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Meetings

Chapter 120 membership meeting will be held on Thursday, May 4, 2023 at 7:00pm in the Machinists Union Hall, 357 Main St., East Hartford. *State and East Hartford COVID-19 guidelines apply.*

The Board of Directors will meet on Thursday, May 25 at 7:00pm. Call the Chapter office for any changes in schedule. Chapter members are welcomed to attend.

Notice

If you have moved or changed your address, PLEASE notify us immediately. Call the Chapter Newsletter Editor at (860) 282-7470, or e-mail the Newsletter Editor at ctchapter120@aol.com.

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State Commissioner of Veteran Affairs Thomas J. Saadi among jurists nominated by Governor to serve as Judge of the Connecticut Superior Court



Commissioner Saadi

Governor Ned Lamont announced on March 29 that he is nominating 20 jurists to serve as judges of the Connecticut Superior Court. Among the nominees is 53-year-old Danbury resident and Connecticut State Commissioner of Veterans Affairs Thomas J. Saadi.

“Selecting nominees to become judges is one of the most important duties that I have as governor because these individuals will become responsible for ensuring that justice is administered fairly and without prejudice, and that everyone who comes before the court is treated equally and with respect,”

Governor Lamont said. “Our court system works best when it reflects the diversity, experience, and understanding of the people it serves. These individuals I am nominating have the qualifications that meet the high standards the residents of Connecticut deserve on the bench. Justice delayed is justice denied, and these new judges will help ensure the judicial branch is able to decide cases promptly and efficiently.”

Thomas J. Saadi, 53, of Danbury: Saadi graduated from Western Connecticut State University and obtained his Juris Doctor degree from Quinnipiac University. He is currently the Commissioner of the Connecticut State Department of Veterans Affairs and a Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve. Prior to becoming Commissioner for the department, he served for almost six years as its Chief of Staff and two years as its General Counsel. He also spent 15 years as a Connecticut Assistant Attorney General and Special Prosecutor. He has 18 years of continuous service in the Army Reserve as a Judge Advocate providing legal support from the company to division levels.

In a statement dated March 29, 2023, Commissioner Saadi said, “I am humbled to have been nominated by Governor Ned Lamont to serve as a Connecticut Superior Court Judge. While my nomination is still subject to confirmation hearings and approval by the General Assembly, I am working with the administration to ensure the stable transition of leadership at the Department of Veterans Affairs and continuity of the delivery of programs and services to our Connecticut Veterans.”

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Chapter/State News

Chapter 120 Elections Held

Elections for five National Convention delegates and three members of the Election Committee were held during the Chapter 120 meeting on April 6, 2023.

Delegates to the National Convention:

Bob Burgess Paul Barry Phil Morneault
 Bob Bagge John Siemer

Elections Committee:

Ken Lewis Roger Anderson Carl Morin

Congratulations to all!

Chapter Donates to Goodwin University Library

On Thursday, April 20, members of the board of directors of the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 120 visited Goodwin University to donate historical books and other materials to the Hoffman Family Library. Chapter 120 also provides an annual scholarship to student veterans and participates in Goodwin’s programming for 9/11 Remembrance, Veterans Day, and the Memorial Day Parade.



Shown left to right: Cynthia Hunt (Library Assistant Director), Roger Anderson, Frank Zizzamia, Bob Burgess, Craig Jordan (Goodwin Veterans Coordinator), Paul Barry, and Leigh Lovering.

Birthday Wishes

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

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>John P. Burns</i> | <i>Michael J. Coyne</i> |
| <i>John R. Cutler</i> | <i>Robert N. DeRosa</i> |
| <i>William S. Ehlert</i> | <i>Robert Fulco</i> |
| <i>Peter Galgano</i> | <i>Normand R. Girardin</i> |
| <i>Frank T. Jodaitis</i> | <i>James V. Laviana III</i> |
| <i>Kipp O. Miller</i> | <i>Raymond R. Samolis, Jr.</i> |
| <i>James Stevenson</i> | <i>Roland Wolf</i> |

A belated birthday wish to Ron Zdanis, whose birthday was in April.

