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Meetings

The Chapter 120 membership meeting will be held on Thursday, March 2, 2017 at 7:00pm in the Machinists Union Hall, 357 Main St., East Hartford.

The Board of Directors will meet on Thursday, March 30 at 7:00pm. Call the Chapter office for any changes in schedule. Chapter members are welcomed to attend.

Notice

If you have moved or changed your address, PLEASE notify us immediately. Call the Chapter office at (860) 568-9212, mail us at the address on the back of this newsletter or e-mail the Newsletter editor at JRCVVA120@aol.com.

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Senate confirms David Shulkin as Veterans Affairs Secretary



The Senate has unanimously confirmed Trump nominee David Shulkin to be secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Shulkin, the lone holdover from the Obama administration among President Trump's Cabinet picks, has been the VA undersecretary for health since July 2015 and has not drawn the harsh opposition from Democrats that other Trump nominees have faced.

During his confirmation hearing earlier this month, he promised to lead a "major reform and transformation of the VA." Shulkin said he wants veterans to be able to get care in the private sector when they need it, but he also

wants to maintain core VA services.

"There will be far greater accountability, dramatically improved access, responsiveness and expanded care options," he said. "But the Department of Veterans Affairs will not be privatized under my watch."

Shulkin will need help from Congress to get more authority to discipline poor performers at the agency, which has been beset by scandals since 2014, when news broke that schedulers at the Phoenix VA had been keeping secret wait lists, hiding how long veterans had been waiting for appointments and at least 40 veterans died while they waited.

Subsequent investigations found scheduling improprieties at 40 VA medical facilities in 19 states and Puerto Rico and in seven states, supervisors had directed employees to falsify wait times.

In addition to scheduling problems, which the Government Accountability Office found continued after the scandal, the VA has been criticized for keeping health care quality data secret and shuffling managers between jobs and medical centers, even when concerns were raised about the care provided at their previous posts.

Dr. Shulkin has been named as one of the "50 Most Influential Physician Executives in the Country" by Modern Healthcare. He has also previously been named among the "One Hundred Most Influential People in American Healthcare."

CHAPTER 120 OFFICE 568-9212**Board of Directors**

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All Telephone Numbers are Area Code 860 unless otherwise noted

Chapter/State News**National Convention Delegate Elections**

Elections for six National Convention delegates and two alternates will be held at the Chapter 120 membership meeting on April 6, 2017. Three members of the Election Committee will also be elected on that date. If you are interested in running for a Delegate to the National Convention to be held in New Orleans, LA on August 8 - 12, 2017, you should start planning for your trip and consider expenses necessary to attend the Convention. Historically, the Connecticut State Council and Chapter 120 have assisted with the majority of expenses. But there is no way to know how much that financial backup will be this year. If you are interested in a Delegate position or wish to nominate a Chapter member for that position, please contact the Election Committee (Bill Chiodo, Ken Lewis or Tim Siggia). Election Rules are posted below.

Connecticut Chapter 120 Election Rules

Revised November 2, 2006

Section 1. Annual Elections

- A. The Chapter officers will be elected on even numbered years at the April meeting and will serve a two (2) year term in office. They are the following: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- B. The Board of Directors will be elected on even numbered years at the April meeting and will serve a two (2) year term of office.
- C. The State Council Delegates will be elected on even numbered years at the April meeting and will serve a two (2) year term of office.
- D. *The Delegates to the National Convention* will be elected on odd numbered years at the April meeting and will serve a two (2) year term in office.
- E. The three (3) member *Election Committee* will be elected at the April meeting and will serve a one (1) year term.

Section 2. Candidates

- A. Candidates must have been a member for a minimum of fifteen (15) days prior to the election.
- B. Candidates must have on file with the Chapter, or present to the Election Committee their DD-214, or other proof of qualification for membership.
- C. Candidates may be nominated from the floor on the night of the election. Candidates must be present to accept the nomination or have submitted a letter of intent to the Election Committee.
- D. Candidates will be allowed space in the newsletter to campaign but not to defame or slander the other candidates. Space allowable will be at the discretion of the Newsletter Editor.
- E. Candidates will be allowed five (5) minutes to speak at the April meeting if desired.
- F. Candidates may use the membership list for a mailing pursuant to the Chapter rules and Federal laws governing the membership list.

