CHAPTER 20 ELECTIONS:

THE RESULTS ARE IN

2 Election Report
5 Walking Guard
11 Memorial Day Events
President’s Report

Well, this month’s report will be a little short. By the time of this reading the elections and annual dinner will have come and gone. Thanks to Chuck Macaluso for running the elections, and to our Mouse, Dick Oleksyn, and his committee for the hard work of making a wonderful annual dinner. I would like to say “Thanks!” to the Board of Directors for the past two years of service to the Chapter in turning it back in the right direction. I would also like to congratulate the ones that were elected to serve Chapter 20 for the next few years. I look forward to the upcoming years, because we plan on doing more things to help our fellow veterans and also make the public aware of how great this chapter truly is.

I would like to say a big “Thanks!” to Joe Peck and everyone that helped him put together our new POW/MIA room on the 2nd floor of Ira outside our board room. It looks wonderful and pays tribute to those still listed POW/MIA.

Please stop up and look at it.

The Post remolding is going along great, and you should now start to see a big difference in the bar and hall. Thanks to all those who have helped and will be helping until it is completed. Chuck Macaluso is doing a great job as construction foreman and planning the work details.

Until next month, please consider volunteering for some of the things we are and will be doing. Plans are underway to have a Chapter tent at area carnivals and other events, and your help will be needed. I will also need LOTS of help for the “Ride to the Dakota” annual veterans’ bike run on June 22nd, both the day of the event and the days before and after.

Stay Safe and, until next month -- “TOGETHER THEN TOGETHER NOW”
Ken Moore, President

Nominating Committee

Chuck Macaluso, Chair

Congratulations to the newly elected Chapter Board Members:

OFFICERS
President Ken Moore
1st Vice Pres. Tom Gleason
Treasurer Ray Melens
Secretary Chuck Macaluso

DIRECTORS
Hank Wallace
Ron Trovato
Jerry McDermott

STATE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES
Nick DeLeo
Fred Elliott

Nominating Committee for 2009 - Chuck Macaluso, Bob DeMitry, Tom Puff, Dan Corona, Pat Pudetti

Many of us have served on the Board of Directors (in one position or another) for several years. Ten years ago a board member attended the monthly meetings and worked on a project or two. With the decrease in the “volunteer base,” things have really changed over the past five years. Now a board member not only attends meetings he/she are also involved the execution of Chapter 20 Business, Chapter 20 Programs and Special Projects, Chapter 20 Community Projects, and “teaching” the next generation about Vietnam in our schools and at our Memorial.

You have elected a good team to keep Chapter 20 moving forward.

Thank You,
Chuck
POW-MIA
Gail Bologna-Melens, Chairperson

It’s May!!! Now starts the season of parades and picnics. For one American family closure has come with this new season.

The remains of Colorado Air National Guard Maj. Perry H Jefferson, who vanished during an observation flight 39 years ago over the jungles of South Vietnam, were at last laid to rest April 3 at Arlington National Cemetery. Three days of events were a high-profile attempt to put closure to a MIA mystery, but what exactly happened to the intelligence officer and his Army Reserve pilot, then 1st Lt Arthur Ecklund during their fateful observation flight may never be known.

A closed-casket viewing was held at a funeral home on April 1st. Families, fellow service members, veterans and friends to both men attended full-honors funerals April 2nd and 3rd, which started at the Old Post Chapel on Ft. Myer, followed by platoon, band and caisson escorts to their gravesites on our nation’s most sacred property. Ecklund was interred April 2nd and was previously interred in Knoxville, Illinois by his family in 2004. The Reservist attended Arizona State University and was drafted in 1968. He attended helicopter and fixed wing aircraft training prior to his combat deployment. More than 150 attended Jefferson’s services, including nearly 100 from Colorado who watched the state’s reported last Guard Vietnam MIA put to rest.

Jefferson was an intelligence officer at Colorado’s 120th Tactical Fighter Squadron, which flew the F-100C Super Saber. He received his bachelors degree from Southern Methodist College and worked for Aramco in the Middle East before joining the Air Guard. His wife, Sylvia, died in 1992.

Jefferson and Ecklund were within a month of coming home. Their case remained unsolved. After defense officials received human remains in 1984 from a suspected military crash, eyewitnesses were then interviewed. One witness said the aircraft crashed on a mountainside and the pilots died and were buried there. In 2000, the remains turned over in 1984 were identified as Ecklund’s.

