

# CONNECTION



Connecticut Chapter 120

Greater Hartford  
Over 36 Years of Service to Veterans

March 2020

Visit Our Website at [www.vva120.org](http://www.vva120.org)

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NATIONAL WELCOME HOME  
**VIETNAM VETERANS**  
DAY

**March 29, 2020**

## Meetings

The Chapter 120 membership meeting will be held on Thursday, March 5, 2020 at 7:00pm in the Machinists Union Hall, 357 Main St., East Hartford.

The Board of Directors will meet on Thursday, March 26 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](mailto:ctchapter120@aol.com).

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Yes, the hypocrites from Washington DC say they honor Vietnam veterans on this day in March. But on the other side of their mouths, they continue to deny approval of the four presumptive diseases caused by Agent Orange (bladder cancer, Parkinsonism, hypertension, and hypothyroidism).

Congress has now become involved, as Representatives Josh Harder (CA-10) and Pete Stauber (MN-08) have introduced the Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act (HR 5610), which would require the VA to cover these four conditions.

And seven of the country's largest veterans' organizations (including Vietnam Veterans of America) have urged President Donald Trump to fast-track the benefits, after years of delays, for thousands of Vietnam War veterans suffering from the four medical conditions caused by Agent Orange.

The VA insists that there is insufficient scientific evidence and that further studies are needed. But in reality, it's all about the money. Just how much is a Vietnam veteran's life worth, Mr. Secretary?

*See news articles concerning this issue inside this newsletter edition.*

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**All Telephone Numbers are Area Code 860 unless otherwise noted**

## 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>Willie E. Scott, Sr</i>
<i>Peter R. Sorensen</i>	<i>William Taylor</i>
<i>Joseph Tkacz, Jr.</i>	<i>Francis M. Zizzamia</i>
<i>Elizabeth Zizzamia</i>	

*And a special Happy Birthday wish to Jacob Cutler, grandson of Chapter 120 members Mike Belliveau and John Cutler.*

## Chapter/State News

### Thanks to our donors

Chapter 120 graciously thanks those of you who have donated to the Chapter during the past two years. Well over \$3,000 were donated to help the Chapter continue to provide our services to members and those who are in need. Without your help, the Chapter could not function in the way we do today. Thank You All!

### Chapter elections coming in April

As Chapter elections for officers, directors and state council delegates will be held at the April membership meeting on April 2, 2020, we ask our members to offer their time and enthusiasm 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 (Bill Chiodo, Leigh Lovering or Tim Siggia) 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:** Five positions

**Elections Committee:** Three positions

Election Rules are posted here:

## 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 Nominating 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 Nominating 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 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.

## 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 membership renewal application is <https://vva.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/VVA-Member-EZ-Renewal-Form.pdf>

## POW/MIA News



## VVA 2019-2020 Legislative Agenda & Policy Initiatives for Prisoners of War/Missing in Action

- We will endeavor to ensure that the U.S.-Russia Joint

Commission on POW/MIA Affairs remains a separate and independent entity with an adequate budget.

- Because the POW/MIA flag has become a universal symbol for service members taken prisoner in every war in which American troops have been deployed, VVA urges its year-round display on all government buildings—federal, state, county, and municipality.
- VVA will press to have all U.S. government documents pertaining to POW/MIAs declassified and released for public inspection, and will encourage Congress to pass a resolution urging the governments of Vietnam, Russia, and China to provide all relevant wartime records.
- VVA will work with the Department of Defense to ensure that all families of those still listed as POW/MIA have provided DNA samples for potential identification of recovered remains.
- VVA will endeavor to press the appropriate authorities to authorize a new POW/MIA “Forever Stamp” to add awareness about this issue.

The number of Americans who remain missing from conflicts in this century as of February 2020 are: World War II 73,025 of which over 41,000 are presumed to be lost at sea, Korean War 7665, Vietnam War 1589 (i.e. VN-1,246, Laos-288, Cambodia-48, & Peoples Republic of China territorial waters-7), Cold War 111, Iraq and other conflicts 5. .

