Celebrating Freedom

Rexford John DeWispelaere
Missing in Action

Breaking News -
Taps 2009

MEMBERSHIP MEETING: WED, JULY 8 AT 7:30 PM
President's Message

Well another month has passed, and a busy one it was. I started the month representing the Chapter May 3rd at the annual DAV Dinner that honored our own Gordy Williams with an award for all the hard work he does. On May 16th, along with some other Board members, I attended the Annual Armed Forces Day Lunch at the Army Air Guard hangar. This year’s event was another great event that honored all our young people serving in harm’s way today.

On May 28th I met with Congressman Chris Lee at the Batavia VA along with about 30 other veterans Group Commanders and County Veterans Service Agency Directors, for the first meeting on his advisory committee. Congressmen Lee hosted the meeting so that he could better understand the concerns of veterans in his Congressional District. In the meeting we voiced our concerns in the area of health care at the VA, the long wait in the claim process to get claims adjudicated and how best to handle the newly returning veterans who served in harm’s way. Great meeting and the Congressman seemed truly interested in helping us correct some of the issues that came up. We will meet 3 times a year and he promised to keep us all informed as to what steps he is taking to better the life style of veterans. If you have an issue please let me know so that I can bring it up at the next meeting.

Also on May 28th, Chuck Macaluso and I represented the Chapter at the annual Kodak VetNet dinner. After the dinner we presented a Certificate of Appreciation for their help over the years on the Day of Caring, cleaning up our Memorial in Highland Park. We also presented one for the trailer they will be giving us with a flag display on it. Great dinner and great friends.

Last but not least I need to recognize the true dedication of our 2nd VP and Region 2 Director Fred Elliott for playing taps at our Memorial Day ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Highland Park on May 25th. As Fred moved over to his spot to play taps he fell and broke his ankle in 3 spots. In the true meaning of “Army Strong” as a proud member of the US Army Cavalry with Cavalry hat intact, Fred played Taps lying on the ground in pain. Fred is recovering at home and will be back in action soon. God Bless you my buddy -- you’re the best!

We also had two great outreach events - first at the Lilac Festival and second at the Air Show. Thanks Ralph and all those who helped.

Till next month stay safe and I’ll see you at the next event.

Ken Moore
Vietnam 66-67
US Army Cavalry

President’s Report

The month of May was, as usual, a very busy month for members of the Marching Unit. Without rehashing all of the parades during May, I would just like to touch a little bit on Memorial Day. Memorial Day started out just like any other Memorial Day for the Marching Unit with the Downtown Parade. Following the parade we were at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial for our annual Memorial Day service to honor and pay respect to our 280 fallen brothers and to all of those that we lost during the past year. The ceremony was well attended as it usually is every year. We had our usual service with the posting of our Nation’s Colors, prayers, a few words from County Executive Maggie Brooks, the reading of the 280 names, the 21-gun salute and the playing of Taps. Ah yes, the playing of Taps. At this year’s service it was a little bit different. As I was standing at my position by the American Flag pole I could faintly hear, off in the distance, what sounded like the playing of Taps? While I was standing there and listening as best I could, for the last note so I could give the next command to the Color Guard, I thought to myself I should have told our Bugler to turn the volume all the way up. So I made a mental note to be sure to tell him after the service so he would remember for next year. I mean after all, it was a rookie bugler this year. After the ceremony was over and I was back at the overlook bringing the service flags back to full staff, someone came to me and said that our Bugler, Fred Elliott, had fallen and broken his ankle. So I figured that now would be a good time to talk to him about the volume on the trumpet. I mean after all he had become a captive audience so to speak. Well he really had ended up breaking his leg in three places above his ankle. When I got to him, of course I wanted to know how he was and what happened. He told me that he didn’t like where he was going to play Taps from and was going to go to a different spot when he broke his leg. I must say though, that our man Fred, as dedicated as he is, withstood his pain and waited for his cue, played Taps while lying on his side on the back of a hill in the Memorial while holding the trumpet up for us to hear the playing of Taps. We then of course had to carry Fred up over the hill to the awaiting MEDEVAC, ahh ambulance I mean. That is true dedication to one’s mission. Fred truly went above and beyond. Instead of trying to get someone to fill in for him and get some help, he waited to complete his

Marching Unit
Ray Melens, Commander

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mission. JOB WELL DONE, Fred! The good news is that Fred is home and on the road to recovery. I’m sure there are probably some pictures elsewhere in this issue of Fred and the Memorial Day service.

