

CONNECTION



Connecticut Chapter 120

Greater Hartford

Over 33 Years of Service to Veterans

May 2017

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Inside This Issue

Chapter/State News

POW/MIA News

At The Capitol

On The Hill

Veterans Affairs News

From the Service Rep's Desk

Helicopter units and losses

50 Years Ago

Helping Hands for Veterans

Remember and Honor Them



On Monday, May 29, 2017 Americans across this nation and citizens located around the world will pause throughout the day to observe Memorial Day. Since its first official observation on 5 May, 1868, when it was called Declaration Day, it has been a day of remembrance for those who sacrificed and died in our nation's service. And while it was originally dedicated to honor Civil War

soldiers, we know it today as a celebration in memory of all who have fought for and defended our right to freedom.

Meetings

The Chapter 120 membership meeting will be held on Thursday, May 4, 2017 at 7:00pm in the Machinists Union Hall, 357 Main St., East Hartford.

The Board of Directors will meet on Thursday, May 25 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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In 1968 the observation of this day was established to be the last Monday in May. Today it remains a time of observation to honor and to respect those who fought to protect the liberties that our Founding Fathers proclaimed with certainty in the Declaration of Independence and that were thoughtfully and carefully framed in the Constitution of the United States. In his proclamation to set aside this day in 1868, General Logan instructed there to be thoughts to "...cherish tenderly the memories of our heroic dead who made their breast a barricade between our country and its foes".

To those who died securing peace and freedom; To those who served in conflict to protect our land, and sacrificed their dreams of the day to preserve the hope of our nation keeping America the land of the free for over two centuries we owe our thanks and our honor. It is important to not only recognize their service but to respect their devotion to duty and to ensure that the purpose for which they fought and died will never be forgotten.

From the soldiers who fought bravely during the American Revolution to the men and women of today's Armed Forces, America's fighting forces, have responded bravely to this nation's call to duty. Both on the battlefield and in their assurance of readiness, members of the nation's military remain bound to their duty. For more than 240 years, America's Armed Forces have been the surest guarantee that Freedom will continue to ring across this land – From Sea to Shining Sea!

The lives of the men and women who fought in America's battles, and who served their country in support of the military, made significant sacrifice in fighting for the freedom and liberty that we enjoy today. Too often we fail to remember those who gave their life, or those whose life today bears the scars as a lasting memory of that sacrifice and commitment. But there are many who remember vividly as the lives affected were sons, daughters, friends, coworkers and neighbors – and that their unselfish sacrifice was made with the assurance that life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness required the ultimate service to their nation.

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VVA Service Representatives	
John Cutler	568-9212
E-Mail: VVA.Service.Rep@att.net	
Gerald Fabry, MD	887-1755
E-Mail : gerfab@comcast.net	
Gary Waterhouse	656-0430
E-Mail : gwaterhouse@cox.net	
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E-Mail: Fmello336@yahoo.com	
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E-Mail: jrcvva120@aol.com	
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Norwich (Area Code 860)	887-1755
Danbury (Area Code 203)	790-4000
All Telephone Numbers are Area Code 860 unless otherwise noted	

Chapter/State News

National Convention Delegate Elections

Elections were held at the April Chapter meeting for National Convention Delegates and the Election Committee. Results of the election are below:

National Convention Delegates

Frank Mello	Paul Barry	Bob Bagge
Jerry Blum	Bob Burgess	John Siemer

Election Committee

Tim Siggia	William Chiodo	Kenneth Lewis
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Congratulations to All!

Upcoming Events

Shad Derby/Armed Forces Day Parade

Chapter 120 will participate in the Shad Derby/Armed Forces Day Parade, to be held May 20. Form up at 10:30am, with step off at 11:30am from Windsor High School.

Manchester Memorial Day Parade

Chapter 120 will participate in the Manchester Memorial Day Parade on May 29. Form up at 8:30am, with step-off at 9:30am from the Army/Navy Club, Main Street.