Happy Birthday!

NOTICE

Notifying Chapter 120 of your mailing address and e-mail address changes is very important if you wish to continue receiving the Chapter newsletter. Over the past few months, several members' newsletters have been returned to us as undeliverable. This means that we will not mail/e-mail future newsletters until a correct address is received.

Please notify the Newsletter Editor of any change of mailing address or e-mail address at ctchapter120@aol.com or leave a voicemail message at 860-282-7470.

POW/MIA News



DPAA holds first honorable carry ceremony at Offutt since runway reopened

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency held its first honorable carry ceremony since the runway reopened April 4, 2023, at Offutt Air Force

Base, Nebraska.

An Alaska Air National Guard C-17 Globemaster delivered nine transfer cases containing the remains of World War II service members disinterred from an American cemetery in France and from excavation sites across Europe to the lab during the ceremony.

“It is humbling to think about the sacrifices these soldiers made, and I am proud to see the effort being made to reunite them with their families” said Rep. Mike Flood, who attended the event along with Nebraska Governor Jim Pillen and other local elected officials and base leadership.

An honorable carry is a ceremony that pays tribute to the Unknown service members who are returning to American soil for the first time since their conflict-related death. The Agency laboratory will now begin the extensive process to identify the remains, which can take anywhere from a few months to several years based on the state of the remains recovered.

“DPAA appreciates the extensive support shown by the local community, the state of Nebraska and the base, not only for today’s ceremony, but also for our daily work in providing the fullest possible accounting of missing personnel from previous conflicts,” said Fern Sumpter Winbush, DPAA principal deputy director.

An additional example of close community ties cited by DPAA Officials was the partnership with University of Nebraska-Lincoln for both research and field work, UNO College of Information Science and technology, and the UNMC School of Dentistry.

The 33,000 square foot lab at Offutt has helped identify more than 500 service members since opening in 2013 and together with its partner lab in Hawaii have accounted more than 1,000 missing Americans since DPAA stood up in 2015.



On The Hill



Biden Administration to Improve Veterans’ Access to At-Home Care Following Tester Efforts

Following efforts from U.S. Senator Jon Tester, President Joe Biden signed an Executive Order today to expand access to high-quality home care and support for veterans and caregivers of all ages.

“This is great news for our aging and disabled veterans who deserve and have earned access to quality home-based care,” said Tester. “Ensuring these men and women have access to

convenient, long-term care options after their time in uniform is absolutely critical, and I’m proud to have pushed the Administration to take action. I’ll keep working to hold folks in Washington accountable on delivering this needed support now and in the future.”

The President’s Executive Order pushes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to improve access to home-based care for veterans who require support, as championed under Tester’s bipartisan Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act. Mirroring requirements under Tester’s legislation, the Executive Order specifically directs VA to speed up the expansion of its Veteran Directed Care program to all 172 VA Medical Centers by the end of Fiscal Year 2024.

The President’s Executive Order also requires VA to consider expanding access to the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, also known as the Caregivers Program, and provide more mental health support for caregivers enrolled in that program. VA recently expanded Program eligibility to veterans of all eras, and following pressure from Tester, suspended discharges for legacy participants and is conducting a review of all eligibility criteria to ensure they are not too restrictive.

Tester has been leading the fight for years to deliver stronger support to disabled veterans and expand the Caregivers Program to veterans of all eras. He led the charge the last two years to introduce the Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act alongside Ranking Member Jerry Moran (R-Kan.). The aim of this bipartisan bill is to expand home and community-based services for aging veterans, as well as improve support for veterans and caregivers of all ages.

Continuing to build on these efforts, Tester will be leading a Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee hearing in the coming months examining veterans’ long-term care options and opportunities for improvement.

