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Meetings

The Chapter 120 membership meeting will be held on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 7:00pm in the Machinists Union Hall, 357 Main St., East Hartford.

The Board of Directors will meet on Thursday, March 28 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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Extract from Stars and Stripes

Court Decides 'Blue Water' Navy Vets Eligible for Agent Orange Benefits



On January 29, a federal court ruled that Vietnam veterans who served on ships offshore during the war are eligible for benefits to treat illnesses linked to exposure to the chemical herbicide Agent Orange – a decision that has the potential to extend help to thousands of veterans.

The Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit ruled 9-2 in favor of Alfred Procopio, Jr., 73, who served on the USS Intrepid during the Vietnam War. Procopio is one of tens of

thousands of “Blue Water” Navy veterans who served aboard aircraft carriers, destroyers and other ships and were deemed ineligible for the same disability benefits as those veterans who served on the ground and inland waterways.

At issue was interpretation of the current law, which allows easier access to disability benefits for veterans who “served in the Republic of Vietnam” and suffer from one of a list of illnesses linked to the Agent Orange. The herbicide has been found to cause respiratory cancers, Parkinson’s disease and heart disease, as well as other conditions.

The court determined territorial seas should be included in the definition of “Republic of Vietnam” – a point the government disputed.

For Procopio and other Blue Water Navy veterans, the decision could result in thousands of dollars of disability benefits each month. John Wells, one of the attorneys on the case, estimated 50,000 to 70,000 veterans could now become eligible for benefits. Veterans affected by the ruling must still go through a VA evaluation to ensure they meet all of the eligibility criteria.

The government could seek a review of the case from the U.S. Supreme Court. VA Press Secretary Curt Cashour said the department is reviewing the decision and “will determine an appropriate response.”

For veterans who think they are affected by this court decision, see VVA recommendations under “From the Service Rep’s Desk” in this newsletter.

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

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Bob Burgess	646-0205
William Chiodo	688-2518
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Roger Anderson, Treasurer	528-4338
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Vet Centers

Hartford (Area Code 860)	563-8800
New Haven (Area Code 203)	932-9899
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**Chapter 120 Elections in April**

Elections for six National Convention delegates and two alternates will be held at the Chapter 120 membership meeting on April 4, 2019. 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 Spokane, WA on July 15 - 20, 2019, 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 at this time 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

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- The three (3) member Election Committee will be elected at the April meeting and will serve a one (1) year term.

Section 2. Candidates

- Candidates must have been a member for a minimum of fifteen (15) days prior to the election.
- Candidates must have on file with the Chapter, or present to the Election Committee their DD-214, or other proof of qualification for membership.
- 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.
- 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.
- Candidates will be allowed five (5) minutes to speak at the April meeting if desired.
- Candidates may use the membership list for a mailing pursuant to the Chapter rules and Federal laws governing the membership list.

Section 3. Voters

- 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.
- Voting members must have on file with the Chapter, or present to the Nominating Committee, their DD-214 or proof of qualification for membership.
- 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 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>Richard J. Olson</i>	<i>Richard Pikulski</i>
<i>Charles L. Ravenell</i>	<i>Peter R. Sorensen</i>
<i>William Taylor</i>	<i>Joseph Tkacz, Jr.</i>
<i>Francis M. Zizzamia</i>	<i>Elizabeth Zizzamia</i>

A special birthday wish goes to Jacob Michael Cutler, grandson of Chapter members Mike Belliveau and John Cutler.

Section 4. Election Procedures

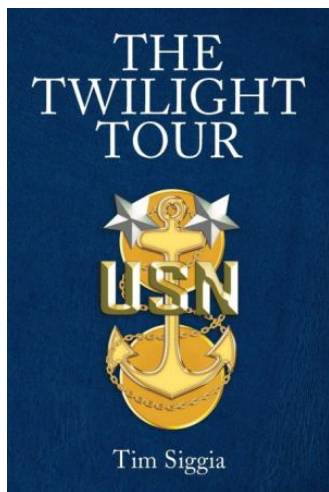
- A. The voting period will be from the close of nominations until 8:00 PM.
- B. The quorum required to hold the election should be 10 members.
- C. A candidate can request a recount of the ballots for his or her office if the margin between the candidates running for that office is 10% or less based 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.