From The New London Day

Blumenthal asks New London VA clinic for 'wish list'



In his first visit to the John J. McGuirk Outpatient Clinic, U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal asked staffers there for their "wish list" in light of a \$10 billion proposal to upgrade Department of Veterans Affairs' facilities.

Blumenthal, D-Conn., spent time Tuesday afternoon touring the clinic, the busiest of the VA's six community-based outpatient clinics in Connecticut, and chatting up patients and staff. The clinic, which focuses on primary and mental health care, serves about 4,800 veterans. The VA is hoping to almost double the size of the clinic.

Last month, Democrats in the U.S. Senate unveiled a \$1 trillion infrastructure plan over the next decade, including \$10 billion for VA infrastructure upgrades. Sixty percent of VA buildings are 50 years or older, and the VA estimates their facilities need as much as \$50 billion in capital investment over the next decade, according to Blumenthal's office.

President Donald Trump has also proposed to increase the VA's budget.

The growth in the number of patients being seen at the clinic and in services has resulted in a space crunch, Chris Ruser, chief of primary care for the VA Connecticut Healthcare System, told Blumenthal.

Birthday Wishes

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

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| John P. Burns | Michael J. Coyne |
| John R. Cutler | Robert N. DeRosa |
| William S. Ehlert | Russell C. Ehlert |
| Robert Fulco | Peter Galgano |
| Normand R. Girardin | Frank T. Jodaitis |
| James V. Laviana III | Kipp O. Miller |
| Raymond R. Samolis, Jr. | James Stevenson |
| David Taylor | |



"We're at the point where efficiency is affected, and our ability to see patients the way we would like to see them," Ruser said. "You can see people crammed into rooms and providers running back and forth from different spaces."

All but the VA's Willimantic clinic, the newest, have outgrown their space, according to the Ruser.

Blumenthal said going forward he would be advocating for more space and investment at the clinics.

Newsletter articles/stories/photos

Any articles, stories and/or photos submitted for the newsletter must be received by the "cut off" date for any given month. Photos must be accompanied by text which describes the event, names, dates and any other pertinent facts so our readers understand the story behind the photo(s). The newsletter editor will announce the "cut off" dates at each Chapter meeting. The "cut off" date for our June 2017 newsletter is 19 May 2017. Due to space availability, the editor reserves the right to include or not include photos for a given month.

Connecticut Chapter 484 Life Member Passes

Joseph R. Zichichi, 71, of Guilford passed away on Tuesday, April 4, 2017 surrounded by his family at CT Hospice in Branford. He was the beloved husband of Marianna (Gargano) Zichichi. Joe was born in New Haven on August 22, 1945 to the late Nicholas and Lorraine (Hartman) Zichichi.

Joe was a U.S. veteran who served in the Army with the 138th Aviation Company (RR) over two tours in Vietnam. After the war, Joe worked for S.N.E.T. for more than 25 years. He retired after 16 years from the Connecticut State Police, where he worked as a Safety and Weight Inspector. Joe was also a member of the New Haven Sportsmen Club in North Guilford.

He was a true car fanatic, loving all cars, especially his 1967 Mustang, which he was restoring. Joe could be found on all holidays serving food to the veterans at the Veterans Affairs Hospital. Joe's mission in life was to help people, no matter what. He was there to help family, friends or a veteran. The community has lost a good friend.

Joe is survived by his sister Lynnette (Jack) Feibel of Deerfield, NH, and many cousins including Joseph P. Zichichi of Northford, CT. He is also survived by his two nephews and a niece: Michael Zichichi of Maryland, and Christopher Feibel of Salem, NH, and his niece, goddaughter Kelly Fox of Windham, NH, Joe had three great-nieces he leaves behind. As well as his great friends William Schaefer and Robert Schmidt. He was predeceased by his brother, Nicholas Zichichi. Joe's family would like to extend a special thanks to the staff of Smilow Cancer Center in Guilford and the staff of Connecticut Hospice in Branford.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Monday April 10 at St. George Church. Burial was at St. Agnes Cemetery in Branford, with full military honors.

