Revelations from Reno

Please Note:
Monthly Membership Meetings will start at 6:30 pm every month beginning in October!

Stinky & Bernadine in Virginia City, NV
Photo by Kathy Gleason

4 Revelations from Reno - VVA Convention 2011 Reports
5 Sampson Dedication
IN ACTION
ON THE HOME FRONT

October is
Breast Cancer Awareness Month

May all be loved.
May all be healed.
May all be sheltered.
May all be free from fear.

Highlights

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From the President

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

Not to bore you with a long report and repeat the other reports in this issue I will just give some highlights of our trip to the National Convention in Reno Nevada.

I want to start by offering congratulations to my friend and fellow Vietnam Vet, Fred Elliott, on his big win as National Vice President of VVA. Fred will do a great job in his new position, and I look forward to some exciting changes at the National level.

Well, it all started on August 16 at 4:00AM with Tom and Kathy Gleason picking me up at my house for the trip to the Airport. I was greeted at the airport by my buddy, Ron Trovato. The flight left at 6:15AM and I settled in with my mp3 player and the 20-minute version of my all time favorite, “Free Bird,” headed for NY City and connecting flight to San Fran. When I looked back in the seats behind me I noticed that Ron was sitting next to an old gray hair woman with the biggest glasses I have ever seen. I did a double-take and sure enough Ron was sitting next to Carol Channing. See seemed scared, either because of the boil on his eye or the fact he kept trying to tell his tales of Ronbo our beloved Vietnam Vet. Ron finally got the guts up to ask for her autograph. He was so excited later to show me the signed CD of her latest recording “Carol Sings the Blues with Special Appearance by Alvin and the Chipettes.”

Wednesday, our first day of the convention, began with the opening session starting at 9:00AM. Again this year, NY State was near the front and that made it nice to be able to see and hear what was going on. Chapter 20 delegates showed up that first day dressed the same in our “Charlie Sheen” style shirts - everyone loved them. Keynote speaker this year was Richard Pimentel, an advocate for rights of persons with disabilities. Richard spoke at the Leadership Conference last year in Orlando and is one on the best speakers I have ever heard. On the first day there were 676 delegates present, 65 of those from New York State. The morning was filled with committee reports. After lunch it was off to committee hearings - I attended the Agent Orange committee and the Health Care meetings where they reviewed the resolutions to be voted on. After a bite to eat, Marie and I went with Fred where he talked to the regions about how he will serve us as Vice President. We attended 8 of the 9 where Fred did a great job, really made us proud the he is a member Chapter 20. Fred talked about his plans on the issues of
Health Care Benefits and answered questions that were asked of him by the delegates from the regions. Fred in all his presentations stood head and shoulders above his opponent.

Thursday morning there were more guest speakers and voting on both Constitution amendments and Resolutions. A highlight of the morning was Chapter 20 again, for the 8th time, won Newsletter of the Year award for larger chapters. Much thanks to those who write articles and much credit to Kathy Gleason as Editor, Thanks Kathy!

Friday morning was election time, All went smooth until it was noticed that one candidate was left off the ballot that resulted in a revote on Saturday morning. When the votes were counted Fred’s team for Secretary and Treasurer were elected and fellow New Yorker John Rowen was re-elected as President.

Saturday night’s banquet was great. The food was wonderful and a special thanks goes out to Wes Guidry for doing another outstanding job.

In closing, I can assure you that your delegates put in long hours and did an outstanding job representing you at the Convention – thanks to each of them for their hard work!

In closing, the nice weather is here so stay safe, enjoy the lawn mowing and see you at the next meeting. Remember, our next meeting will be at the new location at 1250 Buffalo Road, between Howard Road and Rt. 390. See you there! God Bless.

POW-MIA

Joe Peck, Chairperson

First of all, I want to thank all those who came out on Saturday, September 10th for our annual POW/MIA candlelight vigil. The names of our missing Americans were read out loud by our attendees followed by a ring of the bell. This solemn ceremony will continue yearly to always bring awareness to the fact that we still have missing Americans from the Vietnam War and to show that we will forever be vigilant until they are all brought home.