Don’t forget that we are doing the flag drawings at VVA meetings again. Our first person to receive the flags this year was Bruce Vanappledorn -- You could be next.

At this time there are still 1,763 service personnel still missing and unaccounted for. Please don’t forget them. We must REMEMBER.

Marching Unit
Ray Melens, Commander

One of the busiest months of the year for the Marching Unit is here after a long winter. The official 2008 parade season will begin with the annual Lilac Parade on Saturday, May 10th. Formation is usually on Science Pkwy off of South Ave. The parade starts at 10:30AM and they usually block off the roads around 9:00AM, so plan accordingly. Then on Sunday May 11th (yes, the very next day), members of the Chapter’s Honor Guard will be in Wellsville, NY, to conduct closing ceremonies at the Moving Wall. The organizers of the Moving Wall’s visit saw a video of the ceremony we conduct at the WALL and asked for us to attend their closing ceremony and to conduct our ceremony for them. The closing ceremony will take place at 5:00PM.

On Sunday May 25th is the Irondequoit Memorial Day parade. That starts at 5:30PM and we usually form up at Hudson and Titus Ave. by the plaza. The next day, Memorial Day, we are in the Downtown Memorial Day parade which starts at 10:30AM and we form up on East Ave. and Strathallan Sts. After the parade at 1:00PM is our annual Memorial Day service at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Highland Park. I am still in need of Marching Unit members to partake in the service. If you haven’t already signed up for it, then please let me know ASAP if you will be partaking. Name readers will also be needed. Then on Saturday May
On Saturday April 5th, our Brother and friend, Wally Gekoski, was laid to rest...
The turnout just tells me that Wally was a great friend to us all and was loved.

On Saturday 31st, we are in the Mendon firemen’s parade, which has a 6:30PM start time.

On Saturday April 26th, the Marching Unit held their annual meeting. (Due to the fact that we have not held the meeting as of this writing, I will report next month with the parade schedule and the date for the annual Marching Unit picnic.) Watch for the parade schedule in the next issue of the BTL and also on the Chapter’s new and improved web site at www.vva20.org.

On Saturday April 5th, our Brother and friend, Wally Gekoski, was laid to rest. There was a great turnout of Chapter members and spouses. The turnout just tells me that Wally was a great friend to us all and was loved. I know personally speaking that he will be sadly missed, especially with parade season approaching. Wally was a true Marine and a great friend to us all.

The Honor Guard will meet before the monthly membership meeting in May, at 7:00PM, upstairs at Ira. Any and all members that are interested in joining either the MU or HG are encouraged to attend. You only have to be a member of Chapter 20 in good standing (dues paid up) to become a member.

Until next month...AT EASE!!!!!!

Veterans Incarcerated Committee Report
Ron Trovato

Chapter 190 (Atmore, Alabama) is doing well and we continue to be in touch with Craig McLaren there who publishes their newsletter “The Eagle Speaks.” We know the guys there are under serious budget constraints and we wish you all a prosperous and productive 2008.

Chapter 205 (Auburn Correctional - New York) is also alive and well thanks to the core of veterans there that continue to work hard for VVA, as well as the crochet squad that makes hats and scarves for needy children. Chapter 205’s excellent bimonthly newsletter continues to be published and sent out to other incarcerated chapters. Many thanks to Bill Layer, Chapter President, and all the officers and board members for keeping things running there. A general membership meeting was held on March 7th and nominations for chapter positions were taken. Elections are scheduled for the April 11th meeting, one which Ken Moore and I hopefully will be attending.

Thanks are in order also to the Caron Corp. of South Carolina, the Schafer Yam Co. of Inlaken, NY and the Wool Connection of Avon, Connecticut for their generous donations of yarn to Chapter 205.

The Vietnam Veterans group at San Quentin (Chapter 563) continues to move forward and their next meeting was scheduled for March 30th. Generating funds has always been a challenge there and the group will be limited to one food sale this year. We were also recently contacted by Marian Kerbleski, a registered nurse who works for the Dept. of Veterans Affairs at the San Francisco VA Medical Center, and we thank her for her good work with vets at San Quentin.
Before we could consider ourselves soldiers we had to learn how to walk guard. Teaching us the proper protocol was the endeavor of no less than the company’s Commanding Officer during our last weeks of Basic.

Our final test would include a path with five or six guard stations. At each one, we would be required to cope with some situation. We would begin by reporting to an officer; then we might have to challenge someone and check his identification, or handle some misplaced equipment on the post, or manage not to talk to a bothersome civilian. Above all, we would have to prevent anyone from getting our M-14 rifle away from us.

