doris Goldin)**

Sgt. Albert Nyland, Army, **PH**, Company B, 1st of the 2nd, 1st Infantry Division, another victim of Agent Orange. (**Irv Abel, 1st Inf. PH**)

Sgt. Gary Abbate Army, Bronze Star V, Company B, 1st of the 2nd, 1st Infantry Division another victim of Agent Orange (**Louise Abel**)

Cpt. Laurence Kolman US Air Force, Soc Trang 67-68. Larry volunteered to be with a Special Forces unit as an FO – (Forward Observer). He was a Humanitarian, Doctor and a friend. He died 11/20/10 due to Agent Orange exposure and had Ischemic Heart Disease (**Helaine Shimel**).

Lt. Thomas Crosser Air Mobile, Army was an assault helicopter pilot who flew missions in I Corp & III Corp. Tom was shot down while serving with a Scout Platoon of Charlie Horse, C Troop,. 3rd Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry. Six weeks later he was badly wounded in Cambodia on May 30, 1970. Tom sustained serious injuries to his legs & arms. Tom made the journey back with us in 2008 and wrote a poem about the Black Virgin Mountain, Tay Ninh. Tom died 2018 as a result of his wounds and infections that never stopped bleeding or healing. Tom loved the quiet life and lived in Missoula, Montana. **PH (Dana Goldin)**

Poem – Nui Ba Den, Black Virgin Mountain (Debby Frank)

Seaman Richard J. Frank, Navy, USS Truxton, brother of Ed (Ed Frank)

(Continue on pg. 36)

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Spec 5 (Sgt.) Frank Arvis Beavers, Army, **PH**, 19 years old, Newhall, West Virginia, HHC 4th 23rd, 25th Infantry Division, Medic, KIA February 14, 1968 (TET Offensive) Gia Dinh Province small arms fire to his heart, while trying to save two men also shot. I would be remised if I did not mention Doc Beavers saved my life (Howard Goldin)

Fredric Douglas Hillmann USMC 67-68 **PH**, Battle of Hue, member of the 1st of the 9th, "Walking Dead". DOD 12/8/2021, another victim of Agent Orange. (Bob Gorglione)

Spec. 4th James Paul Perrone Jr., Army, **PH**, **Bronze Star V**, 19 years old, Wanaque NJ Co A, 2nd Bn, 35th Inf. 25th Inf. Div. KIA March 12, 1967 Pleiku Province, small arms fire. (Donna Gorglione)

Spec. 5 Dewitt Studway Army, **PH** 21 yrs. old, Durant Mississippi, 271st Assault Helicopters KIA January 13, 1969 Phong Dinh Province when his base camp was over run. He had one week left in Vietnam before he was scheduled to return home to his wife & child (Diane Marie)

It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of Pham Van Dinh (Tano's father) and patriarch of the Pham family on January 1, 2017. Since 2007, Pham Van Dinh was the key player in finding S.T.E.P.'s scholarship recipients based on family need and a willingness of the student to better one's self. We were the first Americans he ever broke bread with and forged a strong bond that would last till his final days. Even though stricken with advanced cancer, Pham Van Dinh insisted on going to the airport to see us off on our flight back to America November (2016). (Hime)

His life was tough, having left the very most northern part of Vietnam in 1954 and traveled south eventually creating a family compound in Go Vap – Saigon. Change came again in 1975 and they weathered through it, never losing their strong faith in God. RIP our friend, you earned it. (Nguyen, Vu Kim Kuyen)
Tano – words



(Continue from pg. 19) VVA Chapter #333

VVA Chapter #333

Roy Tschudy

Chapter 333 Palisades Mall Fund Raiser

Our chapter fundraising is now completed for the year, thanks to the members who stopped by over the past two days at the Palisades Mall to contribute whatever time allowed. aside from the \$\$\$ money received, we may have added two or three new veterans to join our chapter.

As always has been in the past, interacting with the general public always proves to be a pleasant and informational exchange of thoughts from our era as Vietnam veterans. Many who received our special veteran thank you gifts of county K.I.A. (along with two or three others) expressed their deep respect and condolence for those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Countless "Thank you for your service" was directed to those of us in attendance, handshakes and fist bumps galore! Some stop to talk, tell a story here and there about loved ones who served and no longer are with us, cathartic for them as well as us.

A highlight for us today was meeting GOLD STAR family brothers Glenn and Robert Perrone who lost their older brother and my high school buddy Jimmy Perrone. For those who attend chapter member Howard Golden's SCHOOL REMEMBRANCE PROGRAM, you may recall Glenn and Robert in attendance who deliver heartfelt words on their brother and our chapter accomplishments as well. Both Glenn & Robert made a generous contribution to chapter 333, thank you guys!

