Together Then... Together Now

Work Hard
Play Hard

U.S. Army Pfc. Timothy Noonan and Spc. Calvin Reed fight for the ball during a touch football game at Camp Victory, Baghdad, Iraq. Both Soldiers are with the 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera), attached to Joint Combat Camera Iraq.

Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Edwin L. Wriston, Released

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**Highlights**

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**From the President**

Ken Moore, President · Vietnam 1966-67 · US Army Cavalry

It will be a short report this month, hope all is well for all of you and enjoying your summer. Vets Court is going along great. On July 19th we graduated 23 veterans who completed the program and now will be able to move on with their lives. I want to thank all my fellow mentors for the time and efforts they put in each week in court.

The “Ride to the Dakota” vets motorcycle run was a great success and the Chapter made over $5,000, and with the help of all those who volunteered their time we were able to hand out lots of vets information.

Fred Elliott and I met with the new CEO of the VOC, Col. James McDonough, and came away very happy with how he sees the VOC moving forward and working more closely with vets groups like VVA 20.

I will give a more detailed report next month because at this time I’m writing this I’m trying to heal the bones of my old body from working the bike run. It’s Hell being old!

Until next month - stay safe and enjoy the summer!
POW-MIA

Joe Peck, Chairperson

With summer upon us we are now receiving very promising news releases from the Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) with reports of recoveries and identifications of 6 more Vietnam War MIA’s. They are as follows:

Lt. Col. Henry Paul Brauner, USAF from Franklin Parks, N.J. He was part of a 14 man crew aboard an AC-130A that was shot down on March 29, 1972, during a armed reconnaissance mission over Laos.

Maj. Thomas B. Mitchell

Sgt. Thomas E. Knebel

Master Sgt. Gary Pate

Lt. Col. William T. McPhail

From 1986:1987 and 2005:2006, remains and other items were recovered from the crash site. Lt. Col. Brauner’s remains were identified on Dec. 2, 2008, and returned to his family. All 14 crew members have been accounted for and were laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery.

USAF Airmen Maj. William T. McPhail (Chattanooga, TN), Maj. Thomas B. Mitchell (Littleton, CO), Sgt. Thomas E. Knebel (Midway, AK) and Master Sgt. Gary Pate (Brooks, GA). On May 22, 1968, these men were part of the crew on board a C-130A Hercules on a nighttime flare mission over Laos when their aircraft disappeared and was thought to have been shot down by enemy fire. All 9 crew members have now been accounted for and laid to rest as a group in Arlington National Cemetery on June 10, 2010. Individually indentified remains of each Airman were previously returned to their families for burial.

Lt. Col. William L. Kieffer, Jr., USAF, Greenbelt, MD. Kieffer was part of the 1st Special OPS Sqd. of the 7th Air Force. His plane was shot down by hostile enemy fire and was listed as a MIA on Feb. 11, 1970. His remains were recovered on Apr. 9, 2007, and identified Apr. 10, 2010. He will be buried with full Military Honors.

Search Continues for Journalists

Several months ago, there was a national news report that the possible remains of journalist Sean Flynn who was the son of actor Error Flynn, had been recovered in Cambodia and were sent to JPAC to be identified. The results came back as a negative. The search will continue for Sean Flynn and other journalists who disappeared during the Vietnam War.

The total number of missing and unaccounted for Americans from the Vietnam War now stands at 1,714.

Recovered and Identified

There were also reports of the following remains being recovered and identified:

Korean War

- PFC Charles H. Higdon USA
- MSgt. Roy E Head USA
- Ensign Robert W. Langwell USN

WWII

- Fireman 3rd Class Gerald G. Lehman USN
- Capt. Joseph M. Olbinski, USAF
- 1st Lt. Joseph J. Auld, USAF
- 1st Lt. Robert M. Anderson, USAF
- Tech Sgt. Clarence E. Frantz, USAF
- Pfc. Richard M. Dawson, USAF
- Pvt. Robert L. Crane, USAF
- Pvt. Fred G. Fagan, USAF

There are also reports of the following remains being recovered and identified:

Vets

- SFC George H. Humphrey USMC
- Pvt. Thomas D. Costello USA

All were recovered, identified and returned to their families for burial with full military honors. We must keep up hope that our government will continue to search, recover and identify all our POW/MIAs and return them home. Please keep them and their families in your thoughts and prayers and remember, they will not be forgotten.