Section 3. Voters

- A. To be eligible to vote, you must have been a member for fifteen (15) days prior to the election. This would include new members or reinstated members that are not paid up for the prior year.
- B. Voting members must have on file with the Chapter, or present to the Nominating Committee, their DD-214 or proof of qualification for membership.
- C. Voting members must have paid their dues for the current fiscal year. Membership may be renewed the night of the election, but must be paid prior to casting their vote.

Birthday Wishes

Birthday wishes go to our members born in March. May you have many more!

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Norman P. Alderman</i> | <i>David Barrows</i> |
| <i>Joseph E. Billera</i> | <i>Joanne Blum</i> |
| <i>Maurice L. Collin</i> | <i>Maurice Deschaine</i> |
| <i>Ted C. Graziani</i> | <i>Stephen E. Hesse</i> |
| <i>Howard C. Huestis</i> | <i>Angelo Licata</i> |
| <i>J. Andrew Livingston</i> | <i>Albert G. Michaud</i> |
| <i>Warren Occhialini</i> | <i>Richard J. Olson</i> |
| <i>Richard Pikulski</i> | <i>Charles L. Ravenell</i> |
| <i>Willie E. Scott, Sr</i> | <i>Peter R. Sorensen</i> |
| <i>William Taylor</i> | <i>Joseph Tkacz, Jr.</i> |
| <i>Francis M. Zizzamia</i> | |

And a special Happy Birthday to Jacob Cutler, grandson of members John Cutler and Michael Belliveau!

Section 4. Election Procedures

- A. The voting period will be from the close of nominations until 8:00 PM.
- B. The quorum required to hold the election should be 10 members.
- C. A candidate can request a recount of the ballots for his or her office if the margin between the candidates running for that office is 10% or less based on the number of total votes cast.
- D. The ballots will be kept for one (1) year in a sealed envelope signed by the Election Committee or their appointees.
- E. Results will be announced the night of the election.
- F. If an Election Committee member is running for an elected position, they shall appoint a volunteer vote counter from the floor.
- G. The vote will be taken by a secret paper ballot.

Chapter members distribute coats to area needy children



AVVA Life member Joanne Blum and Chapter Vice President and VVA Life member Jerry Blum distributed donated winter coats to The Village for Families & Children. Located on Albany Ave. in Hartford CT, The Village has been dedicated to building a community of strong, healthy families who protect and nurture children for over 200 years.

Photo by Bob Venti



Donna and Roger Anderson, Ken Lewis and Pete Lund gave donated coats to South Windsor Town Hall to be given to needy children in town.

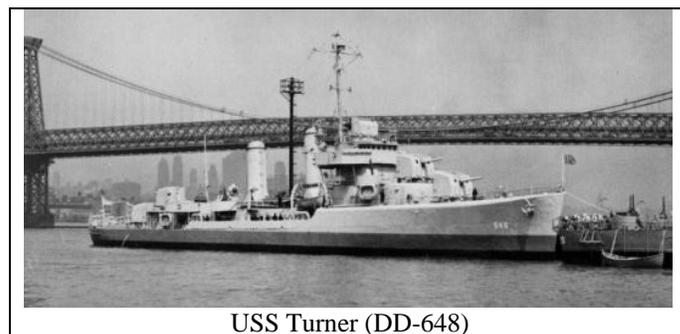
POW/MIA News

From The Associated Press

Pentagon launches effort to solve a baffling Second World War mystery

The Pentagon is launching efforts to solve a baffling Second World War mystery: whether dozens of U.S. sailors listed as missing from a ship disaster were actually recovered and buried all along as unknowns in a New York cemetery.

More than 130 victims of the USS Turner’s 1944 explosion and sinking near New York Harbor are still officially missing. But Second World War researcher Ted Darcy found papers last year indicating at least four of them were buried as unknowns in a Long Island military cemetery. He believes the rest could be there too.