I also want to note that many participants made the service happen and without them it would never take place. We need to thank our friends from the Keystone Pipes Drum Band. They are always there every year for us and really do a great job. Then there were all the name readers, Marching Unit members, our combat photographer, Glenn Peck, and without whose help I could never get it done, my wife, Gail. There just isn’t enough space to mention everyone by name, but to you all – THANKS - and I’m sure the 280 Brothers enshrined there “Thank You” as well, for remembering them.

The month of June brought a new parade to the Marching Unit’s schedule. On Saturday, June 6th the Marching Unit was in Clifton Springs for their Bicentennial parade. We had a great turnout of marchers and the Unit had a warm reception the whole length of the parade. It was a great parade and the members that attended enjoyed it as well.

Be sure to see the updated parade schedule elsewhere in this issue. Special note is the date change of the ceremony. Afterwards we were able to talk to several of the veterans and let me know that you would like to join and then I can tell you what you need to do. You can also let me know by seeing me at a meeting or calling me or send me an E-mail.

Please remember all our troops that are currently deployed and serving in harm’s way. Remember them in your thoughts and prayers.

Until next month ………AT EASE!!!!!

POW-MIA
Gail Bologna-Melens, Chairperson

WOW!! July 4th has been here and gone already. Now we are getting ready for the national convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

So far I have only one name listed as a returned POW/MIA. The remains of Major Wilbur Ronald Brown, USAF, who was from North Carolina, and was missing in South Vietnam, were recovered May 19th, 2003, as part of group identification.

Hope to see everyone at the next VVA Chapter 20 meeting. Don’t forget our monthly flag drawing is held at these meetings. REMEMBER our POW/MIA’s in your prayers and thoughts. If we keep them in the public eye then they will not be forgotten. Fly your flag and put a decal on your car window.

Veterans Incarcerated Committee Report
Ron Trovato

Greetings to all. My committee has been pretty active this past month and I want to thank Pat Pudetti for all of his help. On May 16, 2009, Pat Pudetti and I attended the Memorial Day service held at the Oneida Correctional Facility in Rome, NY, put on by the Oneida Active Veterans’ Group there. We were invited to attend by OAV Secretary Wesley Dunn and the turn-out was about 50 veterans. We met up with Staff Advisor Frank Redmond who took us inside the facility and Pat and I were allowed to address the guys there. During the service we received a beautiful certificate of appreciation for coming down. Monica Storms, a Senior Corrections Counselor there, also spoke to the men who did a really nice job of posting the colors for the ceremony. Afterwards we were able to talk to several of the veterans.
Who knew playing Taps could be hazardous to your health? Marie dropped me off for the parade Monday morning and we were off to start of a great day. The weather looked promising and I was with my veteran family.

After the parade we all gathered at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial at Highland Park for the Chapter’s annual Memorial Day services. I had already signed up to play Taps like I did last year so it was no surprise to see me with the bugle. At the appropriate time, I went to a spot in the memorial site to play Taps. Once there, I decided to change places so that the sounds of Taps could be better heard. Bad decision. My next step was my last as my left foot slipped on the grass and I went down like the Titanic.

There was no pain involved but I knew something was wrong because my foot was at right angles to my leg. (Okay, maybe it was only 45 degrees, but it was not right) Fortunately for me, there was a spectator close by and he immediately offered help. (I think his name was Tim Haak.) I told him I appreciated his offer but not until I played Taps and the service ended. (I knew it was close to the end of the service and I was in no pain.) So, for the first time that I know of, Taps was played in the prone position. The folks from Metro-Ambulance and at Strong Memorial were all extremely helpful and willing to do whatever was necessary to help. It’s been a long time since I had to be hospitalized and the experience at Strong was a pleasant one even if it wasn’t by choice. Everyone I came into contact with there from the doctors to the person who cleaned my room was of the highest caliber. I tried to get extra pain medication for my friends but they wouldn’t give….something about it being illegal. Stupid technicality.

At any rate, I just want to say THANK YOU to everyone who helped that day, has emailed, called, sent a card, stopped by, brought food, or had Marie and I in their prayers and thoughts. I am truly fortunate to be part of such a wonderful family. Did I mention how lucky I am to have Marie taking care of me?

ODE TO FRED ELLIOTT
(Sung to the tune of The Caissons Go Rolling Along)
Lyrics by Tom and Sue Puff

Over Hill, over dale,
Freddy hit that dusty trail,
and that Taps tune kept humming along.
Bugle in hand, trying to stand,
to respond to Ray’s command,
as Fred Elliott is playing that song.