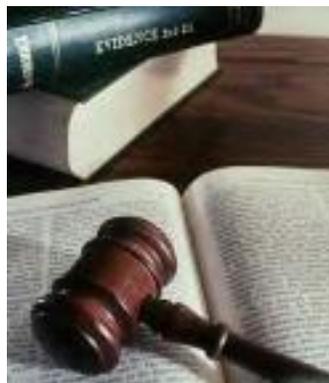
Ed Note: Joe and I both served in Vietnam as crew chiefs with the Army Security Agency, he with the 138th Aviation Company and I with the sister company, 146th Aviation Company. We shared many stories of our experiences in Vietnam. As veterans service officer, I represented Joe at the VA and won his appeal for 100% disability.



US Army RU-8D, 138th Aviation Company (RR)

From The New London Day

Connecticut vet sues over discharges for those with mental health problems



A Connecticut veteran has filed a class-action lawsuit over the Army's alleged failure to address the so-called "bad paper" discharges that he and tens of thousands of other vets received after showing signs of post-traumatic-stress disorder and other mental health disorders.

The suit, filed by Steve Kennedy of Fairfield, who served as an Army infantryman, claims that the Army "routinely" fails to treat soldiers' serious mental health conditions, and instead gives them less-than-honorable discharges, "often because of infractions related to mental health crises."

Kennedy, members of the Yale Clinic, and U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., held a news conference in New Haven Monday April 17 to announce the lawsuit. Kennedy, 30, and former Connecticut resident Alicia Carson, 28, who served in the U.S. Army and the Connecticut Army National Guard, are the lead plaintiffs. Carson now lives in Alaska.

"As my PTSD became impossible to manage on my own, my commander told me that the only way I could receive treatment was by leaving the Army with a bad paper discharge," said Kennedy, who is the leader of the Connecticut chapter of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America. "Just like that, the Army

wiped away years of distinguished service to my country and deemed it less than Honorable."

Initially, Kennedy sued individually, but amended his suit and refiled a federal class-action.

Tens of thousands of vets from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan received less-than-honorable discharges as a result of misconduct attributable to PTSD and traumatic brain injury, according to the Yale Veterans Legal Services Clinic, which has helped former service members seeking to upgrade their discharge status.

Vets with these kinds of discharges are usually ineligible for crucial health and retirement benefits and are not usually eligible for state benefits such as property tax exemptions. And the discharges can also make it difficult for vets to get a job.

The issue has garnered national attention in recent years, including from former Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, who in a 2014 memo, directed the discharge review boards to give "liberal consideration" to PTSD-based applications. The appeals process remains slow and still results in a large number of denials, according to the Yale clinic.

The Army Discharge Review Board "routinely and callously denies veterans that raise mental health as a factor in their applications," said Jonathan Petkun, a law student with the Yale clinic.

Kennedy joined the Army in 2006, deploying to Iraq from June 2007 to July 2008 as a Humvee turret gunner and machine gun operator. He provided route clearance and security for a supply convoy between western and central Iraq, where his unit's convoys regularly hit or discovered improvised explosive devices. His unit was later responsible for disrupting Al Qaeda supply lines through the desert villages in the Anbar and Saladin Provinces.

Despite fairly rapid promotions and being assigned leadership roles at a young age, as well as receiving numerous military service medals, Kennedy began to exhibit symptoms of PTSD when he returned from Iraq.

He abused alcohol, self-mutilated and began having suicidal thoughts. He didn't seek help because he feared being labeled weak and losing the trust of members of his unit, the lawsuit says. After being told he could not take leave to attend his own wedding, Kennedy went absent without leave, or AWOL.

He was given a "general" discharge and dismissed from the Army on July 27, 2009. The Army board twice rejected Kennedy's requests to upgrade his discharge status.

The lawsuit seeks to upgrade Kennedy and Carson's discharges to honorable and to compel the Army to fairly adjudicate PTSD applications.

