Child Safety Fair

From the Front:
Troops Say Thanks!

Together Then... Together Now
February, things slowed down after the busy months of December and January. On February 7, Joe Peck, Crag Wirth and I attended a Vietnamese Tet celebration at the County Office building along with County Executive Maggie Brooks, Jim Carra from the Monroe County Veterans Agency and our own County Legislator, Dick Yolevich. On Sunday the 10th, we had a work detail to try and complete our POW room on the second floor of the post. That project is being spearheaded by our finance guru, Joe Peck. We invite all up to see the progress we have made fixing up that area, as well as the Board Room.

The Board voted at the February meeting to invest $8,000 in fixing up the Post entrance and bar areas, so that hopefully they can attract more business to keep our Post open. We have asked Senator Joe Robach for a State grant to replace the roof that is in such poor shape. The Board also passed the final budget for 2008 and anyone interested in it please let one of know and we can review it with you.

In closing this month, I ask all of you to do a couple things in the next couple of months:
- Please put in your nominations for awards at this year’s annual dinner.
- Please vote in the upcoming elections.

Till next month - “Together Then Together Now”

Ken Moore
Nominating Committee
Chuck Macaluso, Chair

General Membership Meeting
March 13, 2008 - Meet the Candidates

Each candidate will address the membership at this meeting stating their reasons for seeking an elected position. This year openings include the Executive position of President (1), 1st. Vice-President (1), Treasurer (1) and Secretary (1). Three (3) Director positions as well as two (2) for State Council Reps.

The Annual Meeting & Elections will be held April 10, 2008 at 6:00 PM - Ira Jacobson Post Home

The “new” Nominating Committee will also be elected by the membership that evening. A “to date” slate of candidates and bio’s will be presented in the April issue.

- In order to vote in the Annual Election, voters must be a member for at least 30 days.
- Only paid members with a DD214 on file by 28 February of the previous fiscal year are eligible to vote. (For example - 28 February 2007 to vote April 2007).
- A quorum is defined as 10% of VVA 20 membership as of 28 February of the previous fiscal year. Voting for candidates will take place between 6:30 PM till 7:30 PM, after which no new ballots will be taken and votes will be tabulated.
- According to the National VVA Constitution, “Additional persons may be nominated by any member at the Annual Meeting.” These candidates will fall under the category of Floor Nominations.
- Floor nominated candidates can only receive votes from members present at Annual Meeting.

Slate of Candidates for this year:
Officer Positions
President – Ken Moore
1st Vice President – Tom Gleason
Treasurer – Ray Melens
Secretary – Chuck Macaluso

Director Positions
Nick DeLeo
Jerry McDermott

Elections

Marching Unit
Ray Melens, Commander

As I sit here gazing out my window with the winter blues, I am thinking that spring is just around the corner -- and that means another parade season is quickly approaching. Hooray for spring and summer! Yes sir, I can’t wait for the warm weather to get here. I guess while I’m thinking about the upcoming parade season, this would probably be a good time to announce that we will have our annual Marching Unit meeting on Sat. April 26th at 7PM at Ira. Right now I’m not sure if we will meet upstairs or downstairs. I don’t feel that it would be right to book the hall for us at no charge when the post might get an opportunity to rent it out and earn some badly needed money right now. So at this time, I would say let’s plan on meeting upstairs and if the hall for some reason does not get rented out, then I’m sure we will be able to use it. The wives and significant others are also invited to attend. We will have pizza and wings after the meeting and we can socialize and have some fun after the meeting.

In last month’s report, I had mentioned about St. Patrick’s Day. For several years now the Marching Unit has not participated in the annual downtown St. Patrick’s Day parade. Instead we have been meeting at Gunny’s on N. Greece Rd. for drinks, some lunch and a lot of laughs and camaraderie. This year we will meet again at Gunny’s on Saturday, March 15th at 11:30 AM. Then at noon, I would like for all present to have a toast to our Brother and friend, Wally Gekoski. Wally made sure that he attended this event every year, even when he had to start doing it in his wheelchair. So I would like to invite all Marching Unit members, their wives and significant others and any one else from the chapter that wishes to come, to please meet us at Gunny’s on the
15th for some fun and laughs, and to toast Wally. I also must inform you that this is not a Chapter covered get together. In other words, everyone is responsible for their own check. Sorry, guys.