Chorus:
Well it’s Ouch, Darn, Gee!
as he fell on bended knee,
play out that Taps tune loud and strong.
Where ever you go,
you will always know
when Fred Elliott is playing that song.

Standing there, horn mid-air,
Freddy hit that dusty trail again,
and that Taps tune kept humming along.

Well it’s Ouch, Darn, Gee!
as he fell on bended knee,
play out that Taps tune loud and strong.
Where ever you go,
you will always know
when Fred Elliott is playing that song.

Tune complete, ain’t it sweet,
pain is swelling up his feet,
now he’s finished with playing that song.

Standing there, horn mid-air,
Freddy hit that dusty trail again,
and that Taps tune kept humming along.

Well it’s Help, Help, Help!
as Freddie gave a yelp,
calling nine-eleven all day long.
So where e’er the ambulance goes,
Fred Elliot always knows,
that we’re playing his favorite song.
Crisis at the VA

According to an article in The Intelligence Daily, the VA's backlog of unfinished disability claims grew by more than 100,000, adding to an already preponderous backlog that now totals nearly one million claims (803,000 claims on Jan. 5, 2009 and 915,000 on May 4, 2009. (See report at: http://www.vba.va.gov/REPORTS/mmwr/2009/051109.xls. Veterans now wait an average of six months to receive disability benefits and as long as four years for their appeals to be heard in cases where their benefits were denied. Rep. Tim Walz, D-Minn., a member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, said during a hearing in March that the VA is “almost criminally behind in processing claims.”

Excerpted from the original article:

“Although President Obama has proposed increasing the VA’s budget by 10 percent to $15 billion and as much as $113 billion for fiscal year 2010 as a way of meeting this and other challenges, the administration still lacks the manpower, data, and analysis to properly plan for the funding increase, according to a recent report by the Government Accountability Office.

“Shinseki, a staunch advocate of veterans, promised recently that he would take “on the issue of the backlog,” but he also admitted that he doesn’t understand how it turned into a full-blown crisis. While veterans groups say they are pleased with Obama’s choice of Shinseki and other veterans’ advocates to lead the VA, they said they could no longer sit by and wait for relief.

“Earlier this year, two veterans advocacy groups asked a federal appeals court to step in and force the VA to immediately tackle the massive benefits claims backlog and implement mental health care plans. <http://www.veteransptsdclassaction.org/pdf/Appeals/2009-05-01-Appellants%2720Reply%20Brief.pdf>

“The wars and economic devastation continue to generate a flood of new patients and claims for VA. However, the Captain of the ship has changed at VA, and a new course has been plotted. Only time will tell if Secretary Shinseki can turn the ship around without additional damage to VA or harm to our veterans.”

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Legislation for Veterans

by Fred Elliott

Starting with this article, I hope to have regular updates on both Federal and State legislative issues of concern to veterans and their families. My intent will be to let you know what bills are being considered, provide you with some thoughts on the value of certain legislation, who represents us at the Federal and State levels and how to best let them know your concerns as veterans.

Currently there are over 280 bills in Congress that concern veterans and their families either directly or indirectly. Bills to thank veterans for their service, to provide incentives to businesses to hire veterans, to address military domestic and sexual violence, to improve treatment for PTSD, TBI, and other trauma associated with military service, are a small sample of the subjects addressed in the various bills before Congress.

The New York State Assembly and Senate have over 170 bills before them that deal with veterans. These bills range from authorizing distinctive license plates to real property tax exemptions for 100% disabled veterans to the elimination of tolls on the NYS Thruway for vehicles transporting veterans to and from VA Hospitals and other veterans’ healthcare facilities.

If we want legislation to repair the broken DVA, legislation that addresses the healthcare needs of veterans and their families, legislation that addresses the needs of today's veteran, then we must take an active role in the process by staying informed and providing our legislators with our opinions about pending bills and legislation we feel is necessary.

Should you have a specific concern that you feel needs to be addressed legislatively or want further information about current bills, please contact me at felliott@rochester.rr.com or 585-288-5756.
there and were given an overview of the group’s goals and plans to attain them. In the past there was a VVA

Chapter at Oneida, but numbers have forced the vets there to open it up to vets of all eras to remain viable. All in all it was a very productive visit and the Oneida Active Veterans is a group that I will be keeping in touch with. Good luck guys!

