

CONNECTION



Connecticut Chapter 120

Greater Hartford
Over 34 Years of Service to Veterans

March 2018

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Meetings

The Chapter 120 membership meeting will be held on Thursday, March 1, 2018 at 7:00pm in the Machinists Union Hall, 357 Main St., East Hartford.

The Board of Directors will meet on Thursday, March 29 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 ctchapter120@aol.com.

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From MilitaryTimes

Burn pits downrange caused lung disease in service members, court rules



Service members and private military contractors who worked around “burn pits” downrange, and later suffered from lung and respiratory issues, may soon get a breath of fresh air.

A recent court decision by a judge under the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office for Workers’ Compensation Programs ruled that open-air burn pits are connected to lung disease.

The burn pits — where chemicals were released into the air from trash, abandoned hardware, and other waste being incinerated — occurred throughout U.S. military bases in Iraq and

Afghanistan over the course of the wars there.

The ruling could be a boon for the tens of thousands of service members who signed onto the Veterans Affairs Department’s Burn Pit Registry over the course of the conflicts in the Middle East.

The concession may pad the files of plaintiffs seeking medical services for the lung and respiratory ailments they suffered after returning from overseas, but currently are denied coverage by the VA.

The ruling comes after years of veterans’ advocacy groups pleading for assistance. In October 2016, for instance, a group of 700 veterans and family members with the group *Burn Pits 360* wrote an open letter to then-President Barack Obama to record their grievances.

“We write because these veterans are seriously ill, dying or have passed away, and more must be done,” the letter read. “Many of us went to war able to run marathons, but now our health has deteriorated so much that we cannot hold down steady jobs. ... We are misdiagnosed. We are not getting the medical care we urgently need. We need you to act in this, your final year in office.”

In January, former Vice President Joe Biden even voiced the belief that his son’s fatal brain cancer may have been caused by exposure to military burn pits while serving in Iraq and Kosovo.

“Science has recognized there are certain carcinogens that when people are exposed to them, depending on the quantities and the amount in the water and the air, can have a carcinogenic impact on the body,” he said in the interview.

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Chapter/State News

Chapter Elections in April

As Chapter elections for officers, directors and state council delegates will be held at the April membership meeting on April 5, 2018, we again ask our members to offer their time and enthusiasm in order to continue the good works that Chapter 120 is known for in the veterans' community. We need our members to offer their support, expertise, their ideas and their leadership to guide our organization down the right path to attain our basic goals – and establish new goals for our future. We are asking you, our members, to seriously consider running for these important positions. We need your help – we need your leadership and ideas to guide Chapter 120 for the next two years.

Please contact our Election Committee (Tim Siggia, William Chiodo and Kenneth Lewis) to submit your name for one of these positions. Help our Chapter continue our work to support all veterans and their families.

Positions open for candidacy:

Officers: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer

Board of Directors: Five positions

State Council Delegates: Six positions

Elections Committee: Three positions

Election Rules are posted at the end of this newsletter.

From The New London Day

Vets receiving help with legal issues have improved mental health, less homelessness

Veterans receiving care at a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center who also accessed legal help for civil issues they were facing experienced improvements in mental health and fewer days of homelessness, according to a recent study of medical-legal partnerships at VA facilities in Connecticut and New York.

The executive director of the Connecticut Veterans Legal Center, which provides free legal help to homeless and at-risk veterans facing civil issues such as credit card debt or eviction, said proposed legislation in Congress would allow the VA to further study the broader impact of these partnerships.

“It’s possible that legal help could be a low-cost way to reduce homelessness and improve mental health,” said Margaret Middleton, a co-author of the study and executive director of the center.

The Homeless Veterans Prevention Act would allow organizations like Middleton’s to provide civil legal aid at no cost to homeless and low-income vets with mental illness. The bill is co-sponsored by U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., who said that “for vulnerable veterans, access to expert legal services within the VA could mean the difference between a safe, stable home and homelessness.”

While the Constitution guarantees legal representation in criminal cases, the same right is not extended in civil cases, Middleton pointed out, meaning the “vast majority” of defendants in civil cases are unrepresented.

In 2009, a partnership was established between Middleton’s organization and the VA’s facilities in West Haven and Newington to help vets recovering from homelessness and mental illness address civil legal problems. The majority of the 500 veterans the center serves annually are fighting for VA disability benefits. Housing issues such as landlord-tenant disputes, family issues such as child support,

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>Elizabeth Zizzamia</i>	<i>Francis M. Zizzamia</i>

A Special Birthday Wish goes to Jacob Cutler, grandson of Chapter 120 members Michael Belliveau and John Cutler.

and consumer issues such as credit card debt are among the most common problems the veterans faced. Such problems can affect veterans' health and well-being, and if unresolved, can cause them to lose a job or their home.