Veterans Incarcerated Committee Report

Ron Trovato

On June 12, Kenny Moore, Valentino Gatto, and I went into the Attica Correctional Facility where Chapter 489 hosted a cook-out for all of the vets there. The turnout was terrific (about 60 guys) and we appreciate the hospitality that was extended to us by all of the members and Sgt. Mark Schieffer who is the staff advisor there. The food was first rate (chicken, hot dogs, sausage, burgers) and Chapter 20 was presented with a beautifully framed picture of Vietnam scenes drawn by Phil Glazier. I would encourage our members to check it out, Kenny has it, and if mass produced, this would be a real fundraiser for the guys at Attica. We were able to visit with the vets, answer veterans related questions, and most importantly, just kick back and have a really good time. The fundraiser of selling coffee creamers has finally been implemented and so far it has been very successful. There remains the need for outside volunteers to assist Chapter 489 with their General Membership Meetings and once again I am asking those chapters close to Attica if they have someone who can get involved. On the way out, Sgt. Schieffer took us on a guided tour of the facility, which was fascinating and informative. My feeling upon leaving is that Chapter 489 is pulling it together and remains a viable and committed group of veterans who are representative of VVA founding principle of veterans helping veterans.

We have re-established contact with Chapter 603 at the Groveland Correctional Facility and hope to have an update on activities there soon. We have also heard from Andy Restivo with Chapter 205 at the Auburn Correctional Facility and we thank him for the enclosed article he wrote, “Does Anyone Care”, illuminating the affects PTSD has had on his life. Your brother veterans still do and always will care, Andy. Speaking of 205, Ernie Bullock (on the outside) is doing very well and we appreciate his keeping in touch. He is the best example I know of someone who has really made it. Brother Craig McLaren (Chapter 190) in Atmore, Alabama, sent me along a leather Combat Infantrymen’s Badge that he made and that I gave to Max Lill just before he passed away. That is how I will always remember Max and I thank you, Craig for enclosing what was really a tribute to Max along with your letter. You’re the best, bro... Jeff Lagnese of Chapter 563 in San Quentin State Prison, has written us about Chapter activities there and he was recently nominated for Outside Coordinator, a position he has filled admirably in the past.

Keep up the good work, one and all, and know that we care.
Hello everyone, my name is Jim McDonough, and I am the new guy leading your Veterans Outreach Center (VOC) here in Rochester. Thank you very much for the opportunity presented by your leadership to introduce myself.

I want to start this brief self-introduction by isolating on four words – “your Veterans Outreach Center,” for this is where I want you to get a picture of my intent. Members of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 20 were instrumental in putting Veterans Outreach Center on the map and are a good piece of the reason we are what we are today. We are who we are because of you and your efforts put on the uniform and served after you. What you continue to do today for all of us who thank you for what you did then and served during the Vietnam War.

Thank you for what you did then and what you continue to do today for all of us who put on the uniform and served after you.

I am one of those guys – a soldier, husband, father and veteran. I served 26 years in the United States Army after graduating from “Benning’s School for Boys” (OCS) in 1982. I retired in 2007 as a Colonel and immediately was fortunate to find my second calling, servicing veterans and their families.

I started serving in the United States Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service (US DOL VETS), where I led efforts statewide to assist veterans with meaningful employment services. Today, as President of Veterans Outreach Center I oversee two of those very programs – one for homeless veterans and another, which serves all veterans.

On Veterans Day 2007 I was appointed as Director of the New York State Division of Veterans’ Affairs, a post I held until June 14th of this year. I served with honor and integrity and was responsible for leading a team of New York State Veteran Benefit Counselors, some of whom you know right here in VOC, to help our veterans and their family’s access their earned veterans’ benefits. I learned a great deal about serving veterans and their families during these past three years, a good deal of it from VVA leadership, guys like Ned Foote, Ken Moore and many others.