I had the opportunity to attend the 15th National VVA Convention this year in Reno, Nevada, and I wanted to convey some POW/MIA information to our membership. There was a proposed resolution that was introduced to the floor, urging Congress to enact legislation that would recommend the re-issuance of the May 29, 1995 POW/MIA stamp and to make it a Perpetual/Forever stamp by the US Postal Service. This proposal was voted on and adopted.

One of the guest speakers introduced during this convention was Johnny Webb, a senior administrator at JPAC, who spoke to the delegates about the MIA recoveries now taking place in the Pacific islands (WWII), North Korea (Korean War) and South East Asia (Vietnam War). Every effort today is being made to recover all of our MIA’s. Congress has mandated that 200 identifications are to be made annually by 2015 and will provide a significant budget increase by 2012. This of course will require 100 more identification teams in the field by 2013 and will consist of possibly 208 civilian and 45 military personnel, as well as additional aerial equipment.

In addition to all this, they are now breaking ground on a new multi-million dollar facility in Hawaii with a completion date of 2014. Two other satellite laboratory sites are being considered for opening, one at an Air Force base in Nebraska and one in Richmond, Virginia. These sites will aid in the fullest possible accountings of Americans lost during past conflicts.

Concerning our missing in South East Asia, JPAC has stated that the Vietnamese cooperation has been outstanding. There is also a great working relationship between Laos, Cambodia and the US. It was also very clear that many of our delegates stated that if they could go back to Vietnam they would gladly help in the search and recovery of their missing brothers and sisters until they are all finally brought home. Now that is true brotherhood, above and beyond.

The DPMO and JPAC this month have released the names of two more missing Servicemen who have now been accounted for and returned to the US from the Vietnam War. This now brings the total of missing and unaccounted Americans to 1682. They are as follows:

**Lt. Col. Edward Dean Silver**, US Air Force from Junction City, Oregon was the pilot on a F-4C jet on an armed night reconnaissance mission on July 5, 1968 over North Vietnam. His aircraft was hit by hostile anti-aircraft fire and was witnessed to have burst into flames. No parachutes were seen and no beepers were heard. Intense hostile fire prevented a daylight search of the area. Lt. Col. Silver and his co-pilot, 1st Lt. Lawrence, (listed in the August issue of the BTL) were listed as MIA’s and later KIA/BNR. Lt. Col. Edward Dean Silver and 1st Lt. Bruce E. Lawrence’s remains were recovered and returned on June 26, 1998. Lt. Col Silver was identified on May 31, 2011.

**Col. Gilbert Swain Palmer Jr.**, US Air Force from Birmingham, Alabama was the pilot of a RF4C aircraft from Udorn, airbase in Thailand. On February 27, 1968, Col. Palmer and his co-pilot were on a midday unarmed solo photo reconnaissance mission to photograph a strip of terrain running through the 17th parallel which divides North and South Vietnam. The target was a heavily wooded and mountainous area near the Ban Karai pass, which was one of the gateways from North Vietnam into Laos and was used by Communist forces to transport weapons, supplies and troops into South Vietnam. All communications with Col. Palmer’s aircraft were lost during this mission and it was presumed that his aircraft was shot down by heavy enemy defenses. An aerial visual and electronic search was initiated and continued for several days but no signs of the aircraft or crew were found. They were officially declared MIA. Col. Palmer’s remains were located and identified on May 19, 2011.

There are also reports of the recovery and identification of the following:

Pfc. Aaron Pearce, US Army was reported missing on April 21, 1951 near Unsan-ni, South Korea. His remains were identified on may 16, 2011.

Cpl. Robert J. Tucker, US Army was reported missing on November 26, 1950 near Kujang, North Korea. His remains were identified on June 11, 2010.

Pfc. Henry L. Gustafson, US Army was reported missing on December 31, 1950 near the Chosen Reservoir, North Korea. His remains were identified on June 3, 2011.

Sgt. Lee D. Henry Jr., US Army was reported missing on August 7, 1950 near the Naktong River in South Korea. His remains were identified on June 3, 2011.

Cpl. Freeman Lindsey, US Army was lost on February 28, 1951 near Hageru-ri, North Korea. His remains were identified on May 5, 2011.