Later during the day, Vietnam veteran Carl Swartz a friend of Jim, Glenn and Robert Perrone and who has been a friend of mine for a few years (This was our first in person meeting!) arrived to deliver a generous donation to the chapter. Although Carl resides in Manhattan, he expressed interest in joining our chapter and would attend meetings via our ZOOM program, in a word, YAY!

The bottom line, over the two days of fund raising at the Palisades Mall and by the way, our final two days of fund raising here from this point on there, our total is \$900.00.

Without naming those members who gave their time and effort to achieve all we did over not just yesterday and today, but for attending, helping and endorsing chapter 333 in many fund raisers, you know who you are and what you have contributed, Thank you!

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, good health and God's blessing for all of us. Roy

We received this message as we were getting to go to press.

VVA Chapter #333 mourns the recent loss of member JAY FINK who was instrumental in many chapter fundraising events over the years. R.I.P. brother may God Our Father hold you in his loving arms for all eternity.

A SHORT STORY TO BE SHARED WITH A LOVED ONE

Roy Tschudy

A TINY LEAF

One early spring day, Sun shining with the breath of warmth after a long winter season, a small bud gave way to a tiny new leaf.

The small leaf enjoyed being with his other new leaf friends
both day and night.

While the other leafs on the tree to grow bigger in sizes, the tiny
leaf

remained so. Not one more inch in height or width, "Hmm, he thought
to himself, I was the first bud to open, why haven't I grown at all?"

Undeterred, the tiny leaf decided if he couldn't grow then at least
he will be the strongest of all the leafs on the tree!

Spring passed into the summer and soon thereafter the fall season
appeared just as quickly.

The larger leafs began to bid one another farewell, dropping slowly
from their home, each and every branch at a time.

One early morning on a late fall day there were just two leafs
remaining

on the big tree. The larger leaf said to his little friend, " I'm so
tired

now trying to hold onto my branch home, goodbye my tiny friend
it was nice being here with you."

And with that, the tiny leaf gazed down as his last friend slowly
let go and drifted off to the ground below.

The tiny leaf was all alone...once more same as in the Spring time.
The winter weather came fast and furious, winds howling, frost and ice
falling upon the tree and also on the tiny leaf.

"I can do this" he kept saying to himself, "I may be a tiny leaf
but I'm also strong and tough," remembering his vow from earlier.

Each winters day brought more cold and winds, but the tiny leaf

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still clung onto his branch home, he indeed was a very strong tiny leaf.

Soon after, he became very tired and worn, he wondered to himself if he

should just let go, drift off somewhere unknown like his old friends before.

Suddenly, fresh new warm air arrived and stirred his memory!

Why my goodness, it was Spring time once again! Yayyyyy, he said to himself, " I made it, I really did!" Looking around the tiny leaf

found he was once more surrounded by a whole bunch of new leaves greeting each other with laughter and glee.

The tiny leaf was so proud of himself as he realized the size of the heart

no matter the size of the leaf body is what matters most.

The love the tiny leaf carried for his tree is much like the love shared

between those who love and are loved in return.





VVA Chapters should attend these Leadership & Educational Conference. There will be many lectures by VVA Committees.

TOGETHER WE SERVED

You will need to sign up with them to get a FREE plaque.



<https://togetherweserved.com/uscg/rewritepages/static/images/logo.674f31.svg>

Claim Your FREE Military Service Basic Plaque!

Carefully created by our military experts, we combine highest quality graphics and accurate content to deliver the finest presentation of your military service in an 11" x 6.5" Plaque you can print out and frame. Join

<https://www.togetherweserved.com/landing?source=portal-plaque>

Veterans News

Don't put yourself at risk of an avoidable sight loss because you failed to have regular sight tests.

Our VA clinic is well equipped to treat glaucoma, neurological eye diseases, corneal diseases, and corneal abrasions.

What are some of the age specific eye issues Veterans should be screened for?

- Ages 18-44: the need for prescription glasses, Veterans deployed to desert environments who have been exposed to intense glare/ultraviolet light may experience Photophobia, Dry Eye issues, and even early onset of Cataracts
- Ages 45-59: Development of Cataracts, Floaters, Glaucoma, and potential need for Bifocals
- Ages 61-79: Cataracts, and Retina disease screening
- Ages 80+: Macular Degeneration, Double Vision

Cataracts: are associated with cloudy/blurry vision. Cataracts develop as we mature and depending on the severity, surgery may be recommended.

Dry Eyes: inflamed eye glands, which gets worse with age. Coatesville VAMC is the only VA medical center nationwide to have the "Intense Post Light or IPL" equipment to treat this condition. The IPL quells the inflammation and boosts the oil production of the glands to mitigate Dry Eye.