USS Turner (DD-648)

After The Associated Press initially reported on Darcy’s findings in November, the Pentagon office responsible for recovering and identifying the nation’s war dead said only that the records that could confirm exactly how many of the Turner’s sailors are buried in the cemetery were missing.

But in recent days, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency said it is now “taking the steps to send out inquiries and conduct archival research” to try to locate the files associated with the Turner unknowns buried in the cemetery in Farmingdale on Long Island.

Darcy and loved ones of the missing crew members hope that the records could be found, identifications made and that the long-lost remains of the Turner be reburied in marked gravesites with full military honors.

The Turner, a 10-month-old Navy destroyer, sank off Sandy Hook, New Jersey, after a series of internal explosions on Jan. 3, 1944. The Navy never determined what caused the initial blast, but an inquiry found that munitions were being handled below deck around the time of the first explosion. Half of the nearly 300 men on board survived, but scores of others were killed and listed as missing. Some remains were recovered from the sunken wreckage during the yearlong salvage operation, but an exact number remains unknown.

Pentagon officials say the process of identifying the remains of unknown service members must meet strict protocols, and in the case of the Turner, it can’t begin until certain key documents, including those containing a sailor’s dental information, are found. They noted that the effort is also hampered by the lack of

records for any of the 70 unknowns buried at the Long Island cemetery.

Todd S. Livick Sr., a the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency spokesman, said in an email that the agency's researchers have spent years searching for files pertaining to the cemetery's burials of unknowns, but so far they've not been located.

"Without these sources of information, DPAA cannot determine whether multiple individuals were buried in the casket or construct a case for disinterment," he said.

According to Darcy, a retired career Marine from Locust Grove, Virginia, who specializes in MIA cases, the Agency hasn't done enough for the fallen Turner sailors.

"These guys died for their country," he said. "They deserve to be buried properly and the families deserve the closure."

At The Capitol



VA Committee holds public hearing on multiple bills

On February 14, the VA Committee held a public hearing on the following bills and voted to draft the bills for further legislative processing:

- **PSB-136** FARM VEHICLE NUMBER PLATES FOR CERTAIN VETERANS
- **PSB-342** EXPANDING THE DEFINITION OF "VETERAN"
- **PSB-503** PROVIDING FOR DISCOUNTED HUNTING, TRAPPING AND FISHING LICENSES FOR CERTAIN VETERANS
- **PHB-5580** CERTAIN VETERANS DISCHARGED DUE TO POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER OR TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY)
- **PHB-6061** WAIVING THE FEE FOR HAVING DRIVER'S LICENSES OR IDENTITY CARDS REISSUED PRIOR TO EXPIRATION WITH AN INDICATION OF STATUS AS A VETERAN
- **PHB-6065** PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION FOR VETERANS
- **PHB-6072** POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER ISSUES IMPACTING VETERANS INVOLVED IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM
- **PHB-6074** REDUCING OR ELIMINATING OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING FEES FOR VETERANS AND THEIR SPOUSES
- **PHB-6285** RENAMING THE STATE MILITARY TRAINING FACILITY IN NIAN TIC AS CAMP NETT
- **PHB-6506** WAIVING CERTAIN VETERANS' RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STEP-UP PROGRAM

- **SJ-25** RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF RECOGNIZING WOMEN IN THE CADET NURSE CORPS DURING WORLD WAR II AS VETERANS

The VA Committee also added the following Raised Bills to their agenda:

- **RSB-854** TUITION AND FEE WAIVERS FOR VETERANS AND MEMBERS OF THE CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.
- **RSB-855** A STUDY ON THE EFFECTS OF EQUINE THERAPY ON VETERANS SUFFERING FROM POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER.
- **RSB-856** FEDERAL RECORDS ACCESSIBLE TO OR MAINTAINED BY THE CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD.
- **RSB-857** DESIGNATING THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ROCKY HILL CAMPUS AS THE CONNECTICUT VETERANS CENTER.
- **RSB-858** MILITARY DEPARTMENT VOLUNTEERS.
- **RHB-7100** AMERICAN LEGION STATE FUND COMMISSION TRANSPARENCY.
- **RHB-7101** ELIGIBILITY FOR BURIAL IN THE STATE VETERANS' CEMETERY.
- **RHB-7102** PROTECTING PERSONAL INFORMATION OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND VETERANS.
- **RHB-7103** THE RETIREMENT AGE OF GOVERNOR'S FOOT GUARD MUSICIANS.
- **RHB-7110** THE LEGISLATIVE COMMISSIONERS' RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TECHNICAL AND MINOR REVISIONS TO STATUTES CONCERNING MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS.

For details of individual bills, go to: <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2017/vadata/cbr/va.asp>

On The Hill



From Pacific Islands Report

Congressman Introduces Bill to Get Veterans Treatment for Agent Orange Exposure in Pacific

Rep. Dennis Ross, R-Florida, introduced the Fighting for Orange-Stricken Territories in Eastern Regions (FOSTER) Act (HR 809), which would provide presumptive Agent Orange exposure status to Vietnam War-era veterans who served in specific areas, including Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa, and show symptoms

of medical conditions currently associated with such exposure so they can receive U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs benefits.

The bill is named after a veteran, Leroy Foster, who served on Guam and who said he routinely sprayed Agent Orange here.

The DOD denies Agent Orange was ever used outside of Vietnam and Thailand during the Vietnam War, despite the influx of veterans coming forth with claims of exposure outside of these areas, including Guam, Ross said.

If veterans' diseases or exposure locations fall outside of the current VA list, the veterans must show an actual connection between the disease and herbicide exposure during military service. There is no presumption in such cases, and many claims are denied.

The legislation would grant presumptive Agent Orange exposure status to U.S. service members who served in specific areas outside of Vietnam and Thailand during the Vietnam War and suffer from any of the diseases the U.S. government has linked to Agent Orange, Ross said.

The congressman has also asked the defense department for information on what specific chemicals were used during the Vietnam War.

The legislation was named after Master Sgt. Foster, of Lakeland, Florida, who said he sprayed Agent Orange in Guam while serving at Andersen Air Force Base during the Vietnam War. He said he has more than 30 diseases and multiple cancers due to his exposure to Agent Orange in Guam, but doesn't qualify for VA benefits under current law.

Foster hopes that veterans and Guam families who were affected by Agent Orange will see financial and medical benefits as a result of the FOSTER Act.

Roe, Wenstrup & Conaway Introduce Bill to Protect Veterans' 2nd Amendment Rights

On February 16, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Chairman Phil Roe, M.D. (R-TN), along with Reps. Brad Wenstrup, DPM (R-OH) and Mike Conaway (R-TX), introduced the Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act. This bill would prohibit VA from considering any beneficiary who is assisted by a fiduciary as "mentally defective" without a magistrate or judicial authority ruling that the beneficiary is a danger to themselves or others.

"The freedoms granted by the Constitution should apply to all Americans—especially the men and women who have been willing to risk their lives to protect those freedoms," said Roe. "This commonsense bill would ensure no veteran or beneficiary is declared 'mentally defective' simply because they utilize a fiduciary."

"For the men and women who have worn the uniform of this country to be denied the very constitutional freedoms that they

fought for is unconscionable," said Wenstrup. "Veterans shouldn't be forced to choose between utilizing the resources they've earned at the VA and exercising their Second Amendment rights. As a veteran myself, I am honored to work with my colleagues, Chairman Roe and Congressman Conaway, to ensure no veteran is denied their constitutional rights due to bureaucratic overreach."

"All too often, government bureaucracies fail the heroic men and women who have fought for our freedom," said Conaway. "In this case, the same department that was created to help our veterans is taking away one of their most important constitutional rights: the right to bear arms. I'm glad to have Chairman Roe and Congressman Wenstrup on board with this important legislation to ensure that no veteran is wrongly denied their rights under the very Constitution they served to protect."