Veterans Affairs News



VA pauses rollout of Electronic Health Records program

The pause continues.

The Department of Veterans Affairs on April 6 said its new Oracle-Cerner Electronic Health Record will not go live as planned

later this year at its Saginaw, Michigan medical center.

“As VA leadership has promised, we will not deploy the new EHR system at any facility until we are confident it is ready to deliver for veterans and VA providers,” Laura Ruzick, director of Veterans Integrated Services Network 10, announced in a staff memo. “Based on our recent assessments, including the ongoing ‘assess and address’ period and the Readiness Assessment, we have determined that the new EHR is not yet ready for the planned June deployment in Saginaw.”

Currently in use at five locations around the country, the EHR system had been set to go live in Saginaw this summer after an eight-month pause. In the memo, Ruzick told staff that she knew their commitment to the project was “extraordinary.”

“I am confident that when we do roll out the new EHR system in Saginaw, we will make it a smooth, safe and positive experience for veterans and staff alike — and we will do so together,” she added.



The modernized EHR is expected to replace VA’s current 40-year-old Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture (VistA) to document and support all aspects of a veteran’s health care. However, its rollout has been plagued by problems that the VA noted in its recently released EHR Modernization Sprint Report. In contrast, the Department of Defense has the same system up and running in a majority of its medical facilities.

House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Mike Bost (R-Ill.) and Subcommittee Chairman Matt Rosendale (R-Mont.) said in a statement that the pause should last as long as is necessary for VA and Oracle-Center to “get their houses in order.”

Bost and Rosendale added that it “is abundantly clear to us that the Oracle Cerner EHR system is not ready for prime time, and VA is not ready to carry out this project.”

During a hearing on March 15, the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee learned from VA that six events related to the EHR system led to four fatalities over several years.

Various pieces of legislation have been introduced in both the House and Senate to address problems with the rollout.

From Military Times

Vet Affairs Deputy nominee would be highest ranked woman in VA history



Tanya Bradsher

President Joe Biden on Wednesday April 19 named Veterans Affairs Chief of Staff Tanya Bradsher as his pick to serve as the department’s second ranking official.

If confirmed, Bradsher will become the first female nominee sworn into the post and the highest ranking woman veteran in the history of VA leadership.

Two other women have served as VA’s deputy secretary, but only in an acting role.

Bradsher is a former Army lieutenant colonel whose 20 years in the service includes work in the Pentagon’s public affairs office and a deployment to Iraq. She has served as VA Chief of Staff since 2021, acting as a senior advisor to Secretary Denis McDonough and former Deputy Secretary Donald Remy, who left the post earlier this month.

She also served on the White House’s National Security Council under Biden and former President Barack Obama.

Bradsher’s historic nomination could face opposition in the Senate not because of her resume but because of objections from Republican lawmakers over unrelated issues. Last month, Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, placed a hold on Joshua Jacobs, the White House’s nominee to serve as VA Under Secretary of Benefits, over complaints he had about department personnel issues and unanswered information requests.

In addition, several Republican lawmakers have threatened to delay or disrupt VA leadership operations over objections they have to the department’s abortion policy unveiled last fall, which allows physicians to perform abortion procedures at some VA medical centers for eligible veterans and dependents.

No timetable has been set for a confirmation hearing on Bradsher’s nomination.

Guy Kiyokawa, VA’s assistant secretary for enterprise integration, is currently serving as acting deputy secretary. The

deputy secretary post oversees a host of major initiatives for the department, including the embattled electronics health records modernization effort.

Arlington National Cemetery announces second Flowers of Remembrance Day

Arlington National Cemetery will hold its second Flowers of Remembrance Day, on Sunday, May 28, 2023, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.

During the event, the public is invited to place a flower at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.



“We received such a tremendous response from the public during our inaugural Flowers of Remembrance Day event last year. We wanted to again allow our visitors the special opportunity to honor and respect the sacrifice of the Unknown Soldiers by placing flowers at the Tomb,” said Army National Military Cemeteries and Office of Army Cemeteries Executive Director Karen Durham-Aguilera in a release.