VVA Membership Change

On October 20, 2018, VVA's National Board of Directors passed a motion to have one class of membership: Life membership. All active and pending three-year members have been converted to life members. This change was reflected on the October 2018 membership roster. After October 31, 2018, all dues payments received for one-year membership will be refunded along with instructions for renewing as a life member. Active one-year members will remain active until their current term expires and are invited to renew as life members thereafter. The link to the new membership application is <https://vva.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/APPLICATION-FOR-MEMBERSHIP.pdf>.

The Twilight Tour

By Tim Siggia (Author)



Marion Charles “Pop” Riley is a Navy man at the top of his game. As a Master Chief Radioman, he has reached the top of the enlisted ladder and has served during three wars: World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. In addition, he is also an amateur radio operator with an Extra-Class license and has become something of a legend among his Navy peers. Arriving at the Naval Air Station in Brunswick, Maine, he is now on an official Twilight Tour, which will mark the end of a Navy career of

more than thirty years. All, however, is not sweetness and light with Pop Riley. Divorced from his wife and estranged from his only son, he sees his upcoming retirement not as a reward for his many years of service but rather as a threat to his well-being and a sort of banishment from the only meaningful life he has ever known. In addition, it becomes increasingly obvious that

his drinking has reached a level above and beyond what is generally considered normal, even for a sailor, and that his presence at NAS Brunswick is no asset but rather a liability. He yet manages to touch the lives of a number of friends even in ways of which he is himself unaware.

Tim is a Life member of Chapter 120. You can buy a copy of Tim's book at Amazon.com

POW/MIA News



From DPAA

Airman Accounted For From World War II - In Vietnam

Army Air Forces Tech. Sgt. Alfred R. Sandini, killed during World War II, was accounted for on Feb. 12, 2019.

In February 1944, Sandini was a member of 22nd Bombardment Squadron, 341st Bombardment Group, serving as a radio gunner aboard a B-25C aircraft. On February 15, 1944, the aircraft he was aboard crashed, allegedly due to enemy anti-aircraft fire, near the Do Len Bridge in Thanh Hoa Province, French Indochina – now known as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

DPAA is grateful to the Department of Veterans Affairs for their partnership in this mission.

Sandini’s name is recorded on the Walls of the Missing at the Manila American Cemetery, an American Battle Monuments Commission site in the Philippines, along with others missing from WWII.

Receive “The Connection” by E-Mail

The monthly Chapter 120 newsletter, The Connection, is available by e-mail. Currently, 100 members receive the newsletter by e-mail, saving the Chapter over \$1,600 in printing and 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



At The Capitol



VA Committee Acts on Selected Bills

Connecticut General Assembly VA Committee actions taken as of February 22, 2019:

Bills reported out of committee

HB07061 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE OFFERING OF CERTAIN MOTOR VEHICLES FROM THE STATE MOTOR POOL TO VETERANS' CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS.

To allow surplus vehicles from the state motor

pool to be provided to veterans' charitable organizations for donation to certain disabled combat veterans with a demonstrated need for financial assistance.

HB07063 - AN ACT CONCERNING LEASING OF MILITARY DEPARTMENT FACILITIES. To authorize the Adjutant General to lease military facilities to members of the armed forces of the state for ceremonies to recognize significant military career events.

HB07064 - AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL VETERANS' REPRESENTATIVES. To change "veterans' service contact person" to "municipal veterans' representative" and to permit volunteers to serve as such representatives.

SB00800 - AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE MEDAL OF MERIT FOR CIVILIANS. To establish a medal of merit for civilians.

SB00802 - AN ACT PROVIDING FOR DISCOUNTED FISHING LICENSES FOR CERTAIN VETERANS. To reduce by fifty per cent the fees charged to certain disabled veterans for sport fishing licenses, permits, tags or stamps.

Bills voted to be drafted

Proposed S.B. No. 777 - AN ACT REQUIRING A STUDY OF VETERANS' TAX ABATEMENTS. To study tax abatements available to veterans in the state.

