Together Then... Together Now
BETWEEN THE LINES
Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.
Chapter 20
December 2011
Issue 155

A Hero Comes Home

4  Sgt. David Lemcke – Home at Last

12  Veterans Visiting Veterans

Chapter 20
From the President

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

It’s been 43 years, and this Veterans Day our brother Sgt. David E. Lemcke returned home to Hilton, NY. This was such an emotional return home for his family, to finally put some closure to David’s death and lay him to rest across the street from the home he left. When I returned from Nam in the mid-70s, I was working with the local POW/MIA families. I picked David’s POW bracelet and have worn it from that time. I never knew David personally, but felt a connection with him over the years. When David returned home November 9th, I turned my bracelet over to his sister and it was placed with his remains. It was really hard for me to give it up, but I knew that it belonged with David as a symbol that his brother and sister Vietnam Veterans never forgot him. May you rest in peace, our brother, and may God bless you forever.

I can’t express to you how proud I felt to be part of Chapter 20 and the great job that was done by our Honor Guard and Marching Unit lead by my friend, Chuck Macaluso. You guys are the best! And thanks to all that came to pay their respects to Sgt. Lemcke at his funeral. I would also like to thank the Patriot Guard for their part in David’s funeral -- they truly made it special. Let’s all pray for the return of the remainder of those who were missing, in all wars.

On another note, I’m sad to say that after some 30 years in business, Chapter 20 will be closing down its Thrift Store due to declining business. We will continue the car donation business to provide a source of income. I can assure all of you we will continue to receive income from other sources, but not on the level we have over the past years. Budgets will be cut, but we will be OK. This was a hard decision for the board but it was in the best interest of the chapter. Please visit the store over the next few months for huge sales. I would like to thank the LLC Board for all their hard work over the years for managing the operations of our store.

POW-MIA

Joe Peck, Chairperson

I am very pleased to report this month that the DPMO and JPAC has released the names of three more missing Servicemen who have now been located, identified and returned to the US from the Vietnam War. One of which is Chapter 20’s own David E. Lemcke from Hilton, NY. This now brings the total of missing and unaccounted Americans to 1,678.

They are as follows:

**LTC. Edward James Broms Jr.**, US Navy from Meadville, Pennsylvania was a pilot assigned to Attack Squadron 66 on board the carrier USS Intrepid in the Gulf of Tonkin. On Aug. 1, 1968 LTC. Broms was in the 4th position with his A4L Skyhawk on a 4-plane strike mission on Dong Dun, North Vietnam. As his aircraft pulled out after dropping its bombs, he was heard transmitting to the other members of the team that he was taking on Puffs (Flak). No other communications or visual contact was made. An extensive electronic and visual search was conducted but with negative results. The remains of LTC. Edward James Brom, Jr. were returned on August 4, 1993 and identified on September
Capt. Charles Ronald Barnes, US Army from Fullerton, PA, was a co-pilot on a UC-21A “Ute” low-wing twin engine executive aircraft. On the morning of March 16, 1969 Capt. Barnes and four other members were enroute to Hue/Phu Bai Airfield in South Vietnam. During the mission, the aircraft was navigating only by instruments due to the weather conditions that day. While attempting to land at Hue/Phu Bai Airfield, the aircraft came in too fast and could not stop before running out of runway. The plane immediately pulled up and to the right in order to try a second landing. The aircraft disappeared over the rugged jungle mountains south of the airfield losing all communications with the control tower. Search and rescue teams were hampered by weather conditions and were unsuccessful in locating the aircraft and its crew. His remains were returned on April 7, 1988 (estimated) and finally identified on Aug. 8, 2011. The other four members of that crash were previously returned on Apr. 7, 1988 and identified on April 5, 2005. No other information concerning Capt. Charles Ronald Barnes’ burial is available at this time.