Flowers of Remembrance Day pays homage to the first official, national Decoration Day, now known as Memorial Day. This ceremony first took place at Arlington National Cemetery on May 30, 1868, to honor U.S. service members who died in the Civil War.

At 10 a.m. in the outdoor bowl of Memorial Amphitheater, ANC historians will offer a program on the history of Decoration Day/Memorial Day, this holiday’s importance to ANC and its connections to the Flowers of Remembrance Day event.

Following the talk, they will lead an optional, supplemental walking tour to the James Tanner Amphitheater, the Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns and other locations related to the official Decoration Day commemoration at ANC. No registration is necessary for participation.

“Every day is Memorial Day at Arlington National Cemetery,” said Superintendent of Arlington National Cemetery Charles “Ray” Alexander, Jr. “This day will provide the American public the special opportunity to see this iconic memorial up

close and to reflect on the service, valor and sacrifice it represents.”

Flowers will be provided by the Memorial Day Flowers Foundation and visitors should not bring their own flowers. During this event, visitors will also have an opportunity to place a flower on headstones throughout the cemetery.

Special Forces legend Billy Waugh passes away at 93

William “Billy” Waugh, a famed Army Special Forces soldier and later CIA operative, passed away on April 4, at the age of 93.



William “Billy” Waugh

Born on December 1, 1929, in Bastrop, Texas, Waugh was drawn to the military at an early age. When he was just 15, he came across two Marines and was inspired to enlist immediately. Deciding to travel to California, where he believed the minimum enlistment age was 16, he was stopped by a police officer in New Mexico and returned to Texas. That abortive attempt would only delay an impressive career by a few years, though.

Joining the Army in 1948, Waugh attended Airborne School and in 1951 was sent to Korea with the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team. Waugh wrote in his 2004 autobiography “Hunting the Jackal” that he “learned what made men tick, and what combat was all about.”

After being deployed to Germany, Waugh transferred to Special Forces.

“Once I learned what these fine men – the fittest and most committed group I had ever seen – were to become, I knew it was the only place for me,” Waugh wrote.

He first deployed to Vietnam in 1961, and then again in 1965. In June of that year, helping lead a Special Forces team alongside South Vietnamese volunteer forces in a raid, Waugh was shot three times, in an engagement for which team leader then-Capt. Paris Davis was later awarded the Medal of Honor.

After recovering from his injuries, Waugh served several more years in Vietnam with Military Assistance Command Vietnam-Studies and Observation Group, an elite formation of special operations forces tasked with conducting some of the most dangerous and secretive missions in the country. Waugh himself participated in the first freefall High Altitude, Low Opening (HALO) combat jump in history, in 1971. Retiring in 1972 as a Sgt. Maj., Waugh earned the Silver Star, four Bronze Stars, eight Purple Hearts, four Army Commendation Ribbons, 14 Army Air Medals, and a Presidential Unit Citation.

Following a brief detour as a U.S. Postal Service employee, Waugh began working for the CIA in 1977, although it happened in an unusual way. Waugh was first recruited by a former CIA employee named Edwin Wilson to train special operations troops in Libya. Once in that country, though, Waugh was recruited by the actual CIA for intelligence work.

“I had a method — I would take photos for about three weeks of areas we’d never been into before, of all the countries around Sudan, Egypt, and all of the countries of Africa. I became very good with small cameras ... I learned how to brief well, and I was excellent with maps. It became a pleasure to do the work. If you get killed, that’s just tough sh*t,” Waugh told Recoil Magazine about his intelligence work in 2022.

In this capacity, Waugh spent the 1980s and 1990s tracking down both Usama bin Laden and Ilich Ramirez Sanchez, known as “Carlos the Jackal.”