On June 15th I assumed my present responsibilities here in VOC and I can report that what you started here in VOC is still going strong in service to our veterans and their families. Our core competencies, as outlined by this slide, are what continue to guide our efforts:

And while we’ve grown over the years, these three areas of effort are what veterans and their families seek from us on a daily basis.

I had a saying while I was State Director that has relevance here in this brief article of self-introduction: “Serving veterans is akin to team sports; there is a need for specialists and generalists alike.” Specialists – Veteran Benefits Counselors, Licensed Clinicians, Veteran Employment Specialists, and Generalists – Advocates, Outreach Folks, and others, need to work side-by-side to help all veterans and their families.

That tagline needs to work here in this community as well. VOC and VVA Chapter 20 should serve side-by-side in service to our veterans and their families. Collectively, we have everything to offer our veterans and their families. Unity of effort, long a tenet of military operations, is where strength is derived. It’s the same in serving our veterans and their families; together we serve from strength and it is my sincere belief that we must serve unified by the belief and principle of your organization: “Never again shall one generation of veterans abandon another.”

Now I know that the only way to get there is through hard work and demonstrated effort; I’m not naïve, we have some wounds to heal. The past is the past. Know this about Jim McDonough: I am a man of my word and my integrity is foremost in the manner in which I serve. I have worked hard these past three years to earn the trust of veterans and their families. Ask your leadership, I think they’ll tell you I am about effort and results – effort by serving others, results by seeing others succeed.

I met recently with your leaders and promised to do my best to earn your trust and confidence. I am in this for one reason and one reason only: to serve so that others may succeed. I can’t do it alone – VOC can’t do it alone and I need your early help. I want to serve commonly – one veteran alongside another veteran - to take care of America’s best, our veterans and their families.

I look forward to a healthy relationship between us and thank you for this opportunity to continue to serve. Each of you has an open invitation to visit and I anticipate I’ll be seeing you at a Chapter meeting soon.

Thank you for what you did here, thank you for what you continue to do for our veterans and their families.
Hi Hon; We took off early AM for the big VA hospital in Manchester. Got there to find it is the Center for VA Affairs. How’s that for totally dumb luck. Doug probably knew that but we never asked. Charlie went to the room Doug told us to go to for the ID and photo. The women said you weren’t registered with us. Charlie said nope and she told him to “sign in, and wait.” That didn’t sound promising, but I had my Kindle. Charlie worried he’d reach the limit of his 4 hr. supply of oxygen. In about an hr. his name was called. Pretty soon he asked me to go to the office too. The fellow shook my hand and said, "you don’t look like a farmer’s wife." I assured him that we came in all sizes and shapes. He was a funny guy who lived in Weare and knew exactly who we were and where French Rd. and French Farm was. He couldn’t have been more helpful. Set Charlie up so if he chooses he can see their Dr.s. We told him we would be reluctant to leave our Doctor for any reason. He knew of him too, and his Dad had gone to Belson and he too thought highly of him, but he definitely can get his 40 copay inhalers for 8 dollars, and we will be able to do that in one month. Next week we go back and he gets his photo and his brand new ID. He won’t have to lug his discharge papers every time. He also xeroxed a bunch more so Charlie could have plenty. Then he gave him a number to talk directly to the people that would handle the fact that he has lung damage from asbestos. They will handle it. So thanks to Jack, Charlie had finally contacted the VA, and it was painless and terribly helpful. And it was all a pleasant surprise. Will keep you posted. But again, hugs kisses and thanks to Jack! Sugar