Floaters: are typical for the aging eye and although they can be irritating, they are usually not a problem. Nevertheless, floaters can be related to a Retinal detachment and should be checked. A Retinal detachment can lead to blindness.

Glaucoma: a silent and more common eye disease, which leads to blindness if untreated. Coatesville VAMC has a Glaucoma Clinic and the ability to provide full treatment for this disease.

Photophobia: a symptom caused by intense sunlight and can generate intense migraines and/or nausea.

Red Eyes: are viral infections or eye allergies. Treatment usually consists of taking an antibiotic or anti-inflammatory medications.

John Podlaski

Ever Wonder Why Young Combat Veterans Return Home "Different"?

Those who gave their all during the [#Vietnamwar](#) will never age - our memories and visions still recall them as young boys, brothers-in-arms, friends, family, and always full of life. Learn more about the [#Vietnamwar](#) and its Warriors <https://lnkd.in/eqwRE8S>



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More Than A Name On A Wall

Song By the Staler Brothers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TA7-9yXJ6Rg>

Data Snapshot: Veteran Suicide in New York State (2012–2021)

NY Health Foundation

Recent data from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs show that the rate has remained stubbornly high over the last 10 years despite numerous federal, State, and local investments in prevention efforts.

New York veterans die by suicide at a rate nearly 2x as high as civilians. This rate has remained relatively unchanged since 2012, despite some annual decreases

Younger veterans (under the age of 55) consistently experience the highest rates of suicide in New York.

Firearms are the most lethal method for suicide. New York veterans who die by suicide are 2x as likely as their civilian counterparts to use a firearm. The 13.4% decrease in firearm usage in veteran suicides in 2021 is a potential bright spot, although sustained improvement remains to be seen.

https://nyhealthfoundation.org/resource/data-snapshot-veteran-suicide-in-new-york-state-2012-2021/?utm_source=email&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Vet+Suicide+Snapshot+Dec+2023

Senate Swiftly Confirms Top Military Brass, Ending Months-Long Campaign By GOP Sen. Tuberville

The Senate has unanimously confirmed 11 top-ranking military officers

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/congress-military-holds-tuberville_n_65825cd0e4b0d9bdbf680a34

Why This Vietnam Vet Kept Silent For 40 Years | Full Interview

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4CS--FEuK-k>



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Vietnam Veterans of America
 New York State Council
 8 Queen Diana Lane, Queensbury, NY 12804
 (518) 338-8147 / Fax (518) 291-4884
www.nyvietnamvets.org

“Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another”

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

S6523 Senator Scarcella-Spanton
 A7701 – MoA Jean-Pierre

An Act to amend the veterans’ services law, in relation to directing the department of veterans’ services to collaborate with other state agencies to establish and maintain a searchable database of resources available in the state for veterans and their families

SUPPORT !

This bill, which would take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall become a law, would assist New York State veterans and their families to attain important access to state-funded programs and policies in one uniformed statewide database.

On behalf of the almost one quarter million Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans, who comprise the largest single block in New York State’s population of more than seven hundred thousand veterans, the Vietnam Veterans of America New York State Council strongly urges enactment of the above-captioned legislation.

Ned D. Foote
 President

Bing Markee
 Legislative Director

VA Caregiver Support Program Overview - Online

Learn about the VA's two caregiver support programs and how they can assist you.

Program of General Caregiver Support Services and Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, along with supports, resources, and more. The Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) Caregiver Support Program (CSP) offers clinical services to caregivers of eligible and covered Veterans enrolled in the VA health care system. The program’s mission is to promote the health and well-being of family caregivers who care for our nation’s Veterans, through education, resources, support, and services.

<https://www.va.gov/outreach-and-events/events/64382/>

Roger Donlon, First MOH Recipient of Vietnam War, Dies at 89

The Congressional Medal of Honor Society announced January 25 that Roger H. C. Donlon, the first recipient of the Medal of Honor for the Vietnam War, passed away January 25, 2024, in Leavenworth, Kansas, at the age of 89—five days before his 90th birthday. President Lyndon Johnson presented Donlon with the Medal of Honor in the East Ballroom of the White House on Dec. 5, 1964, for his actions near Nam Dong. On July 6, 1964, then-Captain Donlon was commanding officer at Camp Nam Dong when a Viet Cong battalion launched a predawn attack. During the next five hours, Donlon repeatedly exposed himself to heavy fire while defending against the

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enemy, moving ammunitions and weaponry to effective positions, aiding the wounded, and rallying his men. Throughout the battle, he was severely injured several times but persevered and insisted others receive medical attention before him. When the sun finally came up, the enemy retreated into the jungle. Donlon's bravery and leadership had resulted in the defeat of the attackers and preserving the lives of the friendly Vietnamese camp defenders and fellow Americans. Humble in every respect, Donlon didn't feel what he had done was heroic: "In my situation and every other situation that leads to the Medal of Honor, there is absolutely no input from the recipient. It's all done by observers. Heroism is a product of what other people see."