## 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](mailto:ctchapter120@aol.com)

GEORGE FREDERICK EDWARDS

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

## At The Capitol



## VA Committee raises bills; sets public hearing for Feb. 27

The Connecticut General Assembly (CGA) VA Committee raised 16 bills on Feb. 20 and has scheduled a public hearing for these bills on Feb. 27.

More significant Connecticut Veterans Affairs Committee raised bills:

### **HB 5087 - AN ACT EXEMPTING VETERANS FROM THE PASSPORT TO THE PARKS MOTOR VEHICLE**

**REGISTRATION FEE.** To exempt veterans from payment of the Passport to the Parks fee.

**HB 5262 - AN ACT CONCERNING SPECIAL REGISTRATION MARKER PLATES FOR VETERANS WHO SERVED IN PERIODS OF WAR.** To create special registration marker plates available to veterans who served during certain periods of war.

**HB 5264 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE ANNUAL REPORT OF BENEFITS TO VETERANS.** To extend the deadline for the Commissioner of Veterans Affairs to compile data and submit the report of benefits to veterans to the Military Department and the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to military and veterans' affairs.

**HB 5266 - AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GREEN ALERT SYSTEM FOR MISSING VETERANS.** To establish a Green Alert system for missing veterans.

**HB 5267 - AN ACT ESTABLISHING A VETERANS' CEMETERY ACCOUNT.** To establish a veterans' cemetery account.

**SB 220 - AN ACT EXPANDING CERTAIN VETERANS' ELIGIBILITY FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.** To exclude all veterans' pension benefits from income when determining eligibility for public assistance programs.

**SB 224 - AN ACT REQUIRING A STUDY OF VETERANS' TAX ABATEMENTS.** To study tax abatements available to veterans in this state.

For details on each bill, see <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2020/vadata/cbr/va.asp>



## On The Hill



## Bipartisan Bill introduced to Force VA to Provide Benefits for Vietnam Vets Exposed to Agent Orange

After the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) signaled that it would not cover several diseases associated with exposure to Agent Orange for at least a year – if at all, Representatives Josh Harder (CA-10) and Pete Stauber (MN-08) introduced the Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act (HR 5610), which would require the VA to cover the conditions. Currently, Vietnam Veterans with specific health care problems developed as the result of exposure to Agent Orange during their

service get “presumptive” access to benefits at the VA. However, some health problems, which have been linked to Agent Orange exposure are not covered. The VA’s decision to ignore the results of real scientific evidence and wait on the outcome of other studies means dragging out care for over 83,000 Vietnam Veterans struggling with bladder cancer, Parkinsonism, hypertension, or hypothyroidism who must struggle without the benefits they deserve for at least a year.

“These guys have waited for over 40 years for the benefits they earned and should have been getting decades ago,” said Rep. Harder. “No more studies. No more excuses. Everyone seems to think this is the right thing to do except for some Washington bureaucrats – it’s time to stop playing games and give our vets the benefits they earned.”

“When our servicemembers join the armed forces, they make the ultimate sacrifice – they put their lives on the line for the security of our nation and the safety of our families. It is only fair that we care for these servicemembers when they return home,” said Rep. Pete Stauber (MN-08). “Vietnam veterans have long been suffering from health problems as a result of Agent Orange exposure. That is why Congressman Harder and I introduced the Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act, which adds Parkinsonism, bladder cancer, hypertension, and hypothyroidism to the list of presumptive diseases associated with Agent Orange exposure, so that our veterans can access the healthcare and disability benefits they rightfully deserve. I’m proud to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle on this important issue.”

Although the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) has found a link between these four conditions and exposure to Agent Orange, the VA has claimed there is not sufficient scientific evidence to justify adding the conditions to the list. VA Secretary Robert Wilkie recently told Senators the decision on whether to add the conditions wouldn’t come until at least “late 2020.” However, last year, the VA told Congress a decision would be made by July 2019

Former VA Secretary David Shulkin attempted to add these four conditions to the presumptive list in 2019, but records obtained by Military Times and Freedom of Information requests indicate that Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director and White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney intervened to prevent the addition of these conditions over cost concerns.

Representative Harder previously introduced a House Resolution alongside Senator Sherrod Brown to encourage the president to add the conditions to the presumptive list. In addition to introducing the bill and resolution, Rep. Harder, along with House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Mark Takano (CA-41) wrote a letter directly to Mick Mulvaney demanding that he stop his campaign to prevent these veterans from obtaining health care coverage for their conditions.