Our hope and prayers for the families and our missing Americans will continue until they all are returned home. Remember - They are not forgotten.
Nick DeLeo, Treasurer

The 15th VVA Convention in Reno, Nevada opened with President John Rowan informing the delegates about Vet Pro software that will soon be available for all Service Officers to assist with filling VA claims. A minority outreach program with the NAACP is in the process of being established to make this group of veterans aware of their benefits and to increase membership. A partnership with the NRA is being formed to reach potential members. AVVA President Nancy Switzer addressed the Opening Session on the close relationship between these two organizations and stated they will continue to advocate on behalf of VA members for problems with Agent Orange and will again promote the Paper Safe to assist Vietnam veterans and their families with age related issues and decisions.

Keynote speaker Richard Pimentel, a disabled Vietnam veteran, has worked on behalf of his fellow veterans and those with disabilities for almost 40 years. He was instrumental in the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act and these efforts were highlighted in the movie The Music Within. He was raised by his grandmother in Portland, Oregon and after a year of college was drafted and sent to Vietnam. Richard used humor and seriousness to tell his story. After a direct hit during a rocket attack when his squad was in the “Beer Bunker” everyone became deaf while he was left partially deaf with a traumatic brain injury.

After being discharged he had problems with the VA when he applied for education or training benefits. The veteran’s counselor treated him poorly and said he would never amount to anything due to his hearing disability. After starting college Richard met a friend with cerebral palsy who had difficulty speaking, but Richard could understand him perfectly. After being asked to leave a restaurant due to Art’s physical appearance he decided to work for the Rehabilitation Office asking how he was able to get jobs for veterans with disabilities. They hired him to lead this effort but there were disagreements with his management when he was asked to review a study on diabetes caused by Agent Orange. He resigned after they requested two more years to decide and threatened to take this issue to the media since he knew it was completed.

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When his movie came out Richard attended a showing at Ft. Hood and had a discussion with OIF and OEF veterans who had served multiple tours of up to 18 months about their worries of a perceived change in public attitude toward them due to the length of these wars. He said to tell anyone this debt was paid in full by Vietnam veterans. Everyone returns from combat with their own mountain to climb and it takes various amounts of time to begin the process of healing. The first time Richard received thanks for his service in Vietnam was four years ago. After nearly 40 years Richard finally applied for VA disability benefits and is currently rated 90%. He proudly stated we will take care of this new generation of veterans and added our government brought them back but VA will bring them home.

United Mine Workers Union President, Cecil Roberts, gave a fire and brimstone speech on how veterans, and especially Vietnam veterans, are in danger of losing their benefits while politicians receive all of their perks. He stressed there must be change to support families, the elderly, and veterans due to politicians and their staff receiving privileged benefits at the expense of all citizens of the United States. Neither of the political parties have common sense. What this country needs is more jobs to create tax payers. He said unions and veterans groups have to lead the way to make this country great again.

Medal of Honor recipient Paul “Buddy” Bucha urged everyone present to become involved and to work to make this country better. He then took his medal off and said it belonged to the enlisted men from his platoon whose names are inscribed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. He introduced Ken Fisher who is CEO of Fisher House that provides services to OIF and OEF veterans and their families.

Ken thanked those present for their service and spoke of the need for a place to stay for families of those who made the ultimate sacrifice when their remains arrived at Dover, Delaware. He lamented about how Vietnam veterans were treated poorly upon their return and received no thank you for their service to our country. Currently there are 29 Fisher Houses being planned and there are now 18 houses attached to VA hospitals. He noted 90% of services are for veterans including Vietnam veterans. Ken will continue to work on behalf of Vietnam veterans until everyone loves them as he does. The Fisher Family recently donated $500,000 to VA to develop a website to allow veterans to locate a Service Officer after entering their zip code. He received a standing ovation.

The Honorable Eric K. Shinseki, Secretary of Veterans Affairs, informed the delegates about jobs created in Nevada with a new VA Medical Center being built in Las Vegas. In addition to construction jobs there will be numerous health care positions created. Bringing the
VVA Convention to Reno has helped with jobs locally. This administration is boosting the number of veteran owned small businesses because veterans hire veterans and this is job creation. He stated the Post 9/11 GI Bill was implemented on the fly and with the help of veteran service organizations such as VVA. It’s the most comprehensive program since the WWII GI Bill. Unemployment for OIF and OEF veterans is 13%. Recently there was a small business conference in New Orleans partnering with a VA program to promote hiring veterans, especially disabled veterans.