On Memorial Day, Pat Pudetti and I went into the Auburn Correctional Facility for their holiday observance. There were four other outside guests present, including the Rev. Freemesser and members of Chapter 704 that talked to all of the veterans in the chapel there. This event was very emotional and also very well attended. Larry Wilson and Andy Restivo from Chapter 205 talked to all of the veterans present and really hit home about what Memorial Day was truly all about. All of us outside guests were also given a chance to address the membership and a lot of business was discussed while we had coffee and donuts. The Veterans Groups at Auburn did a terrific job all around and it is always with a great deal of pride that I attend the Memorial Day vigil there. Thanks for the hospitality, guys!

I want to also thank Chapter 20 for the Don and Rori Murrell Humanitarian Award. It is indeed an honor to receive it. We all know what Rori Murrell was all about.

Ron Trovato and Pat Pudetti with the Oneida Active Veterans group.

Rori helped so many of us Vietnam Veterans back in the day (before it was popular to do so) as a counselor at the Veterans Outreach Center. She was such a force for good in the Monroe County Veterans Community for many years and remains a close friend of this writer. Her husband, Don, worked for the City of Rochester and he was a tireless veterans’ advocate. He helped organize fundraising for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Highland Park and he was also the editor of the Forward Observer for many years before turning that position over to Bruce McDaniel. The Forward Observer was the forerunner of the Between the Lines and Don had the presence of mind to go over my articles like John Madden on a teleprompter. And he was universally correct in doing so, probably saving the Chapter since most of my articles at the time were based on my paranoid, right-wing coloring book readings. Thank you one and all, on behalf of myself and my family for such a prestigious award.

Happy Birthday, US Army!

Chapter 20 toasted the US Army’s 234th birthday.

DEAR BETWEEN THE LINES,

First, salute to all of you. I’m a veteran, in prison who lives in East Rochester with my wife Doris. I would like very much to have a copy every month sent to me. I appreciate it very much.

To the men of Vietnam Veterans of America, as bands of brothers, “Salute” to you all.

Love, Michael Colon

Editor’s Note: You’ve been added to our mailing list, Michael. Thank you for your service and WELCOME HOME!
I seem to have a tendency to be viewed as a know-it-all. I don’t mean in a smart-alecky way, but folks just ask me the darnnest questions sometimes – or, I overhear a topic and my innate curiosity takes over and I invite myself into the conversation. Many times I find myself doing research for the answer – hmm, maybe that’s how I get the tag of a “know-it-all.”

Well, I decided I needed some help. So, let this be a forum for those questions you’ve always wondered about, or things that just come up and make you curious. I’ll post the questions in the BTL and those readers who either have the answer or, like me, can’t stand NOT knowing something, can do the research and send me the info to be posted in the next issue. Likewise, if you choose, I can post your contact info in the BTL and you can get a direct response. (If you’re shy, or don’t want anyone to know it’s YOU asking the question, I’ll respect your anonymity and give you an alias, then forward the info privately.)

Here are the questions asked of me this month:

1. On my ribbons, the colors are green, yellow, three red stripes, yellow then green. Yet the South Vietnam flag colors are yellow, three red stripes then yellow. Why are the color patterns different? (Perhaps the green represents the green landscape in country.)

2. What should the height of the South Vietnam pole be if I’m displaying it with the American and POW flags?

3. Where can I purchase the flags that are 8’ x 12’. (American made only).

Responses to questions 1-3 can be directed to Dan at danltusmc@yahoo.com.

4. When displaying the POW flag in the vertical position (grommet side parallel to the ground), should the top of the head be to the left, or to the right?

This response can come to me at kathy14470@msn.com as I didn’t have a chance to ask permission to post this person’s name.

Please copy me with your responses – if you locate a source, please include that as well. For example, on Question 4 I received the following information:

“I don’t believe that there is any official rule dealing with this. It would make sense that the POW/MIA flag should be displayed so that the lettering reads correctly (not backwards), which would mean that the head should go to the observer’s right. One odd thing about this is that it’s the opposite of the way the US flag is displayed (the union goes on the observer’s left, whether it’s horizontal or vertical). This same problem arises when the US flag is displayed with other national flags (Brazil, for example) that have lettering on them. If your POW/MIA flag is double-sided, so that both sides read correctly, it might look better to follow the same rule as for the US flag. Again, there is no hard-and-fast rule about this; it’s mostly a matter of common sense and what looks good.”