*From MOAA*

## What You Need to Know About the Proposed VA Budget



The White House's FY 21 VA funding proposal would add more than \$22 billion to the department's budget over the current fiscal year.

The \$243.3 billion budget is 10% more than the \$220.7 billion enacted in FY 20 and comes in a proposal that includes level or reduced

funding to many other federal agencies. Among the programs that would benefit from the increased funds:

- About \$90 billion in medical care funds, an increase of 12.9% from last year's enacted level. These include \$1.3 billion for telehealth programs, \$10.3 billion for mental health care, \$1.9 billion to fight veteran homelessness, and \$626 million targeted toward women's health.
- \$137 million to address an expected 70,000 claims and appeals from "Blue Water Navy" veterans – those who served off the coast of Vietnam and recently became eligible for benefits connected with exposure to Agent Orange and other toxins. To date, the VA has received more than 14,000 claims, per budget documents, and has paid \$7.5 million in retroactive benefits to 218 veterans and survivors.
- \$1.2 billion in caregiver support, up nearly \$500 million from the previous enacted budget. Much of the increase is earmarked for when the VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) is expected to expand to veterans seriously injured in the line of duty prior to Sept. 11, 2001, likely sometime this summer. The PCAFC now covers only those injured on or after that date.
- \$4.9 billion for information technology improvements, with \$309.4 million of that money earmarked for MISSION Act

improvements. In addition, the budget calls for \$2.6 billion to continue work on creating a seamless electronic health record that would follow service members from their time in uniform through their care under the VA.

- \$360 million for the National Cemetery Administration (NCA), to support 156 national cemeteries and the expanding Veterans Legacy Program, a remembrance effort founded in 2016.

The proposal also includes a "round-down" of veterans' cost-of-living adjustments (COLA), a regular practice through the early 2000s that, if restored, would save the VA more than \$2 billion over the next 10 years. The move has been proposed in recent VA budgets but not enacted because of pushback from veterans' organizations. The round-down likely would be extended for future 10-year periods, possibly costing disabled veterans \$2,000 over a lifetime.

## Veterans Affairs News



*From Stars & Stripes*

### Veterans groups urge Trump to intervene on Agent Orange decision

Seven of the country's largest veterans' organizations on Monday Feb.10 urged

President Donald Trump to fast-track benefits, after years of delays, for thousands of Vietnam War veterans suffering from four medical conditions thought to be caused by Agent Orange.

The groups asked Trump to add bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, hypertension and Parkinson's-like symptoms to the list of conditions presumed to be caused by chemical herbicides used in the Vietnam War. Being on the presumptive list lowers the amount of proof veterans need to provide in order to receive VA benefits.

Veterans have been waiting years for the Department of Veterans Affairs to add the conditions. VA Secretary Robert Wilkie recently indicated that a decision wasn't likely to come until the end of 2020, when the results of two more scientific studies on the issue are expected to be published.

In a seven-page letter, the veterans' organizations criticized the VA for dragging its feet and undercutting scientific data that already exists. They also raised concerns that members of Trump's administration had rejected the addition of the four conditions because of cost concerns.

"The continued delayed action by VA is causing additional suffering for Vietnam veterans and their families," the groups wrote. "We urge you to take action and to end the wait, needless suffering and disappointment for an entire generation of veterans."

Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Vietnam Veterans of America, the Military Officers Association of America, the Fleet Reserve Association, Paralyzed Veterans of America and AMVETS signed onto the letter.

The letter comes one week after Richard Stone, the executive in charge of the Veterans Health Administration, told senators that the VA wanted to take a closer look at whether hypertension, in particular, was caused by Agent Orange exposure. He said there's doubt because the age demographic of Vietnam War veterans is at higher risk for the condition.

The veterans' organizations that the delay was "unnecessary."

"The scientific community has already provided enough significant data, studies and associations linking these four diseases to Agent Orange exposure," they wrote.

In 2018, researchers with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine found for the first time that enough evidence exists to link hypertension to Agent Orange exposure. Researchers also determined there was "suggestive" evidence linking Agent Orange to hypothyroidism.