But Middleton pointed out the funding model for the center, a nonprofit that receives grants and donations, is not sustainable. The bill in Congress would require the VA to fund this kind of civil legal aid, according to Blumenthal, who said the money could be distributed through grants or specific service payments.

The study of legal-medical partnerships in New York and Connecticut found that on average it took 5.4 hours to resolve a vet's legal issue at a cost of about \$50 to \$75 an hour. This means that on average it took about \$270 to \$405 to resolve the issue compared to the \$10,000 to \$60,000 it costs annually to provide care to a person who is chronically homeless, has a severe mental illness or both, the study points out.

POW/MIA News



House passes House Resolution 129

In the House of Representatives, U. S., February 14, 2018.

Whereas according to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency of the Department of Defense, more than 82,000 United States personnel are still unaccounted-for from past wars and

conflicts around the world;

Whereas, though recognizing that an estimated 48,000 of these personnel were presumed lost at sea and are unlikely to be recovered, tens of thousands of families and friends have waited decades for the accounting of their loved ones and comrades in arms;

Whereas the families of these brave Americans deserve our Nation's best efforts to achieve the fullest possible accounting for their missing loved ones;

Whereas the National League of POW/MIA Families, and their iconic POW/MIA flag, pioneered the Vietnam War accounting effort since 1970 and has been joined in this humanitarian quest for answers by Korean War, Cold War, and World War II families, fully supported by the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, Jewish War Veterans, AMVETS, Vietnam Veterans of America, Special Forces Association, Special Operations Association, Rolling Thunder, and other more recently formed groups, and tens of thousands of families and veterans are yearning and advocating for answers concerning the fates of their loved ones and comrades in arms;

Whereas the mission of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency of the Department of Defense is to provide the fullest possible accounting for missing members of the Armed Forces

of the United States, designated civilians of the Department, and other designated personnel; and

Whereas the recovery and investigation teams of the Department of Defense deploy to countries around the world to account as fully as possible for these unaccounted-for United States personnel: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) calls upon the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency and other elements of the Department of Defense, other appropriate elements of the Federal Government, and all foreign governments to resolutely continue efforts to investigate, recover, identify, and account as fully as possible for all United States personnel designated as unaccounted-for from past wars and conflicts around the world; and

(2) calls upon all foreign governments with information on United States personnel designated as unaccounted-for from past wars and conflicts, or with such personnel within their territories, to cooperate fully with the Government of the United States to provide the fullest possible accounting for those American lives.

At The Capitol



VA Committee Begins 2108 Session

The Connecticut General Assembly (CGA) VA Committee held its first meeting on February 15, 2018 and voted to raise all 27 concepts listed on their agenda. Many well-intentioned legislative ideas were raised, but as you know, few make it to the floor for a vote.

Time will tell if this year is different than previous years. In addition, the following bills were referred to the VA Committee as of Feb.16:

Proposed Bill No. 89 - AN ACT EXPANDING VETERANS BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY FOR CERTAIN VETERANS. That the general statutes be amended to provide veterans benefits to veterans with (1) a general discharge from service, and (2) a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury or military sexual trauma.

Statement of Purpose: To expand veterans benefits eligibility for veterans who have received a general discharge and who have been diagnosed with certain conditions.

Proposed Bill No. 173 - AN ACT WAIVING CERTAIN FEES OR SURCHARGES FOR HONORABLY DISCHARGED VETERANS. That the general statutes be amended to waive for any honorably discharged veteran any fee, surcharge or portion thereof collected and credited to the resources of the General Fund for the issuance of any marriage license, birth or death

certificate, occupational license or permit, dog license or hunting, trapping or sport fishing license, permit or stamp.

Statement of Purpose: To waive for honorably discharged veterans certain fees, surcharges or portions thereof for the issuance of certain licenses, permits, certificates or stamps.

Proposed Bill No. 5120 - AN ACT WAIVING THE FEE FOR HAVING DRIVER'S LICENSES OR IDENTITY CARDS REISSUED PRIOR TO EXPIRATION WITH AN INDICATION OF STATUS AS A VETERAN. That section 14-50a of the general statutes be amended to waive the thirty-dollar fee for reissuing a motor vehicle operator's license or identity card for any veteran that seeks to have any such license or card reissued, prior to its expiration, with the veteran status designation.