At this time I will ask that all Marching Unit and Honor Guard members please plan to attend the burial service for Wally Gekoski. It is scheduled to be held on Saturday, April 5th (Wally’s birthday) at 11AM at the Beechwood Cemetery in Kendall. The cemetery is located on W. Kendall Rd, North of Rt 18. What I would like to do is get everyone together at some place and car pool together to the cemetery. If you can attend and partake in Wally’s burial service, please let me know right away. I’m hoping that we can have enough members to give Wally a rifle salute, flag folding, the Color Guard, and pall bearers. I desperately need Marines to be pall bearers. This was one of Wally’s requests, that he have Marine pall bearers. So please mark your calendars guys, and plan to attend. If it was one of us, Wally would have been there for us.

The Honor Guard will be meeting before the March membership meeting upstairs at Ira at 7 PM. At the March Honor Guard meeting, I hope to finalize the burial service for Wally and we will discuss other matters pertaining to the HG. If anyone is interested in joining either the Marching Unit, Honor Guard or both, please get in touch with me and I can give you all the details. You can also attend the HG meeting if you wish to find out if it’s something you would like to do.

Until next month……..AT EASE!!!!!!!

Agent Orange/Health Affairs
Sue Oleksyn

If you have health issues that you feel are service-connected, please contact Pat Pudetti and the fine people at the Monroe County Veterans Service Agency, serviceofficer@yahoo.com or 753-6040. They will help you from start to finish with the process necessary to meet your needs. Do not hesitate to contact them. Bring your DD-214 and any pertinent medical information from your doctors. The doctor’s word is what speaks in this process.

Thank you to each one of you who answered your country’s call and served America with honor. Because of you, we have our freedom and democracy. Remember that our democracy is not a spectator sport. Make sure to participate and vote! As we near the 4,000 number of noble active duty military who have been killed in this current war, our thoughts and prayers remain with them and their families and also most importantly, with all who have come home with service-connected health issues and live on to face the invisible price of war with their health.

God bless our active duty military, our veterans, their families and may God bless America.

Peace.

Membership Committee
Ralph Pascale

As a result of a recent meeting these new and continued objectives were adopted for 2008:

- Always carry membership applications. When you meet someone new and they look to be about the right age, ask if they are a veteran. If they are, tell them about VVA and give them a VVA 20 membership pamphlet, which contains an application.
- At any of our organized events (Biker Rally, Traveling Wall, Share the Warmth, etc.), have membership pamphlets handy. Almost always, someone is encountered who expresses an interest.
- Have “event related” t-shirts for volunteers at any of our organized events.
- Recognize and honor successful recruiters with chapter gear (t-shirts, golf shirts, hats, etc.).
- At all Marching Unit/Honor Guard events (parades, funerals, ceremonies, etc., always have VVA 20 pamphlets/applications handy.
- At monthly membership meetings, encourage all those attending to be ambassadors/recruiters for VVA (and have an application handy.) Have recruitment materials available at all meetings.
- There is a traveling recruitment display contained in a suitcase. It contains VVA 20 pamphlets, related VA benefit pamphlets, Agent Orange, cancer and veteran related illnesses pamphlets, thrift store and car business pamphlets, a “VETERANS WANTED” poster, and a 10” DVD player that plays a looped chapter 20 events/parades DVD. It’s ready for any event.
- Hold routine Membership Recruitment/Retention Brainstorming Meetings, open to all interested.
- New initiatives: “Cruise nights” at area restaurants, a booth at area festivals and carnivals, a classified ad every weekend in the local paper, PSAs in local neighborhood advertising papers, wallet sized VVA 20 advertisement cards, a bill insert in the local cable bill, and much more.

It is the intention to aggressively recruit for new members while retaining current members. Everyone can and should be helping. Chapter 20 is one of the most active and successful chapters in the country. We are proud of our legacy and want to maintain this level of success. Thanks to all those who actively help in this effort – if you have other suggestions, contact me.
In January

the Chapter held a Child Safety Fair in conjunction with local authorities, providing about 50 ID cards with photo and fingerprints for parents. Bike helmets and child booster seats were also distributed. Entertainment was enjoyed by all. There was some clowning around by our own Bill Meminger, a magician amused everyone and kids (and some adults, too) got tattoos. We think this will be an annual event – but most likely the next one will be in warmer weather!
From the Front: Troops Say Thanks!