There is a backlog of VA claims and many veterans have informed Mr. Shinseki they thought the VA was waiting for them to die. Respect is another issue that was brought up and it will be addressed in addition to poor services for women. Veterans deserve respect from VA employees. The 2011 VA budget is $126.6 billion dollars and in 2012 it will be $132.2 billion. Veterans are a high priority of the current administration and an outreach program to promote and advertise the VA is being implemented. The VA is leading against homelessness and prevention among veterans outreach programs to states and not-for-profit agencies.

The Veterans Outreach Center in Rochester was one of 85 recipients benefitting from this program. Veterans Courts have been started in 80 cities throughout the country to provide assistance to those who have served our country and have broken the law. Chapter 20 was instrumental in bringing this to Rochester, partnering with the VOC, the VA Vet Center and the VA Rochester Outpatient Clinic. Moving claims to be adjudicated within 125 days of submission is another very high priority.

All VA employees will be required to follow Five Core Values to improve their attitude when serving veterans. It’s known as I CARE or Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect and Excellence. Integrity – Adhere to High Standards, Commitment – Work To Highest Ability, Advocacy – Work On Behalf of Veterans, Respect – Treat All Veterans With Respect To Gain It, Excellence – Strive To Provide The Best Service To Veterans. With two ongoing military campaigns the VA must continue to get the best bang for the buck. When personnel return from serving their country we shall work to provide services that were not there or denied to Vietnam veterans. Mr. Shinseki received a standing ovation.

Bill Duker, member of POW/MIA Committee, spoke to the delegates about the Veteran’s Initiative that was started in 1991 after the Vietnamese asked what could be done to help with the 300,000 of their missing from the war. The Veterans Initiative brought back to Vietnam 21,000 artifacts received from VVA members and it resulted in 20,000 of their missing being recovered. He introduced Johnie Webb, retired Lt. Colonel and Vietnam veteran, who was responsible for moving the lab for identifying remains to Hawaii in 1976. His team first went to Vietnam in 1985 to recover a B-52 site. The JPAC mission is to search and recover remains from WWII to present. During the past 2 years a majority of the missions have been to Vietnam. Currently about 90 remains are identified worldwide per year with a congressionally mandated goal of 200 by 2015.

The average length of time for remains to be identified is 24 months. There are now about 50 recovery teams that will be increased to 100 by 2015 with a staff of 410. This will be increased by 208 civilians (scientists, historians) and 45 military personnel. A satellite lab will be built on the mainland United States. It may be at either AP Hill near Richmond, Virginia or Offett Air Force Base in Omaha, Nebraska. With the potential DoD budget cuts building this second lab is uncertain. Due to a helicopter crash in Laos in 2009 there was a loss of host nation support transportation since these aircraft cannot be inspected by the USAF. Most of remaining areas to search in Vietnam are in the central highlands.

Mandated numbers are opposed by JPAC due to the difficulties in recovering remains from a single jet pilot in Vietnam versus a B-24 crew in New Guinea. Certain areas in Vietnam are still off limits to Americans even though cooperation has increased in recent years and is considered to be very good. After 40 to 50 years it has been difficult to locate eye witnesses for information about pilots who were known to be alive on the ground after their aircraft was shot down. These eye witness accounts are extremely important. Laos has limited the number of JPAC personnel in country. Generally they are cooperative. Cambodia’s cooperation is excellent. The JPAC motto is “Until They Are Home.”

Counsel General of Vietnam addressed the delegates about the 16 years of diplomatic relations with his country and how it has increased due to relations in trade and security in Southeast Asia. Access to previously restricted areas has been relaxed and now US Navy vessels are being used to search the waters off the coast of Vietnam. Veterans from both sides have been instrumental in easing of relations. Wounded Vietnamese veterans have been assisting with the recovery of the remains of US military personnel. This effort must be accelerated due to an aging veteran population to provide locations of burial sites. Most of these disabled veterans are very sick and may not live too many more years.

VVA was instrumental in making initial contact with Vietnam regarding POW/MIA issues and providing assistance with helping identify the location of Vietnamese remains. This humanitarian gesture has allowed increased cooperation and there is an urgent need for US veterans to return artifacts and provide eye witness locations of Vietnamese remains. VVA has also assisted with vital information on dioxin and Agent Orange. This must be done in an expedient manner to finally have closure on both sides.