Hi Hon; Just read your e-mail. Must tell you about today, it just gets better. I called,(Charlie tried but he couldn’t hear the phone numbers as the operator spoke so fast.) I called the number the man at the VA gave us to get the papers Charlie had to fill out regarding his advanced COPD and asbestos plaque. I did it and got the woman immediately. Diana said “How can I help you?” I explained that I was calling for my husband, a vet with diagnosed asbestos plaque on his lungs. The following were magic words to “open Sesame.” She said how old is he, and what service. I said 83 Navy. She said World War 2 Navy ship? I said yes, Engine room, she then said I will not be sending you the papers I would rather you could come here and I will help fill them out. Is that possible? I handed the phone to Charlie and they set up a tentative date for Fri. She said if we are earlier, or later not to worry, she would make time. I can’t believe how amazingly helpful they continue to be, especially in the light of Charlie’s years-long resistance to having anything to do with the VA. He sure is looking at them differently now! He is even thinking about seeing a VA Dr. which amazes me. Will let you know about Friday’s meeting. Again our thanks to Jack. Charlie never would have walked in that door if Jack hadn’t made it seem possible. Love Sugar

Hi Hon; Quick update. We arrived at VA at nine and left by 9:30 as he had his picture taken and we were out of there. We found “Diana’s place, a big building the Norris Cotton VA Center. I thought that sounded like good luck as Sen. Norris Cotton (Rep.) and I were great pen pals in the late 60’s. (he was a close personal friend of Charlie’s father) So we found Diana. Great fun and gungho to be Charlie’s advocate. She wondered if we wanted a “lump sum” or an extended “pension.” I had only hoped they would help paying for the inhaler! What was a “lump sum”? Still have no idea, does Jack? Anyhow she said we can move this faster if you can collect the necessary papers from the hospital, and primary care Dr. We stopped and got the needed papers from the hospital and were gratified to see on almost every page reference to the asbestos plaque on his lungs and advanced COPD. Other very funny things were in the crazy Doctors’ reports. One that had us cracking up said “Social history is remarkable for the fact that he is a Farmer”!!! Was the surprise that he had a University degree and could speak? What on earth could that mean? Another funny comment one of his Dr.’s made that “this is an elderly gentleman who works as a farmer, but who appears actually years younger than his stated age. He is surprisingly in no acute distress. He actually looks quite good”. Isn’t that funny on a medical report? I love the Social History one best. Anyhow we will get his records from our Dr., get them back to Diana our gung ho advocate and wait 6 months to a year on claims but asbestos claims move right along” ...”especially Navy World War 2.” So we return to Diana when we have all the papers, and then she goes to work. So another still surprising, to us, good day with the VA. Love Sugar.

I can’t believe how amazingly helpful they continue to be, especially in light of Charlie's years-long resistance to having anything to do with the VA. He sure is looking at them differently now.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Throughout your day, we know many of you reach out to other vets and encourage them to register at the VA and go for routine screening appointments and be certain they get the benefits for which they are entitled. I doubt many of you, however, get feedback like this, a series of email graciously shared for printing in the BTL. Respecting HIPAA regulations and general confidentiality, the names have been changed. Other than that, the writing is verbatim. So – keep talking to those you meet and keep encouraging them to contact the VA, which isn’t like it used to be. Tell them Charlie sent you!
Is someone you love serving in the military in Afghanistan, Iraq or Kuwait? You can now schedule a video conference with your soldier for FREE!

The Freedom Calls Center is located in the lower link level of the Bausch & Lomb Public Library Building and is available by appointment only. Call 428-8304 to find out how to schedule a call to your soldier today!

This service is provided courtesy of the Rochester Public Library, the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 20, the Freedom Calls Foundation and the County of Monroe.

Help Base Greater Rochester

(www.hbrochester.org) is an online resource for veterans, service members, and their families in Monroe, Livingston, Ontario, Seneca, Wayne and Yates Counties. The mission of Help Base Greater Rochester is to enhance services by coordinating, mobilizing and educating the community-at-large about the issues facing veterans, service members, and their families and advocating for the necessary services to ensure that these community members can regain and maintain their physical, emotional, and economic well-being.

FRONT & CENTER

NY State Council Meeting

Jerry McDermott

NYS Council elections were held for all state wide officers and directors...the currently officers and directors ran unopposed and were again elected for a two year period.