There was certainly no post-holiday slump for Chapter 20. Just a few days after Christmas the group gathered to assemble boxes for the troops. With the post office making special accommodations, 83 boxes were sent to troops in the Middle East. Now letters of appreciation are being received with comments such as “[We] could definitely tell that the desires and needs of soldiers deployed are still fresh in their minds with what was packed.” These comments are treasured by all of us, but especially by those who themselves recall the pleasure a package from home can bring.

Notes of Thanks from the Front:

I am writing to say thank you to the Vietnam Veterans of America for their support of me and my battery with a package. I could definitely tell that the desires and needs of soldiers deployed are still fresh in their minds with what was packed. The box was excellent and very well received by myself and the soldiers down here at Patrol Base Lutfiyah.

If you could please pass on my thanks to everyone around there, that would be much appreciated.

Thanks again.

CPT Charlie Lewis
XO, B/3-320th FA

Shawn [Crosley] emailed me and said that he did get the package. He said, “It was filled with lots of great snacks and other things and brought smiles to many faces. Please pass on my thanks to them...” He sounded really appreciative. He felt bad for not letting me know when he first got it, but he has been working 16-hour days and has been very busy and tired when he’s not working. I want to pass on my thanks. It was very nice of you to think of him. It is amazing what a “touch of home” does for the morale over there.
Dear Ken Moore, the Shermans, the Wolf’s, also Jessica and Elias of Craig Hill School.

Thank you so much for the thoughtful holiday cards and care package. There has been tremendous support from home. We’ve received many cards and packages of gifts from caring people as you. Most of the items are shared amongst the soldiers and others are delivered to the Iraqi families as part of our effort to develop a trust and support. If you could only see the reaction of the children when they receive a gift of toys or candy.

I was deployed on 8 July 2007 and arrived in Iraq in September. It looks like I’ll be home around the 4th of July 08. We are an Engineer unit that is currently building and repairing roads, bridges and drainage systems in central Iraq. I’m currently staying at Camp Assecoada, which is located near Balad. We live in trailers, which are divided into 2 or 3 man rooms. We have TV’s and air conditioning in our rooms. The food is very good and plentiful. There are buildings here that provide free internet and reasonable phone service that is within a 30-minute limit and generally a short time to get on. The temperatures presently are 65 day and 40 at night. In the 6 months I’ve been here it’s rained a total of about 30 minutes. We are near the Tigris River and the landscape is flat and fairly green.

I was born and raised in Rochester while currently living in Annapolis MD working as a Construction Project Manager. I was also deployed in 2003-2004. I have two children. My son Griffin is 21 years old and is a Marine stationed in Japan. My daughter Kaela is seventeen years old and is a junior at Hommezy Falls High School.

Again I want to thank you for your support and thoughts from all of you.

Yours truly,
Richard T. Alford
SSG Alford, Richard T

680th EN CO MAC
Operation Iraqi Freedom
Camp Assecoada
APO AE 09910

680th
in Iraq

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**Vietnam Veterans of America**

**CHAPTER 20**

**Car Donation, LLC**

Call 224-8484

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**roll call: b.o.d. attendance**

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hear this: news & notes

Congratulations!

Congratulations go to Pat Welch, President of Chapter 77 in Buffalo, who was recently named Erie County’s new Veteran Services Director. Pat is active at all levels in VVA and is already accredited. His awards include the Purple Heart, Combat Action Ribbon and New York State Conspicuous Service Cross.

Other Veteran Organization Events

Find time to attend these March events sponsored by other veterans organizations in our community:
- Sunday, March 9th from 9am to Noon – Marine Corps League Breakfast, Ira Jacobson Post

ATTENTION! If you know of events hosted by other veterans organization, please send that information to kathy14470@msn.com and we’ll post it here every month. The deadline is always the 5th of the month for the next month’s issue (e.g. – March 5th deadline for April events).

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.

meetings

Membership Meeting Attendance
February 14, 2008


Support Chapter 20!
Vietnam Veterans of America
THrift Store, Chapter 20, LLC

1199 East Main Street, Rochester, NY 14609

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

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

~ Delivery Available ~
Truck Pick-up #482-8016
Thrift Store #482-8036

All donations go to the Thrift Store at the address above.
ROGER ROBACH AWARD
The Roger Robach Award is given to an individual who has spent a minimum of ten years working for the betterment of all veterans in New York State.

I feel ____________________________ should be considered for the Veterans Service Award because of his/her involvement in:

DON AND RORI MURRELL HUMANITARIAN AWARD
The Don and Rori Murrell Humanitarian Award is given to an individual who has accomplished an extraordinary effort on behalf of active duty military personnel and/or veterans and their families. All individuals are to be considered for this reward regardless of Chapter or veteran affiliation.