The CO set up a sample course and ran us through it each day the week before our test. At first it was impossible to remember all the movements and to say the right phrases. But the hardest station turned out to be the last.

Waiting for me as I approached the end of the course was our drill sergeant, SSG Spivey, in civilian clothes. Seeing a civilian on a restricted post, I came to port arms and shouted “Halt!” Then the fun began. SSG Spivey approached. “Don’t you know you’re not holding that weapon right?” Suddenly the man in civilian clothes was no longer the passive subject of our guard practice; he was the drill sergeant, yelling, criticizing, advising. And, too late, I realized I had let him come close enough to snatch the weapon away from me.

SSG Spivey placed my rifle in a stack with numerous others, and I walked over to join my laughing, but weaponless, buddies.

After several of us had gone through, SSG Spivey changed his style. We were all carrying gas masks. Only a few days before we had practiced putting them on—which had to be done in nine seconds—when the cry “gas!” was sounded. Down the road came an unsuspecting guard. SSG Spivey called out, “GAS! GAS!” The guard stopped and, as we had been taught, quickly took off his helmet, placed it with his rifle between his legs, and began to put on his mask, all the time holding his breath. While he was occupied with this, SSG Spivey walked up behind him and slipped the weapon from between his legs.

Those of us who lost only our weapons were lucky. Some managed to surrender their gas masks, helmets, and pistol belts. SSG Spivey got someone’s bayonet and finished off subsequent guards by walking up to them as they yelled “Halt!” and simulating a fatal stab.

Our CO made sure we would be ready for our final guard duty test. He read us the possible situations we might encounter, and went over with us, again and again, what to do.

On one station we would be told that no personnel or equipment would be authorized on our post. Then, sure enough, we would find some equipment in the road. The proper procedure would be to stop and bring the weapon from our shoulder to a diagonal position in front of us. Then we would call the Commander of the Relief, who would handle the offending equipment. It sounded easy enough, so long as we noticed the equipment. The CO made sure we would not walk by it. On the test, it would be a yellow five gallon water can. “A water can, five gallons, yellow,” he told us. “Five gallons. A five gallon yellow water can. What color is it?” “Yellow, sir.” “How many gallons?” “Five, sir.” “That’s right, a yellow five gallon water can. Five gallons. It’s yellow.”

When the Day Came for the big test we knew that the CO would be watching. We nervously lined up at the beginning of the course. The man in charge informed us that, due to a shortage of personnel, not all the stations would be operating.

So I reported to the officer and began walking the post. It was time of challenging, which meant anyone we saw we would stop and check. I turned a corner and saw a sergeant on the course. I only had time to call “Halt!” before he waved me on.

I walked briskly through the rest of the course, past empty stations, to where my buddies were waiting. That was our guard duty test.

But our training was not in vain. That night as we were moving into the mess hall for chow, one of my buddies suddenly stopped and stared at a yellow trash barrel by the entrance where we had never noticed it. Pointing, he yelled “COMMANDER OF THE RELIEF!”
VVA CHAPTER 20 HAS TAKEN the lead to help Ira Jacobson Post with some renovations. Bathrooms are being remodeled, fresh paint is lightening the bar area and overall the Post is looking brighter and fresher – just the ticket for bringing in more celebratory events. Our own Chapter space is also being improved, with the latest the initial phase of a Remembrance Room (see cover photo). Joe Peck and his crew have created a wall for our local POW-MIA heroes, complete with biographical info on each. Be sure to stop by and check out this room as well as the Board Room, which continues to have Chapter memorabilia displayed. Many thanks to everyone who has taken part in these renovations. Much more help is still needed – contact one of your Board members for more information!

**POST RENOVATIONS**

**Flat Daddy™**

Advances in technology have changed the face of war. These same advances are also being used on the home front to help lessen the trauma of separation for families.

The “Flat Daddy™” project puts a life-size portrait of the deployed soldier in the family’s home. The photo, from the waist up, is affixed to poster board and cut out. Flat Daddies are propped in chairs, secured in the cars and have been present at family events.

Elaine Dumler, author of *I’m Already Home* and *I’m Already Home...Again*, books that offer creative ways for families to stay connected while they are apart, holds the registered trademark for these creative substitutes. In conjunction with several sponsors, a “Flat Daddy™” has found its way into more than 5,000 homes. Experts feel these reproductions are especially helpful to children during long absences.