Proposed S.B. No. 778 - AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GREEN ALERT SYSTEM FOR MISSING VETERANS. To establish a green alert system for locating missing veterans.

Proposed H.B. No. 5563 - AN ACT CONCERNING POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER ISSUES IMPACTING VETERANS INVOLVED IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM. To provide judges with information related to mental health and post-traumatic stress disorder issues that may impact veterans involved in the criminal justice system.

Proposed H.B. No. 6775 - AN ACT CONCERNING MILITARY FAMILIES AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS. To connect certain elementary and secondary school students with available resources for military families.

Proposed S.J. No. 3 - RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF RECOGNIZING WOMEN IN THE CADET NURSE CORPS DURING WORLD WAR II AS VETERANS. To petition Congress to recognize as veterans women in the Cadet Nurse Corp during the Second World War.

On The Hill



Congress introduces bills concerning Agent Orange exposure

The "Agent Orange Exposure Fairness Act" (H.R. 566), introduced on January 15, 2019 by Rep. Courtney, Young and Larson, needs co-sponsors. The bill removes the manifestation period required for the presumptions of service connection for chloracne, porphyria cutanea tarda, and acute and subacute peripheral neuropathy associated with exposure to certain herbicide agents. The bill was referred to the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs on 1 February. The Senate

"sister bill", S. 332, was introduced by Sen. Blumenthal on February 5, 2019. Please call your representatives and senators to ask them to co-sponsor these important bills.

The "Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019" (H.R. 203), was introduced on January 3, 2019 by Rep. Roe. To date, there are nine (9) co-sponsors for this bill – none from Connecticut. H.R. 299, identical to H.R. 203, was introduced by Rep. Takano on January 8, 2019. There are 229 co-sponsors to this bill, including Connecticut Representatives Courtney and Larson.

House Veterans' Affairs Committee Launches Investigation into Influence of Mar-a-Lago "Three" on Department of Veterans Affairs

House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Chairman Mark Takano (CA-41) released a following letter on February 8, 2019 notifying the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs that the Committee is opening an investigation into the influence of the Mar-a-Lago "three" on the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"I am writing to request information about alleged improper influence of Mr. Ike Perlmutter, Dr. Bruce Moskowitz, and Mr. Marc Sherman over policy and personnel decisions of the Department of Veterans' Affairs," the letter stated.

"The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is opening an investigation into this relationship so that Congress, veterans, and the American people can better understand the scope and nature of this relationship between the Department and these individuals who have not served in the U.S. military nor U.S. government, and are not accountable to veterans and the American people," Chairman Takano wrote.

He continued, "Government officials and private individuals who seek to use the Department for personal enrichment, or who make poor decisions that waste taxpayer dollars or negatively

affect the delivery of veterans' healthcare and benefits must held to account."

The letter goes on to say, "Public documents show that Mr. Ike Perlmutter, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Marvel Entertainment, LLC., Dr. Bruce Moskowitz, an Internal Medicine specialist, and Mr. Marc Sherman, an attorney without health care industry experience, ostensibly used their wealth and connections to President Trump and his family to make decisions for the Department. Top Department officials apparently treated these Mar-a-Lago members as having decision-making authority, and emails demonstrate these powerful men weighed in on candidates to lead the Veterans Health Administration, and organized meetings and summits between VA and commercial entities. Documents also show these men were involved in the procurement of an electronic health record from Cemer Corporation: they were granted access to review the confidential draft contract between the Department and Cemer Corporation more than three months before Congress received access to the contract and more than two months prior to contract signing."

Veterans Affairs News



Message from the VA Secretary

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War

President Trump signed the Vietnam

War Veterans Recognition Act on March 28, 2017, to recognize and thank our Vietnam Veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice during one of the longest wars in our country's history. This Act designates every March 29th as National Vietnam War Veterans Day. It is a time for all Americans to come together to remember and honor the service and sacrifice of our Vietnam Veterans.

We remember 9 million American men and women—some 6.6 million living today—who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces during our involvement in Vietnam from November 1, 1955, to May 7, 1975. Whether they were stationed in-country, in-theater, or elsewhere during those two decades, they answered the call to duty.