I feel ____________________________ should be considered for the Don and Rori Murrell Humanitarian Award because of his/her involvement in:

Nominations are due by Friday, March 28, 2008 so that the Awards Committee can make final decisions in time for the Annual Dinner. Nomination forms are to be dropped off at the Chapter office or mailed to VVA Chapter 20, P.O.Box 12580, Rochester, New York 14612, to arrive no later than Friday, March 28, 2008.
The Veterans Service Award is given to the member or members who have demonstrated outstanding dedication in improving the condition of Vietnam Veterans and/or the community, and have been active in Chapter 20. Any member is eligible for this award.

I feel ___________________________ should be considered for the Veterans Service Award because of his/her involvement in:

The Community Service Award is given to the group or organization that has demonstrated a strong sense of community service and favorably recognizes and relates to Vietnam Veterans issues.

I feel ____________________________ should be considered for the Veterans Service Award because:

Nominations are due by Friday, March 28, 2008 so that the Awards Committee can make final decisions in time for the Annual Dinner. Nomination forms are to be dropped off at the Chapter office or mailed to VVA Chapter 20, P.O.Box 12580, Rochester, New York 14612, to arrive no later than Friday, March 28, 2008.
On March 3, 1941, I was ordered to Washington to report to the Adjutant General for temporary duty in the Office of the Chief of Infantry. My mission was the procurement of a suitable parachutist badge with would meet with the approval both of the War Department and the Commanding Officer of the 501st Parachute Battalion. Major Miley (commander of the 501st), before my departure, gave me full authority to approve any design that I considered acceptable, and to do so in his name. The same authority was delegated to me in the name of the Chief of Infantry.

“I drew the original sketch in the office of Lieutenant Colonel Beuchner, G-3; a finished copy of my original sketch was prepared in the office of the Quartermaster General. Through the help of Mr. A.E. Dubois, in the Quartermaster General’s office, 350 of the badges were procured from the Bailey, Banks & Biddle Company in Philadelphia and were in the hands of the Commanding Officer of the 501st Parachute Battalion by March 14, 1941. This is believed to have been an all time speed record for War Department Procurement.”

“I personally took the correspondence relative to the badge’s approval from one office to another until the transaction was complete. This operation took me one entire week, eight hours a day.”

Captain Yarborough even applied for a patent to protect the design from unauthorized reproduction. On February 2, 1943, Patent #134963 was granted for “A Parachutist’s Badge” for a period of three and one-half years.

The Parachutist Badge was formally approved on 10 March 1941. The senior and master parachutists badges were authorized by Headquarters, Department of the Army in 1949 and were announced by Change 4, Army Regulation 600-70, dated 24 January 1950.

**Description:** An oxidized silver badge 1 13/64 inches in height and 1 1/2 inches in width, consisting of an open parachute on and over a pair of stylized wings displayed and curving inward. A star and wreath are added above the parachute canopy to indicate the degree of qualification. A star above the canopy indicates a Senior Parachutist; the star surrounded by a laurel wreath indicates a Master Parachutist.

**Symbolism:** The wings suggest flight and, together with the open parachute, symbolize individual proficiency and parachute qualifications.
Basic Parachutist: Awarded to any individual who has satisfactorily completed the prescribed proficiency tests while assigned or attached to an airborne unit or the Airborne Department of the Infantry School; or participated in at least one combat parachute jump.

Senior Parachutist: Participated in a minimum of 30 jumps to include 15 jumps with combat equipment; two night jumps, one of which is as jumpmaster of a stick; two mass tactical jumps which culminate in an airborne assault problem; graduated from the Jumpmaster Course; and served on jump status with an airborne unit or other organization authorized parachutists for a total of at least 24 months.

Master Parachutist: Participated in 65 jumps to include 25 jumps with combat equipment; four night jumps, one of which is as a jumpmaster of a stick; five mass tactical jumps which culminate in an airborne assault problem with a unit equivalent to a battalion or larger; separate company/battery or organic staff of a regiment size or larger; graduated from the Jumpmaster Course; and served in jump status with an airborne unit or other organization authorized parachutists for a total of at least 36 months.