<https://www.cmohs.org/news-events/press-releases/congressional-medal-of-honor-society-announces-passing-of-medal-of-honor-recipient-roger-h-c-donlon/>

Meeting the Needs of the Veterans

NYHealth Foundation

In 2023, NYHealth built upon our previous suicide prevention work to expand successful programs statewide. Although New York has one of the lowest veteran suicide rates in the nation, suicide remains a persistent challenge. We issued a [data snapshot](#) using the most recent data from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), which showed suicide rates among New York veterans holding steady between 2020 and 2021.

<https://nyhealthfoundation.org/progress/best-of-2023/>

New coronavirus variant

JN.1 is spreading fast. Check with your health provider. The version of the Covid-19 virus behind the latest spike in infections shares many of the same symptoms as earlier variants of Sars-CoV-2 : a sore throat, fatigue, headache and a cough

<https://www.huffpost.com/entry/severe-covid-symptoms-hospital | 659ef376e4b0525ad5b4482d>

VA Research with MDMA, Psilocybin for PTSD and Depression

In a groundbreaking move, VA plans to fund studies to determine the benefits and safety of certain psychedelic compounds in treating PTSD and depression.

<https://news.va.gov/press-room/to-improve-care-for-veterans-va-to-fund-studies-on-new-therapies-for-treating-mental-health-conditions/>

Free Service to Help Preserve and Share Your Military Service Story

Together We Served is offering Veterans a free service to help preserve and share your memories and photos of key people and events from your military service. You can share this presentation with friends and family.

https://news.va.gov/127713/togetherweserved-enables-preserve-stories/?utm_source=feature&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=VetResources&utm_id=17JAN2024



Introducing our 2023 Year-in-Review!

Read more [2] about all that you accomplished and some top highlights from last year

"Join the nation ... thank a Vietnam veteran!"

www.vietnamwar50th.com

Engage with us online at <http://linktr.ee/VNWar50th>

Burnt pit

The data goes to an app on a patient's phone and could be used to better understand how long-term respiratory disease develops after burn pit exposure.

https://www.newsday.com/news/health/burn-pits-disease-veterans-oh9byn0h?utm_medium=web_share_api&utm_campaign=web_share_api

Five Ways to Show Love This Year

What is love?

The 'Love Verse' at 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 is an oft-quoted Scripture that reminds us love **is patient and kind; not envious, boastful, or full of pride.**

How can we apply this in 2024?



We're excited the SWAN

to announce an opportunity to join team as a Development Assistant! This

part-time, remote role is perfect for those passionate about supporting service women and advocating for their rights. Please email your resume and cover letter to info@servicewomen.org to be considered. Click [here](#) for full job description.

Development Assistant (Part-Time, Remote)

About the Service Women's Action Network (SWAN): SWAN's mission is to advocate for, support, and connect with service women; past, present and future. SWAN amplifies the voices of military women, draws attention to their unique needs and advocates for solutions to meet their needs.

Interested candidates are invited to submit a resume and a brief cover letter outlining their interest and qualifications for the role at info@servicewomen.org

- This role is currently part-time (10 hours per week)
- Hybrid (if local to DC area)/remote (if not local to DC)
- Compensation is \$750/month

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Thanks to James Ulinski for this information:

The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs reports there are 1.8 million Women Veterans in America. These Women Veterans are an average of 47 years old and the top three reported health issues among Women Veterans are: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Hypertension and Depression. Women Veterans are one of the fastest growing segments of America’s veteran population. The Veteran Administration estimates that Women Veterans will constitute more than 15% of all America’s veteran population by 2020.

Women Veterans, VA May Surprise You:

Women veterans, you may be surprised to learn about all VA has to offer. If you haven’t checked out VA in a while, things have changed. We recognize each of you are unique and your health care needs are not “one-size-fits-all.” That’s why VA continues to expand its services, so we can provide you with the best care possible to better fit your needs.

Vet Tix

Vet Tix supports Veterans and service members by honoring their service and providing positive family and life experiences during and after their years of service to our country. Becoming a member is free!

Account Sign Up Page

<https://www.vettix.org/partner/veteransaffairs?emci=790536e1-699b-ee11-bea1-002248223f36&emdi=57d16b4f-3daf-ee11-bea1-0022482237da&ceid=5590503>

https://www.vettix.org/signup_start.php





Punxsutawney Phil says Spring is Coming soon!



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