Background: Under current practice, if a veteran or beneficiary is appointed a fiduciary from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), they are labeled as mentally incompetent in VA's system, and the department automatically sends the veteran's name to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Criminal Background Check System (NICS). Inclusion on the NICS list may prohibit the beneficiary from legally purchasing or owning a firearm. A beneficiary may apply for relief from the firearms prohibitions included in current policy, but that leaves a VA bureaucrat – not a magistrate or other judicial authority – with the power to determine whether or not relief is warranted.

Veterans Affairs News



The dead got paid and the living got cut off in VA program

The government's plan made sense. It wanted to get burial benefits to the spouses of deceased veterans faster, so it automated the process a few years ago.

Widows and widowers no longer would have to submit claims and receipts for funeral costs and wait for payment. Instead, as long as the information was part of the veteran's record, all they had to do to get paid was to report the death.

But like many well-intentioned government processes, that system developed by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs hasn't always worked as intended.

The agency has paid burial benefits to spouses who themselves were deceased and to spouses of veterans who hadn't died. It also made multiple payments on the same death, according to an audit released last week by the VA inspector general that questioned about \$750,000 of those types of payments.

The payments to spouses of living veterans were especially troubling because in many cases they triggered the cancellation of those veterans' disability benefits because the agency thought

they were dead. While they weren't 6 feet under, they did end up in the hole financially.

One veteran lost about \$11,300 in payments over five months after the agency recorded that he had died, when it was his spouse who had passed on. He later was reimbursed.

The audit also cites the example of a VA claims intake center being notified about the death of a veteran's son so he would be removed from the veteran's disability benefits. But it was the veteran who was recorded as deceased, cutting off \$3,000 in disability benefits. The agency also paid an automated burial benefit to the veteran's spouse. The disability benefits later were reimbursed.

The agency improperly discontinued about \$190,000 in disability benefits to 68 living veterans between August 2014 and January 2015, the first months of the automated burial payments program that were examined in the audit.

Once they had been declared dead, some veterans found it wasn't easy to convince the government they were alive.

In May 2014, the agency sent a letter to the estate of a veteran noting that the veteran had died. The next month, the veteran went to a VA facility "to show that he was not deceased," the audit said. In October, his wife got a \$300 burial payment and a letter noting the veteran had died. The veteran had to go to a VA facility again to show he was alive. The burial payment was returned.

In its response to the audit, the Veterans Benefits Administration defended its automatic burial payment system, saying it "worked as designed and provided proper payments based on the evidence of record."

It said the payments questioned by the inspector general were "not entirely the result of the automated burial process." Some of those payments stemmed from incorrect information provided to the agency "or human error related to data entry of information for a veteran's death."

The VA said it would work to strengthen the system, but that it relies on veterans to report changes about their dependents.

While the agency can make decisions based only on the data on hand, it also needs to do a better job of managing that data.

Other examples cited by the inspector general included an improper burial payment of \$2,000 sent to the deceased wife of a veteran. When she died in 2012, the VA removed her from her husband's disability benefits but not from his other veteran's records. So when he died two years later, the VA believed she was living and paid her.

About \$622,000 was paid to 786 deceased spouses, the inspector general said, with 421 of the payments returned to the VA.

Another \$98,000 was paid in 78 multiple burial payments to spouses of deceased veterans, including one instance when both

the veteran's spouse and former spouse each received \$300. The improper payment to the former spouse was returned.

Only some of the improper payments identified by the inspector general were returned because the mail came back as undeliverable or were canceled because the recipients weren't eligible, the audit said. The Department of Veterans Affairs agreed with the recommendation to take "corrective actions when warranted."

The inspector general criticized the VA for failing to require veterans' spouses to provide proof of death and for accepting notification via telephone instead of requiring a death certificate. It pointed out that while regulations allow for automated burial payments to be processed without a veteran's spouse submitting a claim and proof of burial expenses, proof of the death is required.

The VA interprets the regulations differently. In its response to the audit, it said the verbal statement of a spouse reporting a death is sufficient.