POW/MIA News



Marines Missing From Vietnam War Identified

The remains of Marine Corps Capt. John A. House, II; Lance Cpl. John D. Killen, III; and Cpl. Glyn L. Runnels, Jr., have now been accounted for on April 10, 2017.

House was assigned to HHM-265 Marine Aircraft Group 16, and Killen and Runnels were assigned to Company A, 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, when their aircraft crashed in Vietnam, June 30, 1967.

Two additional service members were previously identified from this crash, Marine Lance Cpl. Merlin R. Allen and Navy Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Michael B. Judd. Their remains were returned to their families for burial with full military honors.

Airman Missing From Vietnam War Identified

Air Force Col. William E. Campbell has now been accounted for on April 13, 2017.

Campbell, of the 497th Tactical Fighter Squadron, was reported missing in action Jan. 29, 1969 in Laos.

The support from the government of Laos was vital to the success of this recovery.

At The Capitol



House passes bill to allow property tax exemption for Gold Star parents and spouses of KIA

The Connecticut General Assembly House passed HB 7110 on April 12, 2017. This bill allows municipalities, with their legislative body's approval, to provide a property tax exemption to a parent or surviving spouse of a service member killed in action while performing active military duty with the U.S. Armed Forces (i.e., "Gold Star" parent or surviving spouse). A municipality may exempt up to \$20,000 or 10% of the property's assessed value.

To be eligible, the income of the Gold Star parent or surviving spouse cannot exceed (1) the state's income limit for a single person for other veteran property tax exemptions annually set by the Office of Policy and Management (\$35,200 in 2017, which includes inflation adjustments) or (2) an amount the municipality sets, up to \$25,000 more than the state limit. Under the bill, if both parents live together only one may receive the exemption. However, if they jointly own the property and one receives the exemption, both would benefit from the lowered tax

liability. An applicant with individual income within the exemption's threshold amounts might qualify while living with another parent who has income over the threshold amounts. The bill establishes application requirements and procedures.

Under the bill, the U.S. Armed Forces includes the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Air Force and any reserve component of these branches, including the Connecticut National Guard performing duty under Title 32 of federal law (e.g., certain Homeland Security missions).

Finally, the bill makes minor, technical, and conforming changes to the veterans' statutes on the Office of Advocacy and Assistance.

This bill is the only legislation acted upon by either General Assembly chamber as of this date. There are twenty-three (23) veterans' bills waiting for legislative action in both the Senate and House.

On The Hill



National Vietnam Veterans Day signed into law by the President

It's Official: March 29 Is National Vietnam War Veterans Day

"Forty-two years ago today, the last American combat troops left the former South Vietnam, marking the end of what was then our nation's longest war," said John Rowan, National President of Vietnam Veterans of America. "And yesterday, the bipartisan legislation, S.305, authored by Senators Pat Toomey (R-Pa.) and Joe Donnelly (D-Ind.), permanently designating March 29th

as National Vietnam War Veterans Day, was signed into law by President Trump."

"The Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017 is the first federal statute to recognize in perpetuity the bravery and sacrifice of veterans who served during the Vietnam War. Although this day may be bittersweet for some of us, and though we cannot claim that the United States emerged victorious from that terribly divisive war, we can look back with pride for the service we rendered in answering our nation's call," said Rowan.

"Our war is long over," Rowan added, "but for many its legacy of hurt continues to this day. Because a war does not end after the last bullet was fired, VVA will continue to assist those who still suffer, mentally as well as physically, from the war's deprivations, and from the failures of those entities of government whose responsibility it is to aid our veterans physically, mentally, and fiscally."

"We applaud Senators Toomey and Donnelly for their support of our Vietnam veterans and for ensuring that March 29th is permanently designated as National Vietnam War Veterans Day," said Rowan.

President Signs bill to extend Veterans Choice Program

The President signed S 544 into law on Wednesday, April 19. This bill amends the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to eliminate the August 7, 2017, sunset date for the Veterans Choice Program, thus allowing the program to operate until all of the money in the Veterans Choice Fund is expended.