President  Ned Foote
VP  Grant Coates
Secretary  Francisco Muniz
Treasurer  Nick DeLeo

State District Directors
Western  Ted Wilkinson
Southern  Pat Toro
Eastern  Sam Hall
Central  Ron Fairbanks (elected to replace John Lamanna, relocating to NC)

Upcoming Leadership Conference scheduled for August in Orlando, FL. So far will have eight chapters sending representatives to attend to learn about successful Chapter organization and operations.

Dee Garcia, VVA Service Officer in Buffalo, NY reported that the 2nd quarter activity for processing veteran benefit claims has been very busy and productive. She now has more space for files that are current and pending for adjudication. Dee gave notice to all present that the rate for co-pay VA prescription medications will increase from $8.00 per med to $9.00 per med starting July, 2010.

Our guest speaker was Bill Kraus, interim Director for the NYS Department of Veterans Affairs. Mr. Kraus gave an overview of the current veteran population of NYS as follows:

Nearly 1,000,000 all era veterans living in NY. NY ranks as the 5th largest veteran population in the country. Of the nearly 1,000,000 vets approximately 725,000 served in combat situations. 117,000 WWII vets, 120,000 Korean vets, 303,000 Vietnam vets 163,000, Gulf War vets, 263,000 non-combat vets, 65,000 women vets and 40,000 active duty personnel make up the NYS population of veterans. Further of the NYS veteran population over 700,000 are 55 years or older seeking a vast array of services and will certainly be on the increase for many years to come. The NYS Department of Veteran Affairs was founded in 1945, and assists veterans and their families obtain services and benefits earned by their service to our country.

Regrettably, a statistic that Mr. Kraus provided on veteran unemployment from 2009 shows a rate of 8.6% for veterans vs. 5.5% for the non-veteran population. Many plans and services are offered in conjunction with training and programs offered with the State Department of Labor.

Some facts and figures relating to VVA membership as of end of 1st quarter 2010:
• Nationally 62,249
• NY State 5,224

Future NYS Council meeting dates for year 2011 as follows:
• January 22, 2011
• April 9, 2011
• June 18, 2011
• September 10, 2010
**FREE FIRE ZONE**

**USS Liberty Dedication**

Thanks for including me in your newsletter. It was my honor to have the VVA Chapter 20 at the USS Liberty dedication and participate. I don't have the men's emails but would like to thank them all.

Thanks again,
John Hrankowski

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**Picnic**

The August Membership meeting on the 12th will include a picnic supper and will start at 6:00pm. There will be a brief membership meeting. Please bring your flags for proper disposal, which will be done that evening. We will serve hots, hamburgers and salads. Feel free to bring a snack or dessert to share. Call 585-482-7396 prior to August 5th for reservations.

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**STARS & STRIPES & THE FLAG STORE**

The only store where you can buy America’s Flag from America’s Veterans

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Veterans Advocate

DEBRA SLOANE
Retail Office Assistant

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**BETSY LOMBARDO**

Veterans Advocate

DEBRA SLOANE
Retail Office Assistant

455 South Avenue • Rochester, NY 14620
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**Thanks for including me in your newsletter. It was my honor to have the VVA Chapter 20 at the USS Liberty dedication and participate. I don't have the men's emails but would like to thank them all.**

Thanks again,
John Hrankowski
It was during the Civil War that soldiers first found the need for some kind of identification on their bodies during combat. During this war, some soldiers would pin a slip of paper with their name and address to the back of their coats or write identification on their knapsacks. Some would even scratch the information in the soft lead on the back of the Army belt buckle. At Vicksburg National Cemetery alone, 75% of the Civil War dead are listed as unidentified.

From 1862 to 1906, different systems of identification were presented to the government. In 1906, a circular aluminum disc was presented and by 1913 identification tags became mandatory for those serving in the United States military.

During WWI, the circular engraved disc was replaced by a more rectangular shaped dog with a notch. The nickname “dog tags” was adopted during WWII because of the similarity to tags worn by family pets.

The most popular explanation for the notch was to place the tag securely in the teeth on a fallen soldier’s body. Another popular belief was that the notch was utilized during stamping to insure proper alignment. In the late 1950s, notched dog tags were discontinued and replaced with the tag that is used today without a notch. Also, the second tag was separated from the first tag by placing it on a shorter chain of 5-1/2”. If a soldier is killed in combat, the tag on the short chain is placed on the soldier’s toe for identification, thus, coming to be known as the “toe tag.”