"The statement is considered acceptable as long as it clearly identifies the beneficiary, contains the date and place of the event, and contains the full name and relationship of the deceased to the claimant," the department wrote. "If there is reason to believe the claimant's statement is not valid, then VA requires proof or evidence of death."

The VA said it would, though, add a step to its process and check with the Social Security Administration to verify that a veteran's spouse is alive before approving payment.

If it can do that, why couldn't it also check with Social Security to verify the veteran death? That could prevent both fraud and mistakes.

Message from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs: Addresses VA employees

I am grateful to President Trump and to Members of Congress for entrusting me with the privilege of serving Veterans and the dedicated employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs as your Secretary. It is my highest professional honor.

Together, we'll ensure our Nation's obligation to provide care and benefits to those "who shall have borne the battle" and fulfill our institutional I-CARE Values: Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence.

That obligation and those values are sacred to me, first, as an American - a beneficiary of the service and sacrifices of Veterans and their families who defend our uniquely American freedoms and opportunities. They're also sacred to me because my father served the Nation as an Army psychiatrist, and both my grandfathers were Army Veterans. My paternal grandfather served as Chief Pharmacist at the VA hospital in Madison, Wisconsin, and as a young doctor, I trained in VA hospitals. So, serving the Nation and serving Veterans is a family tradition.

It was a privilege to serve as VA's Under Secretary for Health over the past year and a half. Now, I look forward to continuing our collective efforts across the Department and our country to deliver the care and services our Veterans need and deserve. Among many critical efforts already underway, we will continue building on significant progress increasing access for Veterans, preventing suicide, addressing unique needs of women Veterans, supporting Veterans' families and caregivers, continuing to drive down the disability backlog and Veteran homelessness, and pursuing necessary legislation to reform the outdated appeals process and for other critical legislative priorities.

With the support of the President, Congress, Veterans, their service organizations, and the American people, we - the dedicated employees of VA - will continue to fulfill President Lincoln's promise.

There is no nobler mission. There is no higher calling for any American. I am humbled and proud to serve with you.

David J. Shulkin, M.D.

Lt. Gen. Hal Moore dies; depicted in film 'We Were Soldiers'



Retired Lt. Gen. Harold G. "Hal" Moore, the American hero known for saving most of his men in the first major battle between the U.S. and North Vietnamese armies, died February 10. He was 94.

Joseph Galloway, who with Moore co-authored the book "We Were Soldiers Once ... and Young," confirmed Saturday to The

Associated Press that Moore died late Friday in his sleep at his home in Auburn, Alabama.

Galloway said Moore, his friend of 51 years, died two days shy of his 95th birthday.

"There's something missing on this earth now. We've lost a great warrior, a great soldier, a great human being and my best friend. They don't make them like him anymore," Galloway said.

Moore was best known for his actions at the 1965 Battle of Ia Drang, where he was a lieutenant colonel in command of the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment. His actions were later reflected in the movie "We Were Soldiers" in which actor Mel Gibson portrayed Moore. The book tells what happened to virtually every trooper involved in the 34-day campaign and the

climactic four-day battle in which 234 Americans died at landing zones X-Ray and Albany in November 1965.

Galloway, a former war correspondent for United Press International, said Moore was "without question, one of the finest commanders I ever saw in action."

"Those of us who survived Landing Zone X-Ray survived because of his brilliance of command. I think every one of us thought we were going to die at that place except Hal Moore. He was certain we were going to win that fight and he was right," Galloway recalled.

Galloway and Moore wrote a second book, "We Are Soldiers Still", which he said grew out of a journey back to the battlefields of Vietnam 25 years later. "We went back and walked those old battlefields. At the end of the day, Hal Moore and Col. Nguyen Huu An, the North Vietnamese commander, stood in a circle in the clearing and prayed for the souls of every man who died on both sides."

He said the two shared an "instant brotherhood that grew out of combat."