He stressed the United States has provided $12 million in aid for this effort, but should stop demanding the Vietnamese improve their human rights violations.

Tony Cordero, Sons and Daughters in Touch, spoke about assistance provided by VVA when their organization started over 20 years ago. They had a 20th Anniversary Celebration at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on Father’s Day in 2010. There wasn’t much media attention and one of their goals is to help children of OIF and OEF military personnel who made the ultimate sacrifice through their shared experiences and loss. Most of the children of Vietnam veterans are now older than their fathers were when they never returned to their families.

I attended the Veterans Benefits Committee hearing chaired by former Long Island resident Jerry Klein, and he also mentioned about Vet Pro software that will make it easier for Service Officers to file VA claims. There were four Resolutions and one Amendment discussed. The first resolution regarded Judicial Review or VB-1 to change applicable law when veterans terminate their legal counsel to remove their fee agreement. It was reported out of committee for the delegates to vote on this resolution. The remaining three were not reported out by committee, but those in the hearing voted to bring these to the convention floor. College credit for military schools was voted to refer back to the committee. Remove an annual 5% deductible and unreimbursed medical expense from a VA pension. Federal law has changed to allow banks not to provide a 1099 form for interest payments less than $10. Last was Change Eligibility Verification Report for Veterans on a VA Pension from March 1st to March 31st. This was approved by the delegates when voting on this resolution.

Next hearing Public Affairs chaired by Keith King had 4 Resolutions being continued regarding promoting a positive image of Vietnam veterans, Teaching Children on Vietnam War, Regulation of Activities at the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C. and a requirement to report on progress of convention resolutions at least annually. There was a proposed resolution not adopted by the Finance Committee about Veterans Benefits not being claimed by Vietnam and all veterans. It’s an opportunity to educate all veterans and those present voted to bring it back to the floor for consideration. It wasn’t adopted by the Finance Committee due to the $250,000 cost. This was defeated on the floor by the convention delegates.
My last hearing was Constitution Committee chaired by Leslie DeLong and there were 5 items to address. The first wasn’t reported out involved changing the Constitution Committee to a Convention Committee. It was noted if this happened this committee wouldn’t be able to advise the VVA BOD during the time between conventions. This was agreed to by everyone present. A proposal to change ETaBO to Economic Opportunities is mainly to shorten the title since the committee work will remain the same. It was voted to bring this to the floor for consideration. The third generated a considerable amount of discussion. Changing the word should to shall demands a chapter have an AVVA liaison on their BOD. This was sent to the floor where it was defeated by the delegates. The fourth was adding e-mail or electronic means as a method of communication for special meeting notification for the National BOD. This brought back to the floor and passed by the delegates. The fifth also generated a protracted diatribe on this issue and was projected as a cost savings. This involved reducing the number of At Large Directors from 10 to 4 and each would come from a quadrant of the country as identified by the VVA Constitution. It’s amazing how old habits die hard because the VVA New York bias came through loud and clear from delegates living in other parts of the country who made reference they didn’t want to be represented by New York if no one ran from their area of the country. NYSC Vice President Grant Coates addressed this bias issue and said this was an unfair assessment of the State and Region 2. This Amendment was defeated by the delegates on the convention floor.

Despite the New York bias the state did quite well with awards and elections. Chapter 11 won Chapter of the Year, Between the Lines, Chapter 20, was again (8X) Newsletter of the Year for Chapters with over 200 members, NYSC VVA received E-Newsletter of the Year and Website of the Year. NYSC President Ned Foot received the VVA Achievement Medal, Pat Toro was elected VVA Vice President, At Large Director, John Rowan, VVA President for a 4th time, and Fred Elliott was elected VVA Vice President. In my opinion this shows where the leadership of the organization lies and it’s in the state everyone else loves to castigate. I’d like to personally congratulate Ned for his well deserved award received on behalf of all the VVA delegates, Francisco Muniz for the Interchange, Dana Halffors for NYSC website, Kathy Gleason for BTL, John for his continued leadership and especially Fred for his great representation of Chapter 20 as the Resolutions Committee Chairman and for becoming the Vice President of Vietnam Veterans of America.