Peter Ansoff

Then & Now

Do you know this soldier? Answer on page 13.
IN 1853, SECRETARY OF WAR
Jefferson Davis, at the suggestion
of conservationist George Perkins
Marsh and Army Lt. General
George H. Crosman approached
Congress about using camels as
pack animals for the U.S. Military
in their fight against the Indians in
the southwestern United States.
Two years later, the government
gave $30,000 to Army Major Henry
C. Wayne to find camels for the
military.

After traveling throughout
Europe and Africa, Major Wayne
(accompanied by Navy Lieutenant
David D. Porter) brought 34 sin-
gle-hump camels and several
Arab handlers to Texas to begin
training of the U.S. Camel Corps.
While Major Wayne took the
camels from Indianola, Texas to a camp northwest of San
Antonio, Lieutenant Porter went back overseas to pur-
chase another 44 camels.
During the year the Army spent training the men and
the camels they both developed a strong distaste for
each other. The camels were prone to biting, kicking, and
spitting and the troopers never adjusted to the camels’ ill-
tempered behavior. Despite these
problems, Edward Beale led an
expedition some 950 miles from
San Antonio to Fort Defiance,
New Mexico. Beale ended up
traveling over 3,000 miles with
camels across the desert, up
into the Sierras and across the
Colorado river. Claiming success,
Beale left some of the camels in
California and returned to Texas
with the remainder.

Despite Beale’s enthu-
siastic report of success, Congress
refused to appropriate any more
funds for the “Camel Corps”. The
troops dislike of the camels, the
looming civil war, and Jefferson
Davis’ rise to the Presidency of
the Confederate States all led to
the downfall of the program. In
1864, an auction was held where 34 of the camels were
sold. Eventually some of the camels found their way to race
tracks, the circus, and Nevada where they hauled salt to
miners. Once salt was discovered near the minefields, the
camels were taken to Arizona where those that were not
sold, were turned loose in the desert. Thus ended the U.S.
Army’s experiment with camels.

Are you a veteran looking for a way
to assist your fellow veterans?

Volunteer as a Peer Mentor in Monroe County Veterans Court
Peer mentors are veterans who assist and support fellow veterans in the Criminal Justice System.

Typical duties include appearing in court and maintaining contact with the veteran.

A Peer Mentor Provides:
• Emotional Support
• Insight necessary for the Veteran to
  successfully complete the Veterans Court
• Assistance to the Veteran in resolving their
  concerns about the court procedures
• Assistance to the Veteran in accessing and
  navigating the Veterans Affairs System

If you are interested,
please contact:
Michael Volkmer
Court Coordinator
Veterans Court
(585) 428-4428
Vietnam Veterans of America
THRIFT STORE, CHAPTER 20, LLC
1199 East Main Street, Rochester, NY 14609

Hours: Monday - Friday 8:30am - 5:00pm
Saturday 9:00am - 5:00pm

Car Donations 8:30am - 5:00pm
Truck Pick-up: 9am - 4:30pm
(weather permitting)

~ Delivery Available ~
Truck Pick-up #482-8016
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All donations go to the Thrift Store at the address above.

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BETWEEN THE LINES

U.S.S. LIBERTY (AGTR-5)
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SURVIVOR
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1-585-225-0385
E-Mail: USSLIBTY@Rochester.RR.com
Web Page: http://www.USSLiberty.org

H-E-L-P
B-U-I-L-D
T-H-E
V-E-T-E-R-A-N-S
W-A-L-K
at the Rochester Vietnam Veterans Memorial
Any past or present member of the United States Armed Services, Active or Reserve, is eligible for an engraved paver brick. For information and an order form, please contact the Chapter 20 office at 482-7396.

GREECE MEMORIAL POST 206
The Newest Post in Monroe County
A casual
Meeting the 3rd Thursday of the month 6:30 - 7:45 pm
at
The Legacy at Park Crescent — Mt. Read Blvd.
For details, please call 227-4383 or 225-4228.

WETZEL ASSOCIATES
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Business Continuity Planning
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(585) 474-4883 lwetzel42@frontiernet.net

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WILLIAM H. WALLACE
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT
636 Middle Road
Henrietta, NY 14467
585-334-5352
Help for OIF and OEF Veterans with Service-Connected Hearing Loss

A partnership has been announced between the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) in support of veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). A result of this partnership is the Military Veterans with Hearing Loss Project, a program designed especially for these veterans who have a hearing loss as a result of their service. The veterans may earn bachelor or graduate level degrees at RIT with access and audiological services from NTID. The goal is to bring qualified veterans into RIT beginning in Fall 2009. For additional information about the program, visit www.rit.edu/ntid/veterans. (submitted by Sue Puff)

Thanks for the Goodies!