A 2016 report from the academies determined that there was "limited" or "suggestive" evidence linking Agent Orange to bladder cancer. That year, the academies also clarified that Parkinson-like symptoms should be considered as part of Parkinson's disease, which is on the list of presumptive diseases.

The veterans groups argued that in the VA's recent reports to Congress about this issue, the agency had tried to undercut the reports from the National Academies. The groups also raised concerns that the White House's Office of Management and Budget had rejected the addition of three of the conditions because of their monetary cost.

Under then-VA Secretary David Shulkin, the agency recommended in 2016 the addition of bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinson's-like tremors to the presumptive list. Shulkin's recommendation never made it past OMB. Lawmakers were told at the time that OMB was waiting on the results of more scientific studies.

OMB and Mick Mulvaney, its director at the time, objected to the recommendation. In addition to a lack of scientific evidence, OMB had concerns about the budgetary implications of expanding access to VA benefits to the thousands of veterans diagnosed with the conditions, Military Times reported, citing emails between Shulkin and OMB.

In their letter Monday, the veterans groups said it was "alarming" that the administration had weighed the cost of the benefits against the veterans in need of assistance.

"When taking all of this into consideration, it appears VA is not waiting on additional science, but continuing to stonewall and delay adding these four diseases based in part on monetary concerns," they wrote. "This is troubling."

They asked Trump to intervene immediately and to direct Wilkie to add the four conditions.

*From Stars & Stripes*

## **Veterans group: Pentagon broke agreement to reopen database**



The Pentagon has reneged on its agreement to reopen a vast records database that helps service members who are appealing other-than-honorable discharges, a veterans group said Tuesday.

The National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP) said the Defense Department has failed to make public the "vast majority" of decisions made by military review boards during the past several years.

A military review board grant or deny a veteran's request to upgrade an other-than-honorable discharge. Veterans' lawyers study those past decisions in hopes of building successful arguments for their clients.

Appeals are being made at a time of growing recognition that an other-than-honorable discharge can stem from behaviors brought on by post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injuries.

Liberal consideration is supposed to be given to veterans with combat-related mental health conditions and to those who were sexually assaulted while in the military.

Bart Stichman, executive director for the veterans group, said the Pentagon continues to break federal law and is harming "veteran advocates who rely on access to these decisions to help them represent and secure critical benefits for veterans and their families."

Stichman's organization had sued the Pentagon over the matter in early January, alleging that hundreds of thousands of decisions have been publicly unavailable since April 2019.

A few weeks later, Stichman said, the Pentagon had agreed to a timeline for releasing most of the records. But the veterans group said access "continues to be severely limited."

The U.S. Military said that some of the records had been made available, according to a recent court filing. But officials discovered that "some of the decisions still contained personal identifying information," which could not be made public under federal law and needed to be redacted.

Military officials said they regret that the personal information precluded them from meeting the deadlines they had agreed upon, their attorneys wrote in the court filing.

A court hearing to review the matter is scheduled for March 6 in federal court in Alexandria, Va.

The lawsuit over the records has already drawn the attention of 11 Democratic U.S. senators. They wrote a letter to military leaders in January asking when the records would become available again.

*From CT Viewpoints - CT Mirror  
by James Ottino February 14, 2020*

## **30 Days Out: Helping Veterans Come Home**

An interception switches the course of a football game by changing its flow and energy. This is also the goal for us at the Veterans Administration toward veterans experiencing recent conflict.

Veterans tend to keep on the alert and mission-ready for some time after being exposed to a conflict-ridden area. When they come home, they may continue to feel the same stress and tension that they felt while deployed. If you have a loved one that has recently returned home from a war zone, do these three things within the first 30 days of them returning home: accept, listen and extend.

**Accept** the fact that your loved one has been to a place that you may never imagine going and has seen things that human eyes shouldn't see. Accept their experiences and the fact that they will probably be changed for the rest of their lives. Accept that they may not fit into society as they have before, but that's the way it has to be now.

**Listen** to their words. Therapy is sometimes effective just by letting people release their frustrations and bad energy through their words. Listen to what they have to say and don't comment back with your experiences – for they are far different than the veteran's. Listen for their cries of help, cries of pain, cries of misunderstanding. Those cries come in many different forms, but you've got to listen to be able to hear them.