Statement of Purpose: To provide veterans, free of charge, with a deserved recognition of their status on their motor vehicle operator's licenses or identity cards.

Proposed Bill No. 5121 - AN ACT CONCERNING TUITION WAIVERS FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES. That sections 10a-77, 10a-99 and 10a-105 of the general statutes be amended to extend tuition waivers for state higher education institutions to members of the armed forces currently serving on active duty who are Connecticut residents and who have completed at least two years of military service not including training.

Statement of Purpose: To provide tuition waivers for state universities and community colleges to Connecticut residents serving in the military.

Referred to Appropriations Committee

Proposed Bill No. 5078 - AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS. That two million dollars be appropriated to the Department of Veterans Affairs for the purpose of maintaining licensure as a chronic disease hospital.

Statement of Purpose: To restore a cut in the amount of two million dollars from public act 17-2 of the June special session.

Receive "The Connection" by E-Mail

The monthly Chapter 120 newsletter, The Connection, is available by e-mail. Currently, 98 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 ctchapter120@aol.com

On The Hill



From Stars & Stripes

VA budget would climb to nearly \$200 Billion under Trump proposal

The Department of Veterans Affairs would get another multibillion-dollar increase in 2019 under President Donald Trump's new budget proposal, which includes cuts to domestic agencies and social programs while boosting spending for defense, homeland security and the VA.

The proposal, released Monday Feb.12, asks for \$198.6 billion for the VA for fiscal 2019 – significantly more than the \$186 billion budget that Congress is working to approve for the current

fiscal year. It places emphasis on mental health care, information technology, access to private-sector medical care and efforts to stop waste, fraud and abuse.

“The 2019 budget reflects the strong commitment of the president to provide the services and benefits that our nation’s veterans have earned,” VA Secretary David Shulkin said in a written statement.

Trump’s budget proposal, an overview of priorities for the administration, was shared with Congress, and Shulkin answered questions about the request during a hearing of the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

While the proposal includes an overall increase for the VA, it includes ideas to cut millions of dollars from specific programs. According to the budget document, the savings would be used to implement expected reforms to the VA Choice program, which allows veterans to receive medical care in the private sector.

The White House is again offering a controversial proposal to round-down cost-of-living adjustments to the nearest dollar amount for all veterans who receive disability compensation. The practice was standard until 2013, and there have been numerous attempts to reinstate it.

It’s an unpopular idea among veterans’ service organizations that don’t want to see any decrease to veterans’ benefits, but the White House argues the round-down would have minimal effect on veterans. The budget document estimated the change would cost each veteran about \$12 a year and would save the VA \$34 million in 2019 and nearly \$2.3 billion over the next 10 years.

The proposal states the COLA round-down would be used to “partially offset the costs” of replacing the VA Choice program. Lawmakers are negotiating legislation to overhaul the program after political infighting stalled the debate late last year.

The budget also proposes slashing the amount the VA will pay for student veterans to complete flight training at public schools.

Late last year, multiple veterans' organizations expressed concerns to lawmakers that some flight programs were targeting GI Bill recipients and overcharging them.

Trump's budget proposal imposes a spending cap of \$22,800 per year for each student veteran participating in a flight program. It's expected to save the VA more than \$500 million over the next 10 years.

Other cost-saving measures include simplifying veterans' net-worth calculations and raising the threshold for the VA to perform medical examinations when determining a veteran's eligibility for disability compensation. The document states the VA unnecessarily performed 180,000 medical exams in 2016. Those proposals would save about \$1.2 billion over the next decade.

The budget also proposes changes to the VA's vocational rehabilitation and education program. It would extend the benefits from 18 to 24 months and require states to offer lower tuition rates to student veterans. The changes would increase VA costs in fiscal 2019 by \$72 million but lead to savings of \$206 million by 2028.

Trump's VA budget includes \$511 million for gender-specific health care for women, \$510 million for caregivers' benefits, \$172.1 million for the Office of Inspector General to increase oversight efforts and \$727 million for medical and prosthetics research. Programs targeting homeless and at-risk veterans would get \$1.8 billion.

Mental health care, Shulkin's top clinical priority, would see a spending boost of \$468 million over 2018, for a total \$8.6 billion. Information technology -- a problem area for the VA -- would get a \$129 million increase over the current fiscal year, for a total \$4.2 billion.