We received the following in thanks for a box of snacks sent to the Middle East:

VVA Chap. 20,
I wanted to extend a thank you from Bandit Troop 1/10 Cav for the boxes that you sent us after Christmas. Everything was enjoyed. Pepperoni must be a Rochester thing, no one else heard of eating just pepperoni. Hey, I enjoyed it and got a few to eat some too, especially at the Super Bowl party we had. It went really well with my Heinekins I had to drink. So again I would like to thank you from all of us here.

Cpl Joseph Becker

Cell Phone Discounts for Veterans

Military veterans and active-duty personnel are eligible for discounts on cell phone plans. There are over 23 million veterans in the United States and many are unaware of the savings they could see on their monthly cell phone bills. Monthly military discounts range from 15 percent on Verizon Wireless plans to 10 percent off - and no activation fee - on T-Mobile agreements. Alltel, Sprint and AT&T offer similar discounts. It is important to know, however, that you will have to ask for the discount and sometimes even speak to a manager for this benefit. Most cell phone providers will require a military identification card, veteran identification card or military discharge papers as proof of veteran status. Some companies may require online registration to get the discount. Many companies, including Verizon, also offer discounted plans for customers 65 and older.

Thrift Store News

As part of giving back, Chapter 20 has donated to the Zoo a variety of items totaling nearly $500: a side-by-side refrigerator, leaf blower, weed whacker, seed spreader, electric drill, storage totes and art supplies. The generosity to the community is to be commended – Great job!!

Devry Announces Help for Unemployed

DeVry will be offering 500 scholarships to workers affected by lay-offs in the last 12 months. The 500 Stimulus Scholarships will be offered beginning July 1 at any of their degree-granting institutions. Some of you may have friends and family affected by recent economic events and you are encouraged to share news of this scholarship with them. The Stimulus Scholarship Program awards scholarships to qualified, new students who have lost their jobs in the last 12 months. You can also get more information about the special scholarship program by visiting www.devry.edu/stimulusscholarship. (submitted by Bruce VanApeldoorn)

VIETNAM VETERANS of AMERICA CHAPTER 20 2009 PARADE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>PARADE</th>
<th>START TIME</th>
<th>FORMATION AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SAT.</td>
<td>JULY 4</td>
<td>Town of Irondequoit</td>
<td>11 am</td>
<td>Irondequoit Plaza Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRI.</td>
<td>JULY 10</td>
<td>Kendall Firemen’s</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>Rt. 237 Just North of RT. 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>*THU.</td>
<td>JULY 16</td>
<td>Webster Firemen’s</td>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>RT. 404 at Phillips Rd.</td>
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<td>THU.</td>
<td>JULY 23</td>
<td>Hilton Firemen’s</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>Quest Elementary School (West Ave.)</td>
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<td>*FRI.</td>
<td>JULY 31</td>
<td>Hamlin Firemen’s</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>RT. 19 at the VFW Post (N. of RT. 104)</td>
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<td>AUG 21-23</td>
<td>MOVING WALL</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Fairport VFW</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>AUG 29</td>
<td>Marching Unit Picnic</td>
<td>2 pm</td>
<td>Ray &amp; Gail’s 151 Curtis Rd. Hilton</td>
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<td>SAT</td>
<td>SEPT. 12</td>
<td>Town of Gaines</td>
<td>10:30 am</td>
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<td>SAT</td>
<td>OCT. 10</td>
<td>Columbus Day Parade</td>
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*Pending an Invitation (YOU WILL BE ADVISED IF WE GET THE INVITATION OR NOT BEFORE THE SCHEDULED PARADE)
NOTE: LISTED ARE START TIMES. PLEASE PLAN TO BE AT FORMATION APPROX. 45 MINUTES PRIOR TO THE START TIME LISTED
On November 24, 1969, a C130A departed Ubon Airfield, Thailand on an operational mission over Laos. The crew aboard the aircraft included Maj. Michael D. Balamonti (the navigator); Capt. Earl C. Brown; Capt. Richard O. Ganley; 1Lt. Peter R. Matthes (the copilot); and Sgts. Donald L. Wright; Larry I. Grewell; Charles R. Fellenz; Rexford J. DeWispelaere.