Additionally, the bill makes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) the primary payer (currently the VA is the secondary payer) for medical care relating to non-service connected disabilities and recovery of costs from third parties for certain care under the program.

And finally, the VA may share medical information with a non-VA entity (including private entities and other federal agencies) that provides veterans with authorized hospital care or medical services. Such entity may not re-disclose or use such information for a purpose other than that for which the disclosure was made.

Veterans Affairs News



VA Secretary Praises Congress for Extending Choice Program

On April 5, following the U.S. Senate's passage by unanimous consent this week, the U.S. House of Representatives passed

legislation that extends the Veterans Choice Program (VCP) until the funding dedicated to the program is exhausted. The VCP is a critical program that increases access to care for millions of Veterans. Without this legislation, the ability to use VCP funding would have ended abruptly on Aug. 7 of this year. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. David J. Shulkin released the following statement of support:

"Congress has once again demonstrated that the country stands firmly united when it comes to supporting our nation's Veterans," Secretary Shulkin said. "The Department of Veterans Affairs truly appreciates the quick bipartisan resolution Congress provided with the extension of the Veterans Choice Program.

"I want to thank Chairman Johnny Isakson, Ranking Member Jon Tester, Chairman Phil Roe, Ranking Member Tim Walz and all the members of our committees for their leadership as we continue to make improvements to increase Veterans' access to care," Secretary Shulkin continued. "I also want to thank Senator John McCain, who has championed choice for Veterans

and whose work on this issue allowed for swift and successful resolution.

“VA looks forward to continued bipartisan support as we partner with Congress to not only develop a long-term solution for community care, but also work toward other critical legislation, such as accountability and appeals modernization to ensure Veterans receive the highest quality of care, benefits and support they have earned.”

VA Makes Wait Times for Patients Transparent for Veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is taking unprecedented steps to increase transparency. VA launched a new Access and Quality Tool on April 12 that provides Veterans with an easy-to-use, easy-to-understand way of accessing patient wait time and quality of care data. This tool not only provides Veterans with more information about VA services, it increases accountability and ensures VA is held to a higher standard.

“Veterans must have access to information that is clear and understandable to make informed decisions about their health care,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. David J. Shulkin. “No other health-care system in the country releases this type of information on wait times. This allows Veterans to see how VA is performing.”

The tool allows Veterans to access the average times patients are waiting to be seen in their local area; how Veterans describe their experiences scheduling primary- and specialty-care appointments at specific VA facilities; timeliness of appointments for care needed right away; and the quality of health care delivered at VA medical centers compared with local private-sector hospitals. The Access and Quality Tool is the most transparent and easy to understand wait time and quality data website in the health-care industry.

“This tool is another example of VA leading the way,” said Acting Under Secretary for Health Dr. Poonam Alaigh. “No one in the private sector publishes data this way. This tool will instill a spirit of competition and encourage our medical facilities to proactively address access and quality issues while empowering Veterans to make choices according to what works best for them and their families.”

VA will continue to make improvements to this tool based on the feedback it receives from Veterans. The Access and Quality Tool can be found at www.accesstocare.va.gov. Watch this video to learn how the tool can be used.

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 220 members who have chosen Life membership for \$100. You must submit a copy of your DD214 to qualify for Life membership.

From the Service Rep's Desk



VA Compensation & Pension Understanding Mental Health Examinations

How is a Mental Health Condition Evaluated by VA?

When you submit a claim for a particular mental health condition, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will process your claim as a claim for any mental health conditions that may be reasonably defined by:

- The description of the claim
- The symptoms that you describe
- The information and evidence that you submit, and
- Any other information and evidence obtained

Since mental health conditions share similar symptomatology and findings, in order to make sure the correct mental health condition is evaluated as it relates to your claim, VA does a thorough review of all of the medical and non-medical evidence surrounding your claim. For VA purposes, you can only be rated for one mental health condition. VA will review the entire body of evidence to gain a clear understanding of how your mental health condition symptoms impact your social and industrial functioning and which diagnosed mental health condition(s) may be related to your claim. When determining the actual evaluation of the mental health condition, VA refers to

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM IV or DSM-5) findings to assign appropriate evaluations using the Mental Disorder Criteria in the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities.