A program exists to coordinate donations and the processing of photos so Flat Daddies (and Flat Mommies, too!) can remain free to affected families. For the price of about $50, a photo can be produced and sent to the family. This photo has an adhesive backing so the picture can be applied to a poster board material and cut out.

There are over 1,500 families waiting for a “Flat Daddy™” and contributions are most welcome. If you would like to sponsor a family who is waiting, go to www.OperationConnectAFamily.com for a quick and easy way to help immediately.
Members

New Members

Please give the new members pictured below a hearty Welcome Home!
(l to r): Gene Rivera, Edwin Williams, Larry Reed, Willie Williams

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.

Thrift Store

As part of giving back to the community, our Thrift Store has donated clothing to the Unity Health Clothing Closet located at St. Mary’s Hospital.

The Unity Health Clothing Closet has a program that helps the homeless in our area. Beth Affeldt, Store Manager, states a donation was made in late January consisting of approximately 100 coats, 35 sweaters, 25 pairs of boots, 30 hats, gloves and scarves for an estimated value of $2,000.00. In March another 50 coats were donated. Terrific work! Thanks!

VVA National e-Newsletter

If you haven’t entered your email address on the VVA website (www.vva.org), consider doing so. If you go onto the website, to the left is “Update E-mail Notification Preferences.” Click on that and complete the brief form. You will need your membership number. By entering your email address you will get updated information on Veterans issues and a monthly email from Public Affairs, as well as other helpful information.

Armed Forces Day

This day is a day to salute to the men and woman in all branches of the service. Initially, each branch of the military had their own day of celebration. But, on August 31, 1949 then Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson announced the creation of Armed Forces Day. President Harry Truman also announced the holiday in a presidential proclamation on February 20, 1950.

Important Property Tax News

If you are a veteran of the Cold War please check out the new Law 458C

This law authorizes a limited exemption from real property taxes for real property owned by persons who rendered military service to the United States during the Cold War (defined as September 2, 1945 to December 26, 1991).

Information and instructions:
http://www.orps.state.ny.us/ref/forms/pdf/rp458bins.pdf

The form itself is available at the following address:
http://www.orps.state.ny.us/ref/forms/pdf/rp458.pdf

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Chapter 20
is now a
designated donor
with United Way.

Our
number
is 2458.

Please support the Chapter!
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

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(weather permitting)

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Thrift Store #482-8036

All donations go to the Thrift Store at the address above.

NVA recruitment and training

Initial recruitment and training. Based on a wide variety of accounts, the performance of some NVA units was excellent, and at times they garnered a grudging respect among those they fought for their discipline, morale, and skill. Recruitment was primarily based on the military draft of North Vietnam, and most NVA soldiers served for the duration of the conflict. There were no “rotations” back to the homeland. The typical recruit was a rural youth in his early 20s, with three years of prior compulsory training and indoctrination in various militia and construction units. Draftees were mustered at indoctrination centers like Xuan Mia, southwest of Hanoi some months before their actual movement south.

A typical training cycle took 90 to 120 days for the recruit, with instruction on conventional military skills and procedure. Special emphasis was placed on physical conditioning. Heavy political indoctrination was part of the package throughout the cycle, most acutely during a special two-week “study” phase. Organization into three-man cells and kiem thao “criticism and self-criticism” sessions were part of the tight training regimen.

Men selected for infiltration to the South received more intense training - with more political indoctrination, weapons handling, and special emphasis on physical conditioning, particularly marching with heavy packs. Specialized training (heavy weapons, signals, medical, explosives) was given to selected individuals in courses that might last up to a year. Pay and rations for designated infiltrators was more than that given to other troops.

Assessment of the NVA/PAVN fighter. Compared to their VC counterparts, most NVA had a higher standard of literacy. While his preparation was not especially impressive by Western standards, the typical NVA soldier proved more than adequate for the task at hand. NVA training was
surprisingly conventional, with little special emphasis on jungle warfare. Most of the troops’ learning occurred on the job. Service and indoctrination under the communist system prior to army recruitment made the typical NVA fighter a bit older and more seasoned than his American or ARVN opponent. Throughout the conflict, NVA defections and surrenders were extremely low, especially compared to that of the VC, a testimony to their motivation and organization.

**VC recruitment and training**

As in any guerrilla warfare, control of the populace is the key to the guerrilla’s prosperity and survival. To this end, Communist forces deployed an elaborate and sophisticated political and propaganda effort.