**Extend** your home and your heart. The veteran is not apt to receive handouts, seek help, or expect you to understand what is humming between his or her ears. Extend yourself to them, so they know that there is a place to seek refuge during this transition. Extend your heart and your home, for it may just be their saving grace from hitting rock bottom.

Common folk cannot speak the same language as a high-level businessman or a mathematician, nor can they speak "Veteran." So many of our men and women, like this writer, have experienced a downhill spiral after coming home without the proper support. If you commit to accept, listen, and extend to these warriors, they may just be able to fully come home.

*James Ottino lives in Enfield.*

## **Welcome Home James**

*From Vietnam Magazine*

## **Aussie Hero in America's War: Keith Payne**



The Victoria Cross, established in 1856, is the British Commonwealth's highest decoration for combat valor, every bit the equivalent of the American Medal of Honor. During the Vietnam War the Victoria Cross was awarded to four Australian soldiers, two of them posthumously. One recipient, Warrant Officer Class 2 Keith Payne, is considered the most highly decorated living Australian. His awards include the U.S. Army's Distinguished Service Cross and the Silver Star.

Payne, born in 1933, enlisted in the Australian Army in August 1951 and fought with the Royal Australian Regiment during the Korean War. In the early 1960s he served in Malaya, a former British colony, during a communist insurgency there, and from February 1967 to March 1968 he was stationed in Papua New Guinea.

Arriving in Vietnam in February 1969, Payne was assigned to the Australian Army Training Team, an elite unit of counterinsurgency advisers who worked mostly with the Mobile Strike Force Command, widely known as the Mike Force. Mike teams consisted of Australian and U.S. Special Forces soldiers who recruited, trained and led rapid-response units of Civilian Irregular Defense Groups, local militias composed largely of ethnic minorities in South Vietnam's hill country.

On May 24, 1969, in the Central Highlands' Kontum province, Payne commanded the 212th Company of the 1st Mobile Strike Force Battalion when the unit was attacked by a large North Vietnamese Army force. The battalion's two leading companies,

including Payne’s unit, were cut off. Under heavy rocket and mortar fire from three sides, Payne moved up and down his line, firing at the NVA, throwing hand grenades and rallying his forces, even though he suffered multiple wounds.

Despite Payne’s efforts, the South Vietnamese militias started to fall back. Ultimately, the entire battalion was forced back, but Payne remained in an exposed position to cover the movement. He managed to halt the withdrawal and establish a night defensive position. Under cover of darkness, Payne moved forward alone to search for his wounded and any stragglers. By morning he had brought back 40 of them, including a severely wounded American adviser.

Payne’s heroics were recognized by Queen Elizabeth II in April 1970 when she presented Payne with the Victoria Cross aboard the Royal Yacht Britannia in Australia’s Brisbane harbor. The U.S. government awarded Payne the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC), the second-highest valor award after the Medal of Honor, for the same action, specifically citing him for saving the lives of his American comrades in arms. With the exception of three South Vietnamese soldiers, Payne was the only foreign ally awarded the DSC in Vietnam—or since.

He retired from the Australian Army in 1975 but spent the next two years as a captain in the army of Oman, fighting against Marxist rebel forces in the Dhofar War, the unsuccessful 1962-76 insurgency in Oman’s Dhofar province.

Payne’s wife, Florence, a member of the Women’s Royal Australian Army Corps, was honored in 2006 with the Medal of the Order of Australia for her services to the veterans community. In 2015 Payne was made a member of the Order of Australia in recognition of his “significant service to veterans and their families as an ambassador, patron and as an advocate for veterans’ health and welfare.”



Vanguard 216 was shot down by a Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM) during a mission over the DMZ – just 5 days before this newsletter editor arrived in Vietnam. Vanguard 216 was assigned to the 138<sup>th</sup> Aviation Co. (RR), sister company to the 146<sup>th</sup> Aviation Co. (RR) where the editor was assigned, and crewed Vanguard 127.

**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 2020 newsletter is 20 March 2020. Due to space availability, the editor reserves the right to include or not include photos for a given month.

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