Why is a Review Mental Health Exam Needed?

Future mental health exams are only required or allowed under certain circumstances:

- When assigning a pre-stabilization rating
- When the evidence of record clearly shows the likelihood for improvement

Sound medical evidence is required, indicating the likelihood of improvement, to warrant a future exam. Other than those reasons listed above, there are no automatic future exams required or allowed by regulations.

Why is it Important to Attend My Mental Health Exam?

When a mental health examination is requested to confirm your continued entitlement to disability benefits, it is important that you attend your scheduled disability examination. If for some reason you are unable to attend your mental health examination you must notify VA and request your examination to be rescheduled. However, if you fail to attend your scheduled mental health examination without adequate reason, the VA will

review the current evidence of record and may be required by law to do one of the following:

- Continue payment for the disability(ies) for which the examination was scheduled, if there is no change in severity of your disability(ies) as supported by evidence of record,
- Discontinue payment for the disability(ies) for which the examination was scheduled, or
- Reduce payment for the disability(ies) for which the examination was scheduled to minimum evaluation established by law.

It is very important that you attend your review examination to ensure that the above mentioned actions do not occur in the absence of the findings that would have been obtained through your examination. VA wants to ensure that the appropriate disability rating is assigned based on your individual examination findings.

REMEMBER: The examiner is only involved in performing the claim exam. They do not make the rating decision. Only a VA regional office can answer questions regarding your claim.

From Cherries - A Vietnam War Novel

Helicopter Units and losses in the Vietnam War

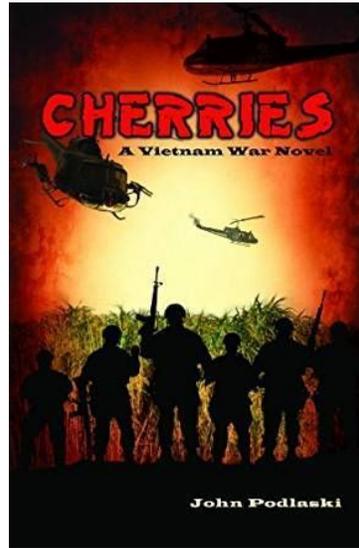


One out of every ten Americans who served in Vietnam became a casualty. As a result, 58,169 were killed and 304,000 wounded out of 2.29 million who served. Although the percent of dead is similar to other wars, amputations or crippling wounds were 300% higher than in World War II. 75,000 Vietnam Veterans are severely disabled.

MEDEVAC helicopters flew nearly 500,000 missions, airlifting 900,000 patients (nearly one-half were Americans). The average lapse between being wounded and reaching a hospital was less than one hour, and as a result, less than one percent of those wounded died of their wounds within the first 24 hours.

The helicopter provided unprecedented mobility. Without helicopters, it would have taken three times as many troops to secure the 800 mile border with Cambodia and Laos (the politicians thought the Geneva Conventions of 1954 and the Geneva Accords of 1962 would secure the border).

Army Huey's totaled 9,713,762 flight hours in Vietnam between October 1966 and the end of American involvement in early 1973. Cobra helicopters totaled 1,110,716 flight hours in Vietnam. This is also the main reason that soldiers in Vietnam saw more action than those soldiers of preceding wars. Large groups of soldiers could be air-lifted into a battle and then be withdrawn after a few hours and flown to another area to reinforce other units or to engage the enemy again in a different portion of the country.



Cherries is a story about the right of passage that all young soldiers undertake when experiencing war for the first time. Although the setting for *Cherries* is Vietnam, the author's experiences, emotions, and tragedies are not only confined to that war – they are repeated in every conflict. Readers of the novel have commented that *Cherries* should be read by students, siblings of those who have served, and by the parents of those soldiers serving today. After

finishing *Cherries*, you'll have a better understanding of why those who go away to war come home "changed". All veterans of war will relate to *Cherries* – either in part or in whole!