In the Vietnam War, American soldiers were allowed to place rubber silencers on their dog tags so the enemy would not hear the metallic clanking. Others chose to tape the two tags together with black tape. Still others chose to wear one tag around the neck, and the other tag on the lace of one boot. All three variations were commonly seen among U.S. troops.

Today, dog tags have become military chic with many civilians wearing them as an accessory or to indicate health problems.
The sun had finally lowered enough in the clear sapphire sky to provide a modicum of shade on the hillside where Rachel sat. Behind her, the stone retaining wall shielded the earth from giving way, the peace from the noises of society, the stillness from the havoc in their lives. Only the occasional motor made itself known above the rustle of summer leaves, birds calling to each other, and majestic flags whipping against the ropes that bound them tight.

It should have been louder, she thought, as she gazed upon the empty footpath below her, the bricks freshly cleaned by some unknown caretaker in the night. The grass, shorn low to make the upkeep easier, needed no worries over children’s roughhousing, as their parents tried in vain to teach them a history that even they were not alive to learn the lessons of.

No, this day, this time, no one had thought to visit the souls that had given the ultimate sacrifice, ensuring that the festivities and joy of what they believed in would survive into the next generations. No commemorations were held in their honour, no moment of silence in their plans of picnics, patriotism, and pyrotechnesis.

These men, and those they represented, needed no parade to encourage their bravery in a country far, far away from the comforts and security of home and family. Needed no words to express the level of faith, of fear, of hope that they took with them in their hearts. Needed no celebration a world apart, when they thought briefly of their loved ones before fate snipped the final cord and their long journey came to an end too soon, too suddenly.

The sleek grey posts, brushed clean for grime and for memories, stood silent below her, mentioning not the parties that took place in every neighborhood, asking not to be recognized or rewarded. Just remembered and respected, as the band of brothers they would come to be, and end their lives knowing. As men, as people, who died protecting something inexplicable, intangible, and dear to their very souls. Men who asked for nothing, so that others could be free.

"Just remembered and respected as the band of brothers they would come to be."
25 Misc Rules of the Military

To add a bit of lightness, to your day, please see if any of these brings a memory or a smile...

1. The enemy "always" times his attack, to the second you drop your pants in the Latrine!!
2. The ammo you need "NOW" is on the "Next" airdrop!!
3. The enemy inevitably attacks on two occasions: when they're ready and when you're not.
4. Four-wheel-drive just means getting stuck in more inaccessible places.
5. The degree to which you overreact to information will be in inverse proportion to its accuracy.
6. If you receive two contradictory orders, obey them both.
7. Never forget that your weapon was made by the lowest bidder.
9. If all else fails hide.
10. If two things are required to make something work, they will never be shipped together.
11. Anything you do can get you shot, including nothing.
12. Whenever you lose contact with the enemy, look behind you.
13. The most dangerous thing in the combat zone is an officer with a map.
14. The quartermaster has only two sizes, too large and too small.
15. The Cavalry doesn't always come to the rescue.
16. If you really need an officer in a hurry, take a nap.
17. There is nothing more satisfying than having someone take a shot at you, and miss.
18. If your sergeant can see you, so can the enemy.
19. If your ambush is properly set the enemy won't walk into it.
20. The only time you have too much fuel loaded is when your aircraft is on fire.
21. If you don't care where you are, you ain't lost.
22. You get the most of what you need the least.
23. There is no limit to how bad things can get.
24. The side with the simplest uniform wins.
25. Least Credible Sentences - 1. The check is in the mail. 2. Of course I'll respect you in the morning. 3. The trucks will be in the drop zone. 4. I'm from the government and I'm here to help you.

Our BOD has wholeheartedly agreed to allow the collection of items below in support of our hospitalized veterans, both men and women, currently receiving treatment at the Canandaigua MC. Volunteer Opportunities are always welcomed and you can make direct contact with Ms Robin Johnson, Manager of Voluntary Services, anytime at 585-393-7759. You can help out one time a year or whenever your schedule will permit. We will collect any items that are brought to the monthly membership meetings, and I will take responsibility to make the delivery to Canandaigua MC.