Sgt. David Earl Lemcke, US Army from Hilton, NY, was a member of a forward observation team on a mission in the Quang Tri Province in South Vietnam near the DMZ. On May 21, 1968 while in a munitions bunker, one of the four members accidentally fired a round causing a fire that ignited trip flares, smoke grenades and kerosene. The explosion badly burned one of the two survivors near the doorway and took the lives of two members, as well as David. The bunker burned for several days. The remains of two service men were recovered, but they could not locate David as the site was still intensely hot from the accident. With the mission still underway, the recovery of David was postponed till a later time and he was eventually reported as KBR (Killed, Body Not Recovered). From 1993 to 2011, multiple investigations were carried out by Joint US/SRV (Socialist Republic of Vietnam) teams. Large amounts of assorted unexploded ordnances were scattered in the suspected area and had to be removed in order to locate and excavate the exact site. In June 2011, a representative of JPAC contacted Donald DeLano from Port Huron, Michigan asking him if he could assist with the recovery in the exact location of the bunker, as he was witness to the event back in May 1968. A six-day deadline was given to the teams by the Vietnamese officials to have everything removed from that site as a War Memorial that had been built earlier was scheduled to be expanded over the suspected bunker area. Once the exact site was identified, a clay base road that had been built earlier had to be removed. A backhoe was brought in to help with this task. Once the teams began to dig, signs of the burned bunker were detected in the sand and at about ten feet, David’s personal effects were located. His dog tags, personal ID and glasses were recovered and then finally, his remains. He was identified by DNA testing and the family was notified and informed of the findings. Thank God, he was finally coming home! There is also reports of the recovery and identification of the following:

Staff Sgt. Meceslaus T. Miaskiewicz, US Army Air Combat Command was reported missing on May 18, 1944 when his B-17G was shot down near Stuica, Yugoslavia. His remains were identified on Nov. 8, 2011.

2nd Lt. Hilding R. Johnson, US army Air Corps was reported missing on Dec. 25, 1944 when P-47D crashed while attacking enemy targets near St. Vith, Belgium. His remains were identified on Sept. 15, 2011.

Staff Sgt. John J. Bono, US Army Air Corps was reported missing on Sept. 13, 1944 when his B-17G was shot down near Neustaedt, Germany. His remains were identified Sept. 27, 2011.

Cpl. Eugene M. Morelli, US Army was reported missing Feb. 1951 in Hoengsong, South Korea and died in a POW camp in Suan, North Korea. His remains were identified Nov. 1, 2011.

Pfc. Jimmie J. Gaitan, US Army was reported missing Feb. 13, 1951 and died in a POW camp near Changsong, North Korea. His remains were identified Sept. 13, 2011.

Sgt. 1st Class Benny D. Rogers, US army was reported missing in Nov. 1950 south of Unsan, North Korea. His remains were identified Nov. 8, 2011.

As always, we will pray and never give up hope of finding our missing Americans. For those of you who are still on foreign soil, we will bring you home to your families and to the country you so proudly and honorably served for.

YOU WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN

Honor Guard / Marching Unit
Chuck Macaluso, Honor Guard Commander

I would like to thank all Honor Guard and Marching Unit members who attended the Sgt. David Lemcke ceremonies on November 9, 11 and 12.

The airport and procession to Burger Funeral Home was extremely moving. Chapter 20 had 19 members in attendance; I would venture to guess this was a record for a “work day.” The Patriot Guard had about 150 bikes to add to the, making it the greatest showing of respect I have ever seen given to a Vietnam Vet. All local law enforcement agencies supplied members to stop traffic from airport to funeral home – another first for me.

The overwhelming attendance at the funeral home was noted by family and funeral home personnel. Honors paid to David were truly appreciated by the family. After our members did the “Final Salute,” the funeral director came up to me and stated, “That was great. You guys are truly professionals.” Again, thanks also go to the Patriot Guard who spent the evening outside in typical Veterans Day weather, similar to conditions we experience during most Veterans Day Ceremonies at our Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

The weather on Saturday was similar to Wednesday – couldn’t ask for better November days. The church ceremony was very moving; again the family made special note as to the tremendous showing of support by the Chapter as well as other groups. After the memorial service, David was laid to rest with his parents at Hilton-Parma Union Cemetery. After 43 years, David was finally reunited with his parents.