About the Author

John Podlaski served in Vietnam during 1970 and 1971 as an infantryman with both the Wolfhounds of the 25th Division and the 501st Infantry Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division. He was awarded the Combat Infantry Badge, Bronze Star, two Air Medals, and a Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry. He spent the years since Vietnam working in management positions within the automotive industry and recently received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration. John is a life member of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 154 and lives with his wife of 43 years, Janice, in Sterling Heights, Michigan. Both retired in 2013 and spend their days pursuing interests they enjoy. John published his second book in June, 2016.

50 Years Ago

May 2 - LEONARD B. KELLER, MEDAL OF HONOR.

May 2 - RAYMOND R. WRIGHT, MEDAL OF HONOR.

May 9 - ROBERT KOMER ASSIGNED HEAD OF CIVILIAN RURAL SECURITY PROGRAM. Robert Komer is assigned to Vietnam and established the CORDS office to oversee the pacification strategy in South Vietnam. CORDS would lead all civilian agencies involved in pacification, which included USAID, State Department, U.S. Information Agency, U.S. Public Health Service, and the Central Intelligence Agency.

CORDS activities varied widely but focused on strengthening rural security from Communist influence, destroying Viet Cong infrastructure, and creating programs to win South Vietnamese support.

May 18 - BRUCE ALAN GRANDSTAFF, MEDAL OF HONOR.

May 18 - DALE EUGENE WAYRYNEN, MEDAL OF HONOR.

May 20 - FRANKIE ZOLY MOLNAR, MEDAL OF HONOR.

May 20 - LESLIE ALLEN BELLRICHARD, MEDAL OF HONOR.

May 22 - DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS. USCG Barataria conducts the first fire-support mission for the newly created Coast Guard Squadron Three in Vietnam. This force initially consists of five Coast Guard 311-footers used to support Market Time operations.

May 31 - CIA FLIES SURVEILLANCE IN BLACK SHIELD. Central Intelligence Agency Project OXCART requests to conduct surveillance missions with their Lockheed A-12 Blackbird aircraft over North Vietnam during Operation BLACK SHIELD. In support of this operation, Mel Vojvodich flew the first BLACK SHIELD mission. Twenty-two operations were flown by Project OXCART in 1967.

Receive "The Connection" by E-Mail

The monthly Chapter 120 newsletter, *The Connection*, is available by e-mail. Currently, 97 members receive the newsletter by e-mail, saving the Chapter over \$600 in postal fees annually. The newsletter is available in Adobe format (.pdf), attached to your e-mail. If you wish to receive the newsletter via e-mail, please e-mail the newsletter editor at jrcvva120@aol.com

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**Helping Hands for Our Fellow
Veterans**

**Won't You Please Give a Helping Hand to
a Brother or Sister Veteran?**

Several veterans have contacted Chapter 120 asking for help in paying the most basic of needs for themselves and their families. These veterans are those who do not qualify for regular federal, state or local assistance – they fall into that financial category where they make too much to qualify for assistance, but not enough to afford basic needs for their families, like food, fuel for heat, or clothing for their children.

Chapter 120 has decided to ask you – our members – to lend a helping hand to your fellow veterans and their families. Even a small amount of \$5 can make a difference – or more if you can afford to help a fellow veteran and his or her family.

Please send your generous gift, made out to Connecticut Chapter 120, to:

Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.
Connecticut Chapter 120
Attention: Helping Hands for Veterans
P.O. Box 4136
Hartford, CT 06145

And don't forget, your donations are tax deductible.



**Veterans
Crisis Line**
1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

STAND BY THEM

Confidential help for
Veterans and their families

..... Confidential chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net or text to 838255



**Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.
Greater Hartford Chapter 120
P.O. Box 4136
Hartford, CT 06145**