Thank you for your support, Jerry McDermott

- Comfort care items (deodorant, shampoo, shaving cream, lotions [for men/women vets at the Center] - travel size, full size, or complementary sizes from hotel/motel chains are great!)
- Coffee (regular and decaf)
- Creamer, sugar, sugar substitute
- Hot Chocolate mix
- Bowling/movie tickets
- Gift cards from stores like Walmart/Wegmans/Tops
- Baking items (cookies, bread mixes - for a homey effect in the wards, used as aromatherapy)
- Prepaid phone cards
- Tickets to sporting events, zoo
- Paper products (plates, napkins)
- New socks, tee shirts, sweatshirts (men and women's sizes...color white...tube socks are ideal!)
- Postage
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)
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Thrift Store #482-8036
All donations go to the Thrift Store at the address above.

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Meeting the 3rd Thursday of the month 6:30 - 7:45 pm
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MyHealtheVet
MHV provides access to:
• Online prescription refills with the VA
• Trusted health information
• Links to Federal and VA benefits and resources
• Personal Health Journals and Health e-Logs

The mission of My HealtheVet (MHV) is to improve health care for ALL veterans, independent of where they receive care, by providing health information and health assessments via the Internet. MHV is a web site designed for veterans and their families with the goal of optimizing veterans’ health care. It is for all veterans and offers additional services to those receiving care at VA medical centers.

MHV registrants will also be able to view appointments, co-pay balances and copies of key portions of their VA medical records online and much more as additional functionality is released. This is available to veterans, their families, veteran advocates and VA employees. Non-veterans are welcome to use many of the features, although they will not have access to all functions VA patients have.

You can access the website at www.myhealth.va.gov. You will need to register to use key features and will be assigned a User ID and Password for return visits. Please note that in order to access enhanced options of this website, you must complete an “In Person Authentication” (IPA) at your local VA facility. This step provides for confidentiality of your information and is required by The Privacy Act, Title 5 United States Code (U.S.C.) 552a, implemented by Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §575-1.584.

“MHV is a web site designed for veterans and their families with the goal of optimizing veterans’ health care.”
Shinseki has done. The facts of the matter are so clear that Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) must restate our position which is dictated by those clear facts: First, Public Law 102-4, the Agent Orange Act of 1991, was enacted to address the health issues of veterans that stemmed from our exposure to Agent Orange while serving in Vietnam. Congress, in its collective wisdom, passed this legislation because of the severe impact exposure to dioxin was having on the lives of tens of thousands of veterans.

Second, we strongly support the actions of VA Secretary Eric K. Shinseki and Congress to Fund AO/D Research Now and Not Wait for an Army to Die. There have been reports in the media recently in which some, including Senator Jim Webb (D-VA), seem to question the legitimacy of service-connected disability compensation for illnesses related to exposure to Agent Orange/Dioxin in Vietnam and other locations, such as Type II diabetes mellitus and ischemic heart disease. Further, it appears that there is confusion on the part of some about how the process established by the Agent Orange Act of 1991 should and does work. The facts of the matter are so clear that Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) must restate our position which is dictated by those clear facts: First, Public Law 102-4, the Agent Orange Act of 1991, was enacted to address the health issues of veterans that stemmed from our exposure to Agent Orange while serving in Vietnam. Congress, in its collective wisdom, passed this legislation because of the severe impact exposure to dioxin was having on the lives of tens of thousands of veterans.

Third, VVA can unequivocally state that the process set up by Congress under the Agent Orange Act continues to be the most objective and valid way of making decisions regarding environmental diseases of military service. These decisions should be scientific, not political. Any Secretary of the VA should adhere to the process, required by law, and follow the facts, as Secretary Shinseki has done.

Fourth, the evidence for inclusion of diabetes mellitus type II as a presumptive disease is very strong. It is true that people are more prone to develop type II diabetes as they age, but the facts are that Vietnam veterans are at least more than twice as likely to develop this disease as the nonveterans in our cohort group, when balanced for age, weight, exercise, and diet. The same is true of prostate cancer and other service-connected presumptive conditions.