I am the son of a Vietnam Veteran and career Army officer. One of the most traumatic days of my life was being told that my father had been gravely wounded in the invasion of Cambodia in 1970. I was six. After 3 long years of recovery, he returned to the 82nd Airborne Division. So, my family and I experienced first-hand the enormous sacrifices this generation of Americans made in courageous service to our Nation.

This year, VA joins over 10,000 organizations across the country as a commemorative partner supporting the Department of Defense in this Vietnam War Commemoration. And I encourage all VA leaders to either host ceremonies or participate in community events from March 25th to March

29th. It is our duty to show our deep gratitude to this generation of warriors and their families.

Please visit <https://www.vietnamwar50th.com/> to learn how your organization or facility can be a commemorative partner and participate in this important tribute. Official commemorative partnership offers historical media and opportunity to request lapel pins and other recognition items to present to Vietnam Veterans.

Thank you all for your service to VA and your devotion America's Veterans.

Robert L. Wilkie
Secretary,
Department of Veterans Affairs

From the Service Rep's Desk

From VVA National



Procopio v. Wilkie: What Does This Mean for You?

On January 29, in a 9-2 decision, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit ruled in favor of the veteran in Alfred Procopio, Jr., v. Robert Wilkie, finding the intent of

Congress in the Agent Orange Act of 1991 was to extend benefits to all veterans who served within the territorial waters of Vietnam, 12 nautical miles from shore.

The VA has 90 days from the Court's ruling to appeal this decision to the Supreme Court; and VA Secretary Wilkie has yet to announce how it plans to respond.

In the meantime, VVA recommends those veterans who think they may have served on a vessel in Vietnam's territorial waters reach out to their local Veterans Service Officer to file VA Form 21-0966, Intent to File a Claim. If VVA is your representative, please go to Service Officer Locator on www.vva.org to find your local representative. If you do not wish to work with a service officer, you may fill out the VA Form 21-0966 form and submit it to the VA.

We recommend Blue Water Navy veterans submit the VA Form 21-0966 if they have never filed an Agent Orange claim or if they have been denied an Agent Orange claim. If you are a spouse of a Blue Water Navy veteran who died from an Agent Orange-related illness, we recommend you also file a VA Form 21-0966.

By submitting VA Form 21-0966, you preserve your effective date. You have one year from the day you submitted your VA Form 21-0966 to submit your claim for benefits. By submitting this form, you will be putting yourself in the best possible position while waiting to see how the VA responds to the Court's decision.

To help your claim's success, we recommend you start gathering evidence such as deck logs, service records, or anything else that could help prove the location of your vessel. We will keep you updated on suggested next steps as we continue to learn more information.

VA Begins New Claims Appeals Process

The new procedure for appealing disability claims decisions began February 19, 2019.

The new system, known as the Appeals Modernization Program, is touted by the VA as a major improvement in the claims appeals process.

It is meant to fix the dismal delays veterans face when appealing the VA's decisions on disability claims. This new program was mandated by Public Law 115-55, The Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017.

Why Does the VA Need to Change the Claims Appeals Process?

Previously, if you disagreed with the VA's decision on your disability claim, your only recourse was to appeal to the VA's Board of Veterans' Appeals, a process that could take years.

In fact, in its Federal Register filing, the VA itself said that, under the old appeal process, veterans who appealed waited an average of three years for a final decision, and an average of seven years if they continued their appeal to the board.

Under the new appeals program, the VA estimates the average time to complete an appeal will be approximately two years less than under the legacy appeals process.

What Exactly Is Different About the New Appeals Process?

The new law created three different ways for you to appeal the VA's decision on your disability claim:

- 1. A Supplemental Claim Lane.** This is done by submitting new evidence to the same office that originally denied your claim. It will then re-examine everything and make a new decision.
- 2. A Higher-Level Review.** If you already gave the VA all the evidence you have, but believe it made a mistake or missed something, you can request a higher-level review that may, or may not, be at the same office that originally denied your claim.
- 3. An Appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals.** This is basically the same option as you currently have, except that you can now choose between three options:
 - 1) A Direct Review.** If you have no additional evidence to submit and don't want a hearing, you can request the board to review the decision made by the original office.
 - 2) Additional Evidence Submission.** Choose this option if you don't want a hearing but have additional evidence to submit.
 - 3) The Choice of a Hearing.** If you want your day in court to submit evidence and testify to the judge, choose this option.