While on the mission, near Ban Bac, Savannakhet Province, Laos, the C130 was observed to be struck by several rounds of 37mm anti-aircraft fire, burst into flames, crash to the ground and explode on impact. All the crew was declared Missing in Action, but due to enemy presence in the area, it was strongly felt that the enemy could account for them. It was not determined whether the crew died or survived the crash of the aircraft.

The crew of the C130 are among nearly 600 Americans who were lost in Laos. When Dr. Henry Kissinger negotiated President Nixon’s Peace Agreements in Paris in 1973, the Americans lost in Laos were forgotten. Kissinger did not negotiate for them, even though several were known to be Prisoners of War, and some 125 of them were known to have survived their loss incidents. Not one American held in Laos was released at the end of the war.

From the Desk of Gail Bologna-Melens, Chairperson, POW-MIA Committee:

Rex DeWispelaere was one of eight airmen aboard the doomed C130A on Nov 24, 1969. His plane was escorting other aircraft over Laos when witnesses on another saw a 37mm anti-aircraft artillery shell explode near the plane. The plane was last seen descending rapidly in flames and exploded upon impact. No parachutes were seen. DeWispelaere’s parents traveled to Laos in 1971 in an attempt to find their son, who was 24 when he was shot down. The remains were excavated from the crash site in Ban Salou, Laos, in October and November of 1993.

Rex was our first local POW-MIA to be returned home for burial. He was laid to rest in Arlington on November 28, 1995 and is buried along with the remains of seven other airmen in a single grave in Arlington National Cemetery.

Rex was repatriated before I became POW chairperson. It was a disgrace that we did not attend his funeral and I vowed that we would never let that happen again.

| NAME: | Rexford John DeWispelaere |
| RANK/BRANCH: | E4/US Air Force |
| UNIT: | 41st Tactical Airlift Squadron, Ubon Airfield, Thailand |
| DATE OF BIRTH: | 09 September 1945 |
| HOME CITY OF RECORD: | Penfield NY |
| DATE OF LOSS: | 24 November 1969 |
| COUNTRY OF LOSS: | Laos |
| STATUS (in 1973): | Missing in Action |
| OTHER PERSONNEL IN INCIDENT: | Michael D. Balamonti; Earl C. Brown; Charles R. Fellenz; Richard O. Ganley; Larry I. Grewell; Peter R. Matthes; Donald L. Wright (all missing) |
Attention All Bikers

The Wall That Heals
Is coming to
Perinton Memorial Post 8495
On “Freedom Hill”
Fairport, NY
August 20–23, 2009

Motorcycle Escort Needed
By August 18th

Call 585-381-5197
Pick Up Point
To be announced.

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roll call: b.o.d. attendance 2009

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X—Present E—Excused A—Absent

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459 South Avenue, Rochester, New York 14620
www.veteransbusinesscouncil.org
For More Information Email jocene.preston@veteransbusinesscouncil.org

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Then & Now

Craig Wirth
membership application

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 20

Name: __________________________________________  Date of Birth: ________________  Sex: □ M □ F
Address: __________________________________________  Home Phone: (___)__________________________
City: __________________________________________  Work Phone: (___)__________________________
Zip: ________  Country: ________  Email Address: __________________________________________  □ W □ H
Chapter # (if known) ______________________  Sponsor: ____________________________

I am not a Vietnam Vet, but I want to help Vietnam veterans and their families. Please accept my donation: _____ □ AVVA Membership
□ $10 □ $20 □ $50 □ Other ($________)

Eligibility: Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. Military (for other than training purposes) between

Term: □ 1 year: $20  □ Life Membership: $250 (ages 49 and under), $225 (ages 50-55), $200 (ages 56-60),
□ 3 years: $50  $175 (ages 61-65), $150 (ages 66 and over)

Payment Options: □ Check □ Money Order

Return this application, along with a copy of your DD214, to: Vietnam Veterans of America, P.O. Box 12580, Rochester, NY 14612

VVA is a non-profit veterans service organization. Programs and services are funded by member dues and public donations.
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Marching Unit .......................................... Ron Trovato • 544-8470
Membership ............................................. Ralph Pascale • 755-2560 (c)
POW/MIA ................................................... Gail Bologna-Melens • powmia20@aol.com • 392-2079
Social Events ............................................. Dick Oleksyn • roleksyn@yahoo.com • 663-5255
Speakers Bureau ....................................... Geno Lenyk • gn3153@nittd.rit.edu • 423-0206
Veterans Affairs/Benefits ................................ Pat Pudetti • patrickusmc1@yahoo.com • 753-6040
Veterans Walk .......................................... Chuck Macaluso • chuckmac66@yahoo.com • 225-8288

VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS
AND INFORMATION
Greater Rochester Vietnam Veterans Memorial... 585-753-7275
[enter 9; enter 2 to leave a message]
Ir Jacobsen American Legion
Post #474 ................................................. 663-7030
VA Clinic - 465 Westfall Road ...................... 463-2600
Vet Center ................................................. 546-1081
Veterans Administration ......................... 800-827-1000
NYS Council ............................................. 888-678-VETS
Monroe County Veterans Service Agency ............... 753-6040
e-mail: serviceofficer@yahoo.com
Veterans Benefits Hotline ......................... 800-827-1000
Veterans Bill of Rights ......................... 800-342-3358
VA Medical Center in Batavia ..... 585-297-1000
VA Hospital in Buffalo ............... 716-834-9200
VA Medical Center in Canandaigua ... 394-2000
VA Medical Center in Bath .......... 607-664-4000
V.V. of America in Washington ... 800-VVA-1316
V.V. Memorial Fund “The Wall” ........... 202-393-0090
Natl.’l Lge. of Fam. MIA/POW
Updates ............................................... 202-223-6846
Richards House................................. 506-9060
The Resource Center ......................... 546-4250
Stars & Stripes ..................................... 546-3524
Persian Gulf Vets, Inc. ...................... 385-4097
Operation Welcome Home ............. 234-4694

WEB SITES/E-MAIL ADDRESSES
Veterans Widows International Network:
members@aol.com/vetwindows
NYS Department Health: www.health.state.ny.us/nysvets
Vietnam Veterans Memorial at Highland
Park: www.monroecounty.gov/parks-highland.php
Operation Welcome Home:
www.operationwelcomehome.org
VVA New York State Council:
www.nyvietnamvets.org

MISCELLANEOUS
VVA 20 Thrift Store, LLC Mgmt., Beth Affeldt ................. 482-8036
VVA Vehicle Donations ............... 224-8494
VVA Chapter 20............... info@vva20.org • 482-7396

contact information: vva, chapter 20
P. O. Box 12580, Rochester, NY 14612 • www.vva20.org • (585) 482-7396 • Fax (585) 482-5513

Parks-Highland
585-753-7275
BETWEEN the LINES

Between the Lines is published monthly by Chapter 20, Vietnam Veterans of America. The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of Chapter 20 or the Vietnam Veterans of America, its officers, board of directors or the general membership. No subscription fee is charged for this publication, and inclusion on the mailing list is available on request. Between the Lines can also be viewed on the Chapter 20 website at www.vva20.org.

We welcome letters to the editor, poetry, original articles and suggestions. Submissions should include name and phone number and can be sent to Between the Lines, P.O. Box 12580, Rochester, NY 14612 or emailed to kathy14470@msn.com. We reserve the right to edit for space and clarity and to not use materials we think inappropriate for the publication. Deadline for submissions for each issue is the 5th of the preceding month. Exceptions may be granted by contacting the editor.

Between the Lines runs paid advertisements to help defray the costs associated with publication and as a convenience to our readers. Chapter 20 does not endorse any advertiser or guarantee satisfaction with goods or services provided.

july 09

4 SAT • Happy Independence Day!
       • 4th of July Parade, Irondequoit, 11:00am
6 MON • Board of Directors, 7:00pm
8 WED • Membership Meeting (PLEASE NOTE DAY OF WEEK CHANGE!)
10 FRI • Kendall Fireman’s Parade, 7:00pm
16 THU • Webster Fireman’s Parade, 6:30pm
23 THU • Hilton Fireman’s Parade, 7:00pm
27 MON • National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day
31 FRI • Hamlin Fireman’s Parade, 7:00pm

AUGUST
21 - 23 • Moving Wall, Fairport VFW

Could someone you know be in crisis?

The VA’s National Suicide Crisis Line
1-800-273-TALK or 1-800-273-8255
24/7 365 days/per year
Provides professional counseling to veterans, their family members or friends.

E-Mail List

We would like to compile an e-mail address list so that we can communicate updated information or news relating to Chapter 20. This list will be used only for Chapter-related business, and will not be published in Between the Lines. We invite you to give your e-mail address to Kathy Gleason, either by e-mail (kathy14470@msn.com) or by calling the Chapter phone number (585 482-7396) and leaving a message.