COMBAT PARACHUTIST BADGES
Stars representing participation in combat jumps had been worn unofficially on parachute wings during and after World War II. This practice did not gain official sanction until after the 1983 invasion of Grenada, Operation Urgent Fury. On October 25, 1983 over 500 Army Rangers from the 1st and 2nd Ranger Battalions made a combat jump into Point Salines Airport, Grenada. The addition of stars to the basic, senior and master parachute wings for each combat jump were approved by Headquarters, Department of the Army on December 14, 1983. Small stars are superimposed on the appropriate badge to indicate combat jumps as follows:

One combat jump: A bronze star centered on the shroud lines 3/16 inch below the canopy.
Two combat jumps: A bronze star on the base of each wing.
Three combat jumps: A bronze star on the base of each wing and one star centered on the shroud lines 3/16 inch below the canopy.
Four combat jumps: Two bronze stars on the base of each wing.
Five combat jumps: A gold star centered on the shroud lines 5/16 inch below the canopy.

SUBDUSED BADGES
Subdued badges are authorized in metal and cloth. The metal badge is black. The cloth badge is of olive green base cloth with the wings, parachute, star and wreath embroidered in black.

MINIATURE BADGES
Dress miniature badges are authorized in the following sizes: Master - 13/16 inch in height and 7/8 inch in width; Senior - 5/8 inch in height and 7/8 inch in width; Parachutist - 15/32 inch in height and 7/8 inch in width.
**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, 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 February 28, 1961 and May 7, 1975 (in-country Vietnam), or between August 5, 1964 and May 7, 1975 (for Vietnam-era veterans).

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

☐ 3 years: $50

**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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**Chapter 20’s New Members**

Please give the new members pictured below a hearty Welcome Home! (l to r): Bob Lombardo, Phil Conrad, Ted Peck, Valentino Gatto

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**Help Build 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.

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**Help Build The Veterans Walk**

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.
CHAPTER OFFICERS
President: Ken Moore ..... 392-0269 (h)...576-9000 (c)
1st Vice President: 
2nd Vice President: Bruce VanApeldoorn.... 252-514-5597 (c)
Secretary: Chuck Macaluso .................225-8288 (h)
Treasurer: Ray Melens ... 392-2079 (h)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Dan Corona ..............................................406-6108
Pete Galle
Kathy Gleason ...........................................978-1331
Tom Gleason ..............................978-1995
Joe Harkness ..........................889-9728 (h)
Max Lill .......... 288-4646 x18
Jack Madigan ......................392-8259
Dick Oleksyn ...............................663-5255 (h)
Ralph Pascale ..................................755-2560 (h)
Joe Peck.......................................734-9046 (c)
Pat Pudetti ............................................753-6040 (w)
Ron Trovato ..................................544-8470 (h)

COMMITTEE CONTACTS
Agent Orange/Health Care .... Sue Oleksyn 663-5255
AVVA .................. Kathy Gleason 978-1331
Between The Lines ....... Kathy Gleason 978-1331
Chaplain ...................... Tom Gleason 978-1995
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Veterans Walk ............Chuck Macaluso 225-8288
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Veterans Widows International Network
members@aol.com/vetwindows

NYS Department Health: www.health.state.ny.us/nyvets

Vietnam Veterans Memorial at Highland Park:
www.vietnamveterans.org

Operation Welcome Home:
www.operationwelcomehome.org

VVA New York State Council: www.nyvietnamvets.org
Region 2 Director: www.region2vva.com

VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS AND INFORMATION
Greater Rochester Vietnam Veterans Memorial... 585-753-7275
(enter 9; enter 2 to leave a message)
Ira Jacobson American Legion Post #474 ..... 663-7030
VA Clinic - 465 Westfall Road.............. 463-2600
Veterans Outreach Center ..............546-1081
Vet Center ........................................ 232-5040
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” ..............800-342-3558
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
Nat.’l Lge. of Fam. MIA/POW Updates ......202-223-6846
Richards House ................................506-9060
The Resource Center ................. 546-4250
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**BETWEEN THE LINES**

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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.

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**March 08**

- **03 Mon** • Board of Directors Meeting at 7:00 pm
- **09 Sun** • Marine Corps League Breakfast, Ira Post, 9am-Noon
- **13 Thu** • Membership Meeting - Meet the Candidates, 7:30 pm
- **15 Sat** • Marching Unit & Friends at Gunny’s (N. Greece Rd. at 11:30 am)
- **17 Mon** • St. Patrick’s Day
- **20 Thu** • First Day of Spring
- **21 Fri** • Purim
- **23 Sun** • Easter Sunday

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