Again, thanks to everyone who took part. Your time and devotion truly enforces our commitment to “never forget” our fallen brothers.
Home at Last
Sgt. David Earl Lemcke
Sgt. David Earl Lemcke’s remains arrived by Delta Airlines at the Greater Rochester International Airport on November 9, 2011. On the tarmac to witness the homecoming were his family as well as the US Army Honor Guard, VVA Chapter 20 Honor Guard, the NYS Patriot Guard Riders, dignitaries from Monroe County, local fire departments, Monroe County law enforcement personnel and other veteran groups. The military escort continued from the airport to the Thomas E. Burger Funeral home in Hilton, passing lines of town residents waving flags, clapping and saluting all along the village route, as well as applauding students from the Hilton High School – a proud display for a hero who is finally home. November 11th, Veterans Day, was the day that hundreds came to pay their respects for him and his family. It was indeed David’s day. Sgt. David Earl Lemcke was finally laid to rest near his home, next to his parents on November 12th at the Hilton-Parma Union Cemetery with full Military Honors that were proudly and rightly bestowed upon a true hero.
It was old home week for volunteers at the Auburn Correctional Facility on Veterans’ Day. It seemed that everyone I’ve known to volunteer at the prison there over the past 22 years was present for Chapter 205’s Veterans’ Day service. Thirteen volunteers and three staff showed up for the event, including Terry Hubert, the VVA National Incarcerated Veterans Chairman, and Nancy Switzer, President of AVVA. The others included a dressed-up Dan Waters, Emie and Regina Bullock, ex-staff Advisor John Sroka, current Staff Advisor Rich Heffron, Prison Chaplain Allen Ferry and Army Chaplain Freemesser. Sixty-two veterans were present and I represented Chapter 20. In speaking with Terry Hubert prior to entering the prison, he indicated that he had spent considerable time working out the status of incarcerated chapters in New York who are currently under suspension.

The service was opened by Chapter 205’s President, Bernard Hatch, and a prayer by Rev. Ferry. Lawrence Abdul Wilson, who served as the First Lieutenant in the 1st Infantry Division in Vietnam addressed those present next, and remarked on his TDY at Auburn Prison and the impact of Chapter 205 on that facility and community. He led a chorus of three cheers for newly elected Vice-President Fred Elliott, who couldn’t make it to Auburn because he was at Arlington National Cemetery for Veterans Days events. Terry Hubert gave the Keynote Address and talked about the Nam vet perspective and why we see the world differently. He gave an overview of what he has done since taking over the Incarcerated Vets Chair and the difficulties of breaking the prison culture. He discussed the resolutions that were passed in Reno and his ideas for incarcerated Chapters passing the torch to other veterans organizations within the prisons. He thanked Chapter 205 for their loyal service to VVA for so many years. Nancy Switzer was up next and she gave her usual high octane high energy talk. She was very comfortable there and the old timers that remembered her from going into Auburn years ago were so glad to see her again. Awards were given to Veterans Group of Auburn President Dennis Conway for his service to veterans at Auburn from 1986 – 2011, as well as his officers, and Dennis spoke about their activities and fundraisers. The VGoA at Auburn is already doing much of the heavy lifting regarding veterans programs at Auburn and the transition has been relatively smooth. Past 205 President Andy Restivo spoke eloquently regarding the effects of PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injury and how to put peoples’ souls and belief systems back together. He suggested veteran inmates be paroled directly to Veterans Courts where they could be supervised by the Court and Parole as well as get into proper treatment programs. Emie Bullock spoke last, giving the history of Chapter 205, recognizing the founding members and how teamwork was the reason for their accomplishments over the years. It was a great night to be with fellow veterans at Auburn and everyone present had two things in common -- they love their country and they were willing to fight for it. If you ask me, veterans are the greatest of every generation.

Thank you to Chapter 563 for continuing to send me the San Quentin news, a newspaper designed and written by prisoners for prisoners and staff at San Quentin. I also heard from Gary Ward, Sr., who is acting as liaison between Chapter 603 and the Prison Administration at the Groveland Correctional Facility. We thank him for all of his efforts. We also heard from Carl Macedonia from Chapter 489 at Attica, and sent them copies of the resolutions that were passed at the National Convention. They had a Veterans Day event scheduled at Attica for November 12th, which we hope went well.