In 2001, Waugh was just a couple of months shy of 72 when he became one of the first CIA members to enter Afghanistan, working alongside special operations personnel hunting for bin Laden, who Waugh said he had been close enough “to have killed him with a rock,” a decade earlier.

Waugh spent his later years as a speaker and, generally, as a legend in the special operations community.

“Once you get used to that (a life of adventure), you’re not about to quit,” Waugh said in 2011. “How could you want to do anything else?”



From Army Aviation Association of America, Inc.

Fort Rucker renamed in honor of Army Aviator



CWO4 Michael J. Novosel

Today, April 10, 2023, Fort Rucker, Alabama was officially renamed Fort Novosel. The home of the Army Aviation Center of Excellence and Army Aviation since 1954 was renamed in honor of Army Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael J. Novosel, a Master Army Aviator who flew combat in both World War II and Vietnam saving more than 5,500 Soldiers lives, and who received the Medal of Honor for a

MEDEVAC mission under fire in Vietnam where he saved 29 soldiers. He was inducted into the Army Aviation Hall of Fame in 1975 and passed away on April 6, 2006 at the age of 83.

From Vietnam Magazine

M1911A1 .45 Caliber Automatic Pistol



On July 18, 1966, Staff Sgt. John McGinty led the understrength 1st Platoon of K Company, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment against a regimental-sized North Vietnamese Army (NVA) force supported by mortar fire. The NVA hoped to overrun 3rd Battalion's Landing Zone Crow to stop the battalion's withdrawal following Phase I of Operation Hastings.

It quickly became a chaotic, close-range fight. McGinty directed air strikes to within 50 meters of his position and called in final defensive artillery fire. He and 20 of his 32 Marines were wounded and his corpsman killed in the fighting. The enemy finally withdrew that evening: McGinty and his company commander, Capt. Robert J. Modrzejewski, received the Medal of Honor for their actions that day. Although air and artillery power turned the tide of battle, McGinty's sidearm, the M1911A1, had delivered critical punching power during key moments in the hard fight.

Based on John Browning's short-recoil operated, .38-caliber, self-loading (i.e. automatic) pistol of 1900, the M1911 gained its designation from the year the U.S. Army adopted it.

Intended for close range engagements in dense terrain, the Army ordered the caliber increased to .45 because the .38 round lacked the power to stop the assaults of Moro tribesmen during the Philippine-American War. It had a 7-round magazine in the grip. Many placed an eighth round in the firing chamber. Grip and manual safeties, sear disconnect, slide stop, and half-cock features were added in 1924 and this model was officially designated the M1911A1 in 1926. Approximately 7,028,690 have been produced to date, including the RIA M15 General Officer's sidearms (1972-1981). There were only 1,004 GO model M15s ever produced. The M15 was a shortened version of the M1911A1. These were not newly produced but were all cut-down from carefully selected original M1911A1s, many from the National Match version. The M1911A1's punching power is unchallenged, but its recoil necessitates training to fire accurately.

By 1969, the majority of M1911A1s were suffering from decades of heavy use. Congress ordered the Pentagon to choose a new standard military pistol. The Army selected the 9mm Beretta 92S1 in 1984. The M1911/1911A1 served as America's basic military sidearm from 1911 to 1984. It remains so in the armed forces of over 40 nations today. More importantly, U.S. Special Operations Forces continue to use specialized versions of the venerated .45 to this day.

On the Lighter Side

14 Funniest Military Jokes Ever (2023 Edition)

Every military branch thinks that they're the best, the most important, and in their own way the hardest working. There are so many funny military jokes and jabs out there so it took a while to compile a list of only the best.

Some of the jokes on this list you may not fully understand or appreciate unless you were actually in the military, but most of them I think anyone can appreciate.

Joke #1

Ask the Army to secure a building and they will set up a perimeter around it and make sure nobody gets out.

Ask the Marines to secure a building and they will charge in, kill everybody inside, and then set up defenses to make sure nobody gets in.