**Importance of the party cadres.** Recruitment of VC fighters followed patterns similar to those in Mao’s Revolutionary China. Party operatives dominated or influenced most significant activities, and so the initial agents of recruitment were the party cadres, tightly organized into small cells. The cadre, or team of cadres, typically were southern regroupees returning to help the insurgency. Since such persons would have some knowledge of the local area, theirs would not be a “cold call”. They would enter a village, and make a careful study of its social, political and economic structure. Cadres usually downplayed communism, stressing local grievances and resentments, and national independence. All was not serious discussion. Musical groups, theater troupes and other forms of entertainment were frequently employed. The personal behavior of cadres was also vital. They were expected to lead austere, dedicated lives, beyond reproach. This would enable villagers to contrast their relatively restrained, non-pecuniary way of life, with the corruption of government representatives or targeted enemies. Female cadres sometimes made effective recruiters, being able to shame and goad young males into committing for the Revolution.
Ride to the Dakota Grill

Annual Bike Run

June 22, 2008

913 Roosevelt Highway • Hilton, NY

Sign Up: 9 am • Leaves at: 11 am

Return to the Dakota Grill for food, beer, tattoos & fun.

All proceeds benefit Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 20.

with Kimberly & Beck

The Breakfast Buzz

Music by

Swamp Moose & Turner Brown
BETWEEN THE LINES

13

roll call: b.o.d. attendance

Name 1/7 2/4 3/3 4/7 5/5 6/2 7/7 8/4 9/8 10/6 11/3 12/3

President: Moore, Ken X X X X
1st V. Pres:
2nd V. Pres: VanApeldoorn, Bruce X X X E
Secretary: Macaluso, Chuck X E X X
Treasurer: Melens, Ray X X X X
Corona, Dan X X X X
Galle, Pete X X X X
Gleason, Kathy X X X X
Gleason, Tom X X X X
Harkness, Joe X X X X
Lill, Max X X X X
Madigan, Jack X X X X
Miksys, Rick X X X X
Panza, Ralph X X E X
Peck, Joe X X X X
Pedotti, Pat X X X X
Trovato, Ron X E X E

X—Present E—Excused A—Absent

meetings

VVA Chapter 20 Board Meetings
See page 7 for meeting attendance.
- May 5
- June 2
- July 7
- August 4
- September 8*
- October 6
- November 3
- December 3*

Scheduled Membership Meetings
2nd Thursday of the Month, beginning at 7:30 pm. All meetings are held at the Ira Jacobson American Legion Post, 90 St. John’s Park, unless otherwise noted.
- May 8
- June 11*
- July 9*
- August 14
- September 11
- October 9
- November 13
- December 11

Special Events
- Memorial Day Picnic, May 26
- Ride to the Dakota, Sun, June 22 - Chapter’s Biggest Fundraiser - Volunteers Needed!
- Summer Picnic, August - Date TBA
- Christmas Party, December 6

* Dates changed due to conflict with holidays or other events.

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25th Anniversary Commemorative

Memorial Day Picnic
May 26

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Vietnam Veterans of America
CHAPTER 20
Call 224-8484

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The Veterans Walk

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.

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 □ $50 □ Other [$________]


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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Veterans Affairs/Benefits ........Pat Pudetti • patrickusmc1@yahoo.com • 482-2387
Veterans Walk .........................Chuck Macaluso • chuckmac68@yahoo.com • 225-8288
Volunteer Coordinator ............Kathy Gleason • kathy14470@msn.com • 978-1331

WEB SITES/E-MAIL ADDRESSES
Veterans Widows International Network:
members@aol.com/vetwindows

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

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

Operation Welcome Home: www.operationwelcomehome.org

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

MISCELLANEOUS
VVA 20 Thrift Store, LLC Mgmt.,
Beth Affeldt................................482-8036

Donation Pick-up, Cindy Rowley........482-8016

VVA Vehicle Donations,
Cindy Rowley................................224-8484

VVA Chapter 20 ...info@vva20.org • 482-7396
May 08

04 Sun • Marine Corps League Breakfast – Ira Post 9am - Noon
05 Mon • Board of Directors Meeting
07 Tue • Happy Birthday, Rusty Kurtz!
08 Thu • Membership Meeting 7:30 PM
10 Sat • Lilac Parade 10:30 AM
10 Sat • Happy Birthday, Fred Elliott!
11 Sun • Happy Mother’s Day
17 Sat • Armed Forces Day
18 Sun • Happy Birthday, Marlin Plymette!
25 Sun • Irondequoit Parade 5:30 PM
26 Mon • Memorial Day