The budget plan also includes funds to implement bills Congress passed last year to expand veterans' education benefits and speed up the process veterans use to appeal claims for disability compensation.

If approved by Congress, the budget would be another in a series of significant spending increases for the VA in the past decade. In 2009, the budget totaled \$90 billion, and by 2012 it had grown to \$130 billion. The approved level for 2017 was nearly \$180 billion.



Veterans Affairs News



From MarineTimes.com

Despite threat of a years-long wait, veterans slow to embrace new option on disability appeals

A new program designed to help clear the Department of Veterans Affairs' massive backlog of disability claims appeals has so far received little interest from veterans, despite promises it could trim years off their wait times.

Less than 3 percent of veterans invited into the program — about 330 individuals — have opted into the Rapid Appeals Modernization Program, launched in November and billed as a “more efficient” review process that could provide final decisions within a month.

The program was included as part of sweeping appeals reform legislation passed by Congress last year and was intended to help start to draw down some of the 340,000 cases languishing in the current case processing system. VA officials have promised full implementation of the reforms package by February 2019, but have also been optimistic they'll see significant progress before the end of the year.

Lawmakers said the RAMP results thus far are raising concerns about reaching those goals.

“Unless more veterans participate in RAMP, it is hard to see how VA will collect enough data to develop an effective plan to successfully implement appeals reform,” said Rep. Phil Roe, R-Tenn., chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee.

VA officials promised more focus on public awareness of the program in coming months. But David McLenachen, director of the Veterans Benefits Administration's appeals management office, said he is still encouraged by the results thus far.

“We need to get that rate up,” he said during testimony before the committee. “But there is every indication that veterans opting in are getting fast decisions and a good outcome.”

The RAMP process allows veterans to fast-track decisions on their disability appeals if they agree to finalize evidence adjudicators can consider and withdraw their pending cases. Because many veterans have been waiting years for an answer on their disability cases, officials think some of the reluctance to opt-in to the new program may be fear of restarting a lengthy wait.

McLenachen said cases processed so far have averaged 37 days, compared to the 1,500-plus average for cases going through the traditional appeals process. Veterans in the new program have been successful in 61 percent of cases so far, compared to 25 percent for the traditional process.

He warned against drawing too many predictive assumptions based on the small number of cases processed so far, but said it does indicate the potential benefit of the new program for many veterans.

It has also drawn positive reviews from veterans' service organizations as well. Officials from Disabled American Veterans labeled it "a great testing environment for the new (VA) appeals system."

At the oversight hearing, Veterans Affairs Deputy Secretary Thomas Bowman said he is confident department officials will be able to stick to the February 2019 timeline for that new system. He promised monthly updates to the committee and a six-month briefing with lawmakers to ensure the work is continuing on schedule.

But officials from the Government Accountability Office have issued a handful of improvements to their project management to ensure better progress tracking, changes that VA officials have said they will incorporate in their work.

And lawmakers on the committee said they need better progress benchmarks from VA to ensure that work is continuing on schedule.

"I'm watching the clock tick rapidly," said Rep. Mike Bost, R-Ill. "Where we're at now is not necessarily where we need to be."

Third-Ranking VA Official Steps Down Over Altered Travel Records

Vivieca Wright Simpson, the embattled chief of staff to Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin, told colleagues on Feb.16 that she is retiring, USA Today reported. Shulkin's most senior adviser had come under fire for "false representations" to a VA ethics official and altering an official record during the course of arranging taxpayer-funded travel for Shulkin and his wife last summer.

According to an inspector general report released Wednesday Feb.14, Wright Simpson doctored an email from a colleague to make it seem as if Shulkin would be receiving an award during a visit to Copenhagen, Denmark.

She then forwarded the doctored email to an ethics official as justification for paying for Shulkin's wife's travel, and the ethics official signed off.

The department paid more than \$4,000 for that airline ticket, an expense the ethics official told the IG she would not have approved without the doctored email. The IG referred the matter to the Justice Department, which declined to prosecute.

Wright Simpson was Shulkin's senior-most adviser and served 32 years at the department, according to her official bio.

After initially denying any wrongdoing, Shulkin told lawmakers on Thursday he had reimbursed the government for the cost of

his wife's travel and for tickets to a tennis match the IG said he improperly received as a gift.

VA Secretary Investigating Staff Who He Suspects Are Undermining Him

Secretary of Veterans Affairs David Shulkin said Wednesday Feb.14 that he is investigating President Donald Trump-appointed members of his staff who he believes are "trying to undermine the department from within."