"When we were discussing the book contract with a lawyer/agent, he asked to see the contract between me and Hal Moore, and Hal Moore said 'I don't think you understand. This isn't just a matter of money. We have trusted each other with our lives in battle and we have no contract before that.' I absolutely agreed."

On a Facebook page managed by Moore's family, relatives said he died on the birthday of his wife, Julia, who died in 2004 after 55 years of marriage.

"Mom called Dad home on her day," the statement said. "After having a stroke last week, Dad was more lethargic and had difficulty speaking, but he had always fought his way back."

Before serving in Vietnam, Moore graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point and then commanded a battalion in the newly formed air mobile 11th Air Assault Division at Fort Benning.

Born in Bardstown, Kentucky, he served in the U.S. military for 32 years.

Galloway said the family has tentatively scheduled a religious service Friday in Auburn and a memorial service at the National Infantry Museum at Fort Benning Army Base in Columbus, Georgia.

Membership Renewals

Is your membership renewal about to become due? Please renew today so you can continue to receive the Chapter newsletter, as well as the VVA Veteran! And as you renew, please consider joining the other 217 members who have chosen Life membership. You must submit a copy of your DD214 to qualify for Life membership.

50 Years Ago

- **March 6** - DAVID G. OUELLET, MEDAL OF HONOR.
- **March 7** - OPERATION OH JAC KYO I SUCCEEDS. The Republic of Korea's (ROK) 9th and Capital Divisions thwart enemy intentions to go on the offensive in Phu Yen Province by inflicting large troop and equipment losses primarily on the North Vietnamese 9th Regiment. The largest ROK operation to date lasts 43 days. It accomplishes the linkup of the two ROK division areas of operations along the central coast of South Vietnam.
- **March 10** - MERLYN HANS DETHLEFSEN, MEDAL OF HONOR.
- **March 12** - STEPHEN EDWARD KAROPCZYC, MEDAL OF HONOR.
- **March 15** - RUPPERT L. SARGENT, MEDAL OF HONOR.
- **March 18** - FIRST U.S. MARINE WOMAN TO SERVE IN VIETNAM ARRIVES. The first woman Marine to serve in Vietnam, Master Sergeant Barbara J. Dulinsky, arrives in Saigon for assignment to the United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, combat operations center.
- **March 20** - CHARLES CHRIS HAGEMEISTER, MEDAL OF HONOR.
- **March 21** - CHARLES ERNEST HOSKING, JR. MEDAL OF HONOR.
- **March 22** - DAVID H. MCNERNEY, MEDAL OF HONOR.
- **March 22** - PRESIDENT JOHNSON MOVES PACIFICATION PROGRAM TO MACV. During the Guam Conference, attended by U.S. and South Vietnamese leaders, President Johnson reveals his decision to reorganize the pacification program and place it under General William Westmoreland, MACV commander, with Robert Komer to serve as head of the program and as deputy MACV commander. On 11 May the United States announces formation of the new office to implement President Johnson's decision, the Office of Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS).
- **March 24** - WALTER K. SINGLETON, MEDAL OF HONOR.
- **March 26** - DOUGLAS E. DICKEY, MEDAL OF HONOR.
- **March 26** - GENERAL WESTMORELAND ORDERS III MARINE AMPHIBIOUS FORCE TO CREATE "MCNAMARA'S WALL". General Westmoreland orders III Marine Amphibious Force (MAF) to prepare a plan for locating, constructing and occupying a strongpoint obstacle system south of the DMZ to prevent the North Vietnamese from infiltrating through that zone into South Vietnam. III MAF eventually begins building this strongpoint system later in the year while under fire by North Vietnamese artillery. This anti-infiltration effort, also known as Dye Marker and Project Nine, is labeled by the media as the McNamara Line or McNamara's Wall, after the U.S. Secretary of Defense.
- **March 30** - JOHN P. BOBO, MEDAL OF HONOR.

Hartford Vet Center



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We are the people in VA who welcome home war veterans with honor by providing quality readjustment counseling in a caring manner. Vet Centers understand and appreciate Veterans' war experiences while assisting them and their family members toward a successful post-war adjustment in or near their community.

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