The VA says that cases appealed under the first two methods should be decided in four months or less. It also says that diverting a majority of cases from the Board of Veterans' Appeals to a lower-level authority should speed up the time it takes cases to be resolved.

What is a Vietnam Veteran?

A college student posted a request on an internet newsgroup asking for personal narratives from the likes of us addressing the question: "What is a Vietnam Veteran?" This is what he received back.



Vietnam veterans are men and women. We are dead or alive, whole or maimed, sane or haunted. We grew from our experiences or we were destroyed by them or we struggle to find some place in between. We lived through hell or we had a pleasant, if

scary, adventure. We were Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Red Cross, and civilians of all sorts. Some of us enlisted to fight for God and Country, and some were drafted. Some were gung-ho, and some went kicking and screaming. Like veterans of all wars, we lived a tad bit – or a great bit – closer to death than most people like to think about.

If Vietnam vets differ from others, perhaps it is primarily in the fact that many of us never saw the enemy or recognized him or her. We heard gunfire and mortar fire but rarely looked into enemy eyes. Those who did, like folks who encounter close combat anywhere and anytime, are often haunted for life by those eyes, those sounds, those electric fears that ran between ourselves, our enemies, and the likelihood of death for one of us. Or we get hard, calloused, and tough. All in a day's work. Life's a bitch then you die. But most of us remember and get twitchy, worried, and sad. We are crazies dressed in cammo, wide-eyed, wary, homeless, and drunk. We are Brooks Brother's suit wearers, doing deals downtown. We are housewives, grandmothers, and church deacons. We are college professors engaged in the rational pursuit of the truth about the history or politics or culture of the Vietnam experience. And we are sleepless. Often sleepless.

We pushed paper; we pushed shovels. We drove jeeps, operated bulldozers, built bridges; we toted machine guns through dense brush, deep paddy, and thorn scrub. We lived on buffalo milk, fish heads and rice. Or C-rations. Or steaks and Budweiser. We did our time in high mountains drenched by endless monsoon rains or on the dry plains or on muddy rivers or at the most beautiful beaches in the world. We wore berets, bandanas, flop hats, and steel pots. Flak jackets, canvas, rash and rot. We ate chloroquine and got malaria anyway. We got shots constantly but have diseases nobody can diagnose. We spent our nights on cots or shivering in foxholes filled with waist-high water or lying still on cold wet ground, our eyes imagining Charlie behind every bamboo blade. Or we slept in hotel beds in Saigon

or barracks in Thailand or in cramped ships' berths at sea. We feared we would die or we feared we would kill. We simply feared, and often we still do.

We hate the war or believe it was the best thing that ever happened to us. We blame Uncle Sam or Uncle Ho and their minions and secretaries and apologists for every wart or cough or tic of an eye. We wonder if Agent Orange got us. Mostly--and this I believe with all my heart--mostly, we wish we had not been so alone. Some of us went with units; but many, probably most of us, were civilians one day, jerked up out of "the world," shaved, barked at, insulted, humiliated, de-egoized and taught to kill, to fix radios, to drive trucks. We went, put in our time, and were equally ungraciously plucked out of the morass and placed back in the real world. But now we smoked dope, shot skag, or drank heavily. Our wives or husbands seemed distant and strange. Our friends wanted to know if we shot anybody. And life went on, had been going on, as if we hadn't been there, as if Vietnam was a topic of political conversation or college protest or news copy, not a matter of life and death for tens of thousands. Vietnam vets are people just like you. We served our country, proudly or reluctantly or ambivalently. What makes us different--what makes us Vietnam vets--is something we understand, but we are afraid nobody else will. But we appreciate your asking. Vietnam veterans are white, black, beige and shades of gray; but in comparison with our numbers in the "real world," we were more likely black.