Hank Wallace
Reno Nevada, you can get there but do you want to?

The city depends on tourists who want to gamble and is in a beautiful area. We went there for the VVA Convention, and a few of us to gamble. The convention was well run and interesting, but you had to go through the gambling floor to get almost anywhere. As a non-gambler (well $3 worth), that did not have much appeal to me.

The convention sessions were interesting, but high on entertainment and low on getting things done. We could have been done it in two days. We attended the general sessions, supporting sessions on health and Agent Orange, Regional and State sessions on candidates, and the final banquet. Basically, we supported veterans’ health care, continuing life for VVA and election of officers.

We were delighted that Fred was elected Vice President. I am sure he will be a valuable addition to our national organization. We had some free time Friday afternoon and four of us took in beautiful Lake Tahoe, a spectacular 4-hour trip. I was driving, so was told repeatedly not to look but keep my eyes on the road. The road was, at many places a drop off on one side and in one place on both sides, with no guard rails. The trip home took us about 30 hours. There are many places closer to home to gamble without the long trip.

Ron Trovato
Although not a gambler, traveling with Kenny is gambling enough. Reno and the casino we stayed in was a nice time for me. Catching up with old friends and just being with Vietnam Veterans was good enough and everything else was a bonus, especially Fred Elliott’s election as National Vice-President. He presented well at the caucuses and fielded all the mundane and questionable questions sent his way up on the dais and didn’t even look up when the election results were announced. Most of the speakers access process, remaining financially accountable, and lobbying for increased per diem payments. The number of female homeless veterans is increasing and they’re experiencing more severe mental health problems. The Department of Veterans Affairs is currently developing rules for administering special programs directed at female homeless veterans. For all homeless veterans the filing of claims for disability is on the rise.

Government Affairs Committee Hearings
Delegates were told that Congress is not talking about jobs right now, but rather is talking about cuts. Congress is also discussing increased fees for level 7 and 8 veterans to access health care. Democrats and Republicans are actually working together on veterans’ issues but no major legislation is pending. On the plus side, there seems to be sympathy in Congress for the Iraqi and Afghanistan veterans.

Louis J. Cavicchioni
Let me first thank the membership of Chapter 20 for giving me the opportunity to attend the VVA National
Convention that was held in Reno, Nevada, August 17 – 20, 2011. This was my first National Convention that I had the opportunity to attend and it was a very informative event for me.

As for the Convention, I had the opportunity during the opening session of the Convention to listen to speeches given by leaders of the various committees of the VVA. During the first day of the Convention, Committee reports from the Credential Committee, Rules Committee, Agent Orange/Dioxin Committee, POW/MIA, Government Affairs, Minority Affairs, Election Committee, the Convention Resolution, PTSD/ Veterans Benefits and Veterans Incarcerated Committee along with a number of other reports by various committees were presented. All of the reports were well presented and all were very informative, and brought us up to date regarding the status of those committees.

On the following day, during General Session, four guest speakers took to the podium, but the speech I was waiting to hear was from the Honorable Eric K. Shinseki, who is the head of the Veterans Administration. I had a good knowledge of the General through a mutual friend and was anxious to hear him speak. He did not disappoint me in confirming his commitment to all veterans in need of help through the Veterans Administration, regardless of the pressures from Congress. General Shinseki is a highly-decorated Vietnam Veteran and as such, is committed to all veterans regardless of when and where you served during your time in the military. In addition, General Shinseki, without the commitment of the Department of Veteran Affairs and the numerous Vietnam Veterans who have given their time to the National Chapter and local Chapters to improve the well being of all veterans, veterans and their families would not have achieved, nor have received the care and benefits that they clearly are entitled to and are fortunate enough to receive.

All of the speeches were very inspirational, informative and motivational and raised my awareness of the value of the work accomplished by not only the National Chapter of Vietnam Veterans, but also individual Chapters and their members. The speeches also brought to all of the attendee’s attention the work that will be needed to obtain continued funding and/or passage of bills in Congress with new members of Congress and older members who are hell-bent on back-door cutting veteran’s benefits. Everyone needs to be aware of what some newly elected members of Congress have in mind for all Veterans.