This situation, again, highlights the need for federal funding of additional research into the adverse health impacts on Vietnam veterans, on our children, and on our grandchildren, by respected independent scientific entities outside of the VA. This is just as evident today as it was twenty years ago. The clear need for such research is even more pressing today, given the number of Vietnam veterans who have died well before their time in the last twenty years, and the number who are continuing to die early, because of the ravages resulting from exposure to Agent Orange/dioxin in Southeast Asia.

Lastly, there have been media reports that the amendment to Emergency Supplemental Appropriation by Senator Webb would delay the process, and thus delay the payment of justly due back compensation to affected veterans, pushing off the time when veterans who are owed back compensation actually will receive their entitled compensation. This simply is not the case. Neither action by Senator Webb nor anyone else has thus far caused any action that will slow down the payment of claims as soon as the VA can work through the public rule-making process to get this accomplished.

We urge all affected Vietnam veterans and eligible surviving dependents to file claims for the newly presumptive diseases associated with Agent Orange: Parkinson’s disease, B Cell leukemias, and ischemic heart disease. These diseases bring the total to 14 illness categories that entitle Vietnam veterans-and veterans who served along the demilitarized zone in Korea in 1968 and 1969-to health care and disability compensation. VVA also contends that many Vietnam-era veterans were also exposed in their service elsewhere in Southeast Asia during the war, including in Thailand and Laos, and aboard Navy vessels off the coast of Vietnam, as well as certain military bases located in the continental U.S. and its territories.

There are numerous diseases recognized by the VA as presumptive to exposure to Agent Orange. Additional information about these and other presumptive diseases and long-term health care risks for veterans can be found at the Veterans Health Council web site, www.veteranshealth.org, and in the VVA Self-help Guide to Service-Connected Disability Compensation For Exposure to Agent Orange at www.vva.org/Guides/AgentOrangeGuide.pdf.
Time to check your attic.
That dusty stack of photo albums.
And that shoe box under the bed.
We know you have one.

That’s right. It’s slide show time...

We need photos of our Chapter 20 members - old military photos & recent photos too - for our 30th Anniversary Celebration Slide Show. Don’t miss your fifteen minutes of fame.

Email photos to 17cav@rochester.rr.com. Please include name, dates of service, and the place where the photo was taken.

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VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, CHAPTER 20

Name: __________________________________________  Date of Birth: _________________________________  Sex: □ M □ F

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I am not a Vietnam Vet, but I want to help Vietnam veterans and their families. Please accept my donation: □ AVVA Membership

□ $10  □ $20  □ $50  □ Other ($________)

Payment Options: □ Check  □ Money Order

Return this application, along with a copy of your DD214, to:
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AUGUST 2010

2 MON  •  Operation Desert Shield began, 1990
          •  Board of Directors, 7:00 pm
4 WED  •  Happy Birthday, U. S. Coast Guard (established 1790)
6 FRI  •  Bombing of Hiroshima - August 6, 1945
7 SAT  •  Purple Heart Medal established, 1782
          •  Phelps Sauerkrat Festival Parade, 2:00pm
12 THU  •  Membership Meeting, Annual Picnic and Ceremonial Burning of
           Flags (Flag burning commences at 5 pm with a brief ceremony,
           picnic starts at 6 pm)
14 SAT  •  Japan surrendered, ending World War II, 1945
15 SUN  •  Woodstock opened 1969

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.

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MEETINGS

BOD
Aug 2      Dec 6
Sept 7     Jan 3, 2011
Oct 4      Feb 7, 2011
Nov 1

Membership
Sept 9      Dec 9
Oct 14     Jan 15, 2011
Nov 11     Feb 10, 2011

Special Events
Aug 12 – Annual Picnic

NYSC Meetings
Owego, NY
January 22, 2011
April 9, 2011
June 18, 2011

Happy Birthday to the U.S. Coast Guard!

Photo by HC Johnny Bivera, USN