Our ancestors came from Africa, from Europe, and China. Or they crossed the Bering Sea Land Bridge in the last Ice Age and formed the nations of American Indians, built pyramids in Mexico, or farmed acres of corn on the banks of Chesapeake Bay. We had names like Rodriguez and Stein and Smith and Kowalski. We were Americans, Australians, Canadians, and Koreans; most Vietnam veterans are Vietnamese. We were farmers, students, mechanics, steelworkers, nurses, and priests when the call came that changed us all forever. We had dreams and plans, and they all had to change...or wait. We were daughters and sons, lovers and poets, beatniks and philosophers, convicts and lawyers. We were rich and poor but mostly poor. We were educated or not, mostly not. We grew up in slums, in shacks, in duplexes, and bungalows and houseboats and hooches and ranchers. We were cowards and heroes. Sometimes we were cowards one moment and heroes the next.

Many of us have never seen Vietnam. We waited at home for those we loved. And for some of us, our worst fears were realized. For others, our loved ones came back but never would be the same. We came home and marched in protest marches, sucked in tear gas, and shrieked our anger and horror for all to hear. Or we sat alone in small rooms, in VA hospital wards, in places where only the crazy ever go. We are Republicans, Democrats, Socialists, and Confucians and Buddhists and Atheists--though as usually is the case, even the atheists among us sometimes prayed to get out of there alive. We are hungry, and we are sated, full of life or clinging to death. We are injured, and we are curers, despairing and hopeful, loved or lost. We got too old too quickly, but some of us have never grown up.

We want, desperately, to go back, to heal wounds, revisit the sites of our horror. Or we want never to see that place again, to bury it, its memories, its meaning. We want to forget, and we wish we could remember. Despite our differences, we have so much in common. There are few of us who don't know how to cry, though we often do it alone when nobody will ask "what's wrong?" We're afraid we might have to answer. Adam, if you want to know what a Vietnam veteran is, get in your car next weekend or cage a friend with a car to drive you. Go to Washington. Go to the Wall. It's going to be Veterans Day weekend. There will be hundreds there...no, thousands. Watch them. Listen to them. I'll be there. Come touch the Wall with us. Rejoice a bit. Cry a bit. No, cry a lot. I will. I'm a Vietnam Veteran; and, after 50 years, I think I am beginning to understand what that means.

50 Years Ago

- March 1** - DANIEL D. BRUCE, MEDAL OF HONOR
- March 3** - ALFRED M. WILSON, MEDAL OF HONOR
- March 3** - LESTER R. STONE, JR., MEDAL OF HONOR
- March 5** - ROBERT H. JENKINS, JR., MEDAL OF HONOR
- March 14** - JOSEPH R. KERREY, MEDAL OF HONOR
- March 18** - UNITED STATES CONDUCTS NEW BOMBING IN CAMBODIA IN OPERATION MENU. U.S. conducts the first of a new round of bombings against North Vietnamese/Viet Cong targets in Cambodia. These strikes evolve into the top secret campaign known as Operation MENU, which lasts for fourteen months. The bombings were advised by the Joints Chiefs of Staff and General Creighton Abrams and approved by President Nixon, who hoped to demonstrate U.S. resolve to the North while significantly reducing the flow of North Vietnamese troops and supplies into South Vietnam. National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger believed that the campaign would increase pressure on the North to negotiate more seriously for peace. Although the bombings were a tightly held secret within the U.S. government and military, the U.S. briefed Cambodian and South Vietnamese leaders about them. The New York Times broke the story of the bombings on May 9, prompting the White House to order wiretaps of the phones of journalists and administration officials.
- March 19** - DAVID ROBERT RAY, MEDAL OF HONOR
- March 20** - TERRY TERUO KAWAMURA, MEDAL OF HONOR
- March 21** - DONALD R. JOHNSTON, MEDAL OF HONOR
- March 24** - RONALD L. COKER, MEDAL OF HONOR
- March 24** - WILLIAM MAUD BRYANT, MEDAL OF HONOR
- March 25** - STEPHEN HOLDEN DOANE, MEDAL OF HONOR



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. Won't you please consider donating for this worthy cause? 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

Chapter 120 has established a separate line item in the budget to collect donations to assist these fellow veterans and their families in need. *And don't forget, your donations are tax deductible.*



NATIONAL WELCOME HOME
VIETNAM VETERANS
 DAY

March 29, 2019



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