For me, the most moving part of the Convention was the Saturday Night Banquet, and the speeches by the guest who were receiving achievement awards for their work with Vietnam Veterans during the active period of the Vietnam War. These were entertainers that traveled throughout Vietnam entertaining the troops, and at time placing themselves at great harm to do so. All gave great acceptance speeches and one actually performed a wonderful musical number for all of us (Gloria Loring), but the most moving speech, and which brought me, and some others, to tears, was by Mickey Jones who was the drummer for Johnny Rivers. He accepted the award for Johnny Rivers, but his speech for receiving his President’s Award for Excellence was from the heart and was quite emotional. He spoke of what veterans meant to him, his time in Vietnam, and the loss of those who did not make it home, and how it changed his life. He clearly was moved by his time in Vietnam. His acceptance speech was the best I have heard at any convention, anywhere, and at any time.

What impressed me the most, aside from the speakers from various committees, was the manner in which Fred Elliott addressed the resolutions presented to the Resolution Committee. His knowledge of the resolutions was incredible. The patience shown by Fred to those who were, for the lack of a better word, uncooperative, speaks volumes for the man that we helped elect to the position of Vice-President. I couldn’t be more pleased that Fred was elected Vice-President. I, along with many others, am confident that Fred will be an important asset to the veterans who are members of the VVA.

Overall, the National Convention was well organized, had great speakers, workshops and informative sessions, but the greatest achievement for me was to help get Fred Elliott elected as National Vice-President. He was by far the best candidate of any that ran for any position. His work on the Resolutions Committee will be missed, but his position on the Board of Directors is one of major importance to the membership. I am confident that he will do well and the VVA will be a much better organization with him on board. Again, my sincere thanks to Chapter 20 for the opportunity to impact change regarding the National VVA going forward to continue to represent and serve its members with the best service possible. Thank You.

Jerry McDermott  
Director, Health Affairs Chairman

The 15th bi-annual VVA National Convention of 2011 held in Reno, NV is now in the books. This was a huge, I mean huge success Rochester, for the home team of Chapter # 20, and the NY State Council delegation as a whole. Our very own Fred Elliott, truly one
of the best “veterans’ advocates,” was elected to the position of Vice President VVA National office. Congratulations, Fred! Our very own “Between the Lines” monthly newsletter won national recognition for the 8th consecutive time for best large chapter newsletter. Congratulations to Kathy Gleason for all her tireless efforts in editing and reporting on all our Chapter #20 people, places and events that give us all so much information and reading pleasure. NYS Council President Ned Foote was presented with the VVA’s Achievement award, New York’s John Rowan was elected National President, his 4th election to this office, NYS Chapter 11, Suffolk County was presented 2011 Chapter of the Year award. NYS also gained national recognition for its very own electronic newsletter and web-site 2011 year awards. Congratulations to Pat Toro of New York City who was elected for the 1st time as a national At Large Director.

So as I report to you, I’m struck by the fact that the 2011 Convention was a contrast of events - events that held great emotions and some irritating frustrations. To paraphrase Charles Dickens, “It was best of times and the worst of times.” Or for me, how I spent my August vacation in Nevada. Yep, seven days put into a 5-1/2 day trip out west. More on that later.

The Convention 2011’s business was held to elect National officers, at-large directors, to include regional directors, and to review and vote on resolutions put forth by committees and individuals. We collectively come together at our bi-annual event to listen, learn and lead going forward as one of the nation’s premier veteran service organizations. We do this time and more! Of course, the work of meeting, listening, and questioning prospective candidates for the elective office is demanding and at times stressful for all. But it is necessary work that has to be done.

Work is also required by the various national committees assigned to review, add to, or recall resolutions that our national VVA leaders will present in the halls of Congress and at the Department of Veterans Affairs. Committees such as Health, Membership, Veterans Benefits, Incarcerated Veterans, POW/MIA, Women Veterans, Government Affairs, Minority Affairs, and Employment, Training and Business Opportunities to name a few had business to be addressed by the delegates. A great deal of time is needed to learn about the issues and make comments and finally vote on the recommendations up or down. These are the issues that will then be carried forward by our national based team of dedicated veteran advocates in our nation’s Capitol. I will report on some Health Committee updates and new information obtained after I get back some additional requested information in future B-T-L issues.