Ask the Navy to secure a building and they will turn off all the lights and lock all the doors at 1700.

Ask the Air Force to secure a building and they will sign a 10 year lease with an option to buy.

Joke #2

What do you call Marines with an IQ of 160?

– A Platoon

Joke #3

Officer: "Soldier, do you have change for a dollar?"

Soldier: "Sure, buddy."

Officer: "That's no way to address an officer! Now, let's try it again!"

Officer: "Soldier. Do you have change for a dollar?"

Soldier: "No, SIR!"

Joke #4

A visitor, returning to Kuwait for the first time since the Gulf War, was impressed by a sociological change. On previous visits, she noted that women customarily walked about 5 paces behind their husbands.

She observed that the men now walked over 20 paces BEHIND their wives! She approached one of the women for an explanation: "What enabled women here to achieve this marvelous reversal of roles?" "Land mines," replied the Kuwaiti woman.

Joke #5

An Airman, Soldier, and Marine are sitting around talking about hardships they faced on their last deployment.

Airman: "The worst was when the air conditioner in our tent broke and it was 110 outside!"

Soldier: "WTF, you had air conditioners?"

Marine: "Wait, stop. You had tents?"

Joke #6

USAF: Birds

USA: Choppers

USN: Helos

USMC: OHH! OHH OHOH! (pointing at the sky)

Joke #7

What Do You Call a Soldier Who Survived Mustard Gas and Pepper Spray?

– A Seasoned Veteran

Joke #8

How does the Air Force Play Bingo?

B-52 F-16 A-10..

Joke #9

An Army Drill Sergeant took some recruits to the mess hall. After everyone had made it through the chow line, he sat them

down and told them “There are three rules in this mess hall- Shut up! Eat up! Get up!” Checking to see that he had everyone’s attention, he asked, “What is the first rule?”

Much to the amusement of the other instructors, 60 privates yelled in unison, “Shut up, Drill Sergeant!”

Joke #10

Army Says: “HOOOOOAH!”
Marines Say “OOOOORAH!”
Navy and CG Say “HOOOOOYAH!”
Air Force Says “OKEY DOKEY?”

Joke #11

Did You Hear About The Accident at the Army Base?

– A tank ran over a box of popcorn and killed two Kernals

Joke #12

As we stood in formation at the Pensacola Naval Air Station, our Flight Instructor said, “All right! All you dummies fall out.” As the rest of the squad wandered away, I remained at attention. The instructor walked over until he was eye-to-eye with me, and then just raised a single eyebrow. I smiled and said, “Sure was a lot of ‘em, huh sir?”

Joke #13

What do Marines have in common with other members of the Armed Forces?

They all originally set out to become Marines

Joke #14

A Soldier and a Marine were sitting next to each other on a plane. The Marine took off his boots and began to stretch out. The soldier swore under his breath at the Marine and told him he wanted to get up and get a drink.

The Marine insisted that since he was in the aisle seat he would get it for him. The Soldier agreed, and when the Marine went to get his drink he started spitting in the Marine’s boots.

When the the Marine came back the Soldier nodded and thanked him for the drink, very pleased he pulled one over on the Marine. This happened several times times throughout the flight.

When the plane was descending for the landing, the Marine put his boots back on and quickly realized the Soldier had been spitting in his boots.

To the Soldiers surprise, the Marine was laughing about it. He looked over at the Soldier and said “when are we going to stop playing these games, spitting in each others boots and pissing in each others drinks, it’s so juvenile!”

Newsletter articles/ stories/photos

Any articles, stories and/or photos submitted for the newsletter must be received by the “cut off” date for any given month. Photos must be accompanied by text which describes the event, names, dates and any other pertinent facts so our readers understand the story behind the photo(s). The newsletter editor will announce the “cut off” dates at each Chapter meeting. The “cut off” date for our June 2023 newsletter is 19 May 2023. Due to space availability, the editor reserves the right to include or not include photos for a given month.

This newsletter printed by



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