Shulkin told the New York Times in an interview published Feb.15 that he spoke directly to White House chief of staff John Kelly about the issue and is investigating several political appointees in his department for misconduct and potential removal.

"If there are people here who don't want the V.A. to succeed, I want them out," he said.

Officials in Shulkin's department did discuss strategies to replace him last year, according to the report. In an email obtained by the New York Times, White House senior adviser on veterans' affairs Jake Leinenkugel told a Trump appointee within the V.A. that he was unhappy with Shulkin and was looking for "solutions" to replace him and other department leadership.

Shulkin's announcement that he is investigating his staff members comes as he faces criticism for misleading ethics officials about a trip he took to Europe last summer.

From VA Watchdog.org

Your Department of Veterans Affairs is unraveling before your eyes.

And there's not a damn thing you can do about it.

The Secretary has lost what little credibility he had in the first place. He followed a mediocre soap salesman who followed an Army general who was drummed out. We could go on.

There are no replacements of any note. Most of the senior positions in the Veterans Affairs Central Office (VACO) are interim. The word is out that only a madman would accept the job, much less seek the office.

The Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA) has been hit hard in the last 24 months. When the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) caught up on their backlog of claims by issuing denials by the tens of thousands, the denials turned to appeals at the BVA. BVA appeals are now running years and years behind. BVA has lost a number of Veterans Law Judges (VLJs) to the civilian work force as well as having to fire a handful of them.

It now appears that VACO is every bit as chaotic and poorly run as the white house. When the chief of staff retires to avoid the incoming flak, there's a problem.

But do you have any idea just how annoying this is?

VA people get great salaries, unheard of benefits, support from the strongest union in America and when they rise to their level of total personal incompetence, they're retired with full bennies and perks.

Try to imagine a world in which you were allowed a 'gimme' because you had stuck it out for 20 years or whatever. You fake anything, your benefits disappear. A VA employee pulls a fast one and gets a gold watch.

50 Years Ago

March 2 - NICHOLAS J. CUTINHA, MEDAL OF HONOR.

March 5 - RALPH H. JOHNSON, MEDAL OF HONOR.

March 9 - JACK H. JACOBS, MEDAL OF HONOR.

March 11 - LIMA SITE 85 ATTACKED. People's Army of Vietnam sappers and ground forces attack Lima Site 85, a clandestine U.S. base in Laos. CMSGT Richard Etchberger, who was killed on the extraction, was awarded the Air Force Cross. Another 11 U.S. Air Force personnel were missing, and two Central Intelligence Agency officers wounded. This was the single largest ground loss for the Air Force during the war.

March 11 - RICHARD L. ETCHBERGER, MEDAL OF HONOR.

March 16 - AMERICAL DIVISION KILLS HUNDREDS OF VIETNAMESE CIVILIANS AT MY LAI. Elements of the 23d Infantry Division (Americal) kill up to five hundred civilians in the hamlet of My Lai, Quang Ngai Province. Eventually, fourteen men would be charged with committing these crimes. One, Lieutenant William Calley, would be convicted of war crimes and sentenced to life in prison.

March 16 - PAUL WILLIAM BUCHA, MEDAL OF HONOR.

March 17 - EDWARD A. DEVORE, JR. MEDAL OF HONOR.

March 19 - THOMAS J. MCMAHON, MEDAL OF HONOR.

March 23 - GENERAL WESTMORELAND BECAME U.S. ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF. President Lyndon B. Johnson announced that General Westmoreland would be relieved as Commanding Officer U.S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam to become Chief of Staff, effective 1 July 1968.

March 31 - JOHNSON SUSPENDS BOMBING OF NORTH VIETNAM, ANNOUNCES HE WON'T RUN AGAIN.

President Lyndon B. Johnson suspends bombing over most of North Vietnam and calls on President Ho Chi Minh of North Vietnam to respond by agreeing to negotiations to end the conflict. At the end of his speech President Johnson shocks the country when he announces that he will not seek a second term in office.

GEORGE FREDERICK EDWARDS

USMC Vietnam, Oct.3, 1948 – Mar.10, 1968, Putnam CT

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 Nominating 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 Nominating 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 Nominating 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.

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 Nominating Committee or their appointees.
- E. Results will be announced the night of the election.
- F. If a Nominating 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.

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.

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 April newsletter is 23 March 2018. Due to space availability, the editor reserves the right to include or not include photos for a given month.

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 ••••

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