Lastly, I want to thank all of those veterans reading this for their dedication and service to America.
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BTL Staff Wish Everyone a Safe & Happy Holiday Season!
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A Peer Mentor Provides:
- Emotional Support
- Insight necessary for the Veteran to successfully complete the Veterans Court
- Assistance to the Veteran in resolving their concerns about the court procedures
- Assistance to the Veteran in accessing and navigating the Veterans Affair System

If you are interested, please contact Michael Volkmer, Court Coordinator of Veterans Court at (585) 428-4428

Vietnam Veterans of America
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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.

Volunteer as a Peer Mentor in Monroe County Veterans Court.

Mary Anne Vitticore
Women Veterans Program Manager
VA Health Care
Upstate New York
Team Up With Us
Canandaigua VA Medical Center
400 Fort Hill Ave.
Canandaigua, NY 14424
p:(585) 393-7621
c:(585) 490-9370
maryanne.vitticore@va.gov

www.visn2.va.gov
At Lifetime Care, the mission is to provide outstanding care during the end of life’s journey, understanding that each person’s journey is unique. For some, their time spent serving in the military was a very proud and defining moment in their lives – a time they choose to hold on to and share with others who may be able to relate. For this reason, Lifetime Care has created the Veterans Visiting Veterans program, a specialized hospice program.

The program is staffed with volunteers, matching these volunteers with patients based on similar interests, personality traits, and goals of care. Some veterans facing the end of life never let go of that fierce pride that comes from serving their country, yet they may speak very little of those memories to family, perhaps wanting to shelter them from the realities of combat or military life.

Veterans Visiting Veterans can bridge this reluctance by allowing for one-on-one communication with someone who can best understand and can listen as well as share experiences that are more meaningful. Volunteers may be requested anytime; however, volunteers create their own schedule based on their available time, location and preferences (once an initial training period is completed).

Please consider becoming a volunteer in this amazing program – and allow a brother or sister in arms to share memories as they approach end of life.

For more information, please contact:
Rose Fletcher, Manager Volunteer Services
585-214-1444
rose.wade@lifetimecare.org
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.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, CHAPTER 20

Name: ____________________________________________

Date of Birth: ___________________________ Sex: ☐ M ☐ F

Address: __________________________________________

Home Phone: (_____ ) __________________________

City: ____________________________________________

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Email Address: __________________________________ q W q H

Chapter # (if known) ______________________________

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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 ☐ $50 ☐ Other ($________)

Eligibility: Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. Military (for
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☐ 3 years: $50 ☐ $200 (ages 56-60), $175 (ages 61-65), $150 (ages 66 & over)

Payment Options: ☐ Check ☐ Money Order

Return this application, along with a copy of your DD214, to:
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VVA is a non-profit veterans service organization. Programs and services are funded by member
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WEB SITES/E-MAIL ADDRESSES
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members@aol.com/vetwindows

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

Vietnam Veterans Memorial at Highland Park:
www.rochestervietnammemorial.org/The_Memorial.html

Operation Welcome Home:
www.operationwelcomehome.org

VVA New York State Council:
www.vvany.org

Honor Flight:
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DECEMBER 2011

5 MON
Board of Directors, 7:00 pm

7 WED
Pearl Harbor Day - Anniversary of Japan bombing Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941

8 FRI
General Membership Meeting, 6:30 pm

16 FRI
Battle of the Bulge began, 1944

20–28
Hanukkah (Jewish festival of rededication, also known as the Festival of Lights)

22 THU
First Day of Winter

25 SUN
Christmas

26–JAN 1
Kwanzaa (African American holiday which celebrates family, community, and culture)

31 SAT
Presidential proclamation declares official end of WWII, 1946

JAN 1
Happy New Year!

MEETINGS

BOD
2011: December 5
2012: January 9, February 6, March 5, April 2

Membership
Now starting at 6:30 pm!
2011: December 8
2012: January 12, February 9, March 8, April 12

NYSC Meetings Owego, NY
2012: February 4, March 24, June 16, September 29

Vietnam Veterans of America
Chapter 20, Rochester, NY
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