As delegates, we were treated to an esteemed group of speakers and presenters throughout the Reno convention. Our keynote speaker Dr. Richard Pimental, who also spoke at the 2010 Leadership Conference in Orlando, FL, and urged all to get involved and help all veterans no matter what era, extend a hand and reach out to assist and inform others. Vietnam Metal of Honor winner, Paul Bucha also urged us to get involved and reach out. Mr. Bucha also introduced Kenneth Fisher. Mr. Fisher is the founder of “Fisher House” a nationally recognized program that builds homes away from home for our nation’s wounded warriors and their families while attending rehabilitation programs. Mr. Fisher not only was generous with his remarks about aiding veterans and their families through his foundation, but also made a substantial donation to the VVA National Service Officer’s program. Johnnie E. Webb, Deputy Public Relations Commander for Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command gave the delegation a back-ground and current situation report concerning this very touching and emotional issue for all veterans and families of the missing in action. The Consul General of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam came from his office in San Francisco, CA to further give encouragement and added support for the efforts being jointly conducted to recover our service members missing in action.

Finally, the delegates were addressed by Secretary of Veterans Affairs, General Eric K. Shinseki, a Vietnam Veteran from the 25th Inf. Div., who detailed and reviewed the VA’s ongoing commitment to veterans health programs, to the increased efforts to process claims and to make effective use of the increased funds provided by Congress to all the veterans and families who have served our nation. The Secretary detailed plans for elimination of the “veteran homeless population” by 2015, an ambitious but very needed effort to help those in need of safe and secure shelter. In closing his remarks, General Shinseki, pledged that the old ways of doing things at the VA system wide are changing, there is a new attitude and commitment to core values and a moral obligation to serve all veterans by the VA with these newly stated values. They can be summed up by the acronym of “I CARE,” which stands for INTEGRITY, COMMITMENT, ADVOCACY, RESPECT, EXCELLENCE, in all dealings by VA staff and employees to all veterans that they come in contact with on a daily basis. Secretary Shinseki, was very passionate about this and spoke for the need to get the word out that the NEW VA, is not like the old VA, a continued effort for improvement is expected by to be the way of life at the VA going forward. I’m sure we will be watching and seeing if these words do really make a difference for veterans utilizing VA programs.

So, in spite of lost baggage, stolen purses and pocket books, stolen prescriptions, changed airline schedules without notification, missed flight connections, parking tickets, towing charges, smoky bars and gambling parlors, bad food in airport terminals, red eye flights to get home, extended delays and extra time on the road, I’d say the convention in Reno was GREAT. No really, when you compare it to other things in life, like an all-expense paid trip to South Vietnam, why should I complain? But along with my fellow Chapter #20 delegates and their spouses our mission to see one of our very own elected to National office was achieved. I would gladly do it again eh, but not so soon eh!

I did enjoy my honor and the privilege to attend the 15th VVA National Convention. I learned a great deal more about issues that I’ll report on soon. I had the chance to reconnect with delegates from across the country that I met in Louisville, KY in 2009, and made new friends and connected with some really great people and veterans who like you and I want the very best for our great nation. Who knew that I would meet Gary McDermott, and his wife Cindy, from Clinton, IA in Reno. No, we are not blood relations, at least not that we could determine right away, but Gary’s my brother nonetheless, and if there is a family tree branch, we will find it.

All attending the convention served our country before and we are willing to do so again. Again the pledge was taken up, we looked out for each other then and we will do it now too! Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this effort.

Dan Corona

Getting to Reno was a challenge as there were unexpected changes to some flights. The convention itself went very well. Several of us missed the Welcome Home party because we got in so late Tuesday.
Got up early on Wednesday to go to the Credentials office at 7 a.m. (I thought they were opening early) so that I could get registered and have some breakfast. They were going to open at 8. Opening session at 9 a.m. was good and Keynote speaker Richard Pimental told some fantastic stories, some parts funny and some parts sad.

After the opening address and some announcements it was time for a lunch break and then from 1 to 5:30 p.m. it was time for committee hearings on resolutions. I chose to go to Veterans Benefits, Public Affairs, and Government Affairs.

Veterans Benefits Committee discussed a software program, “VetPro,” to aid veteran service agents. Seems to be a good program. Resolutions to be brought to the convention floor included “Judicial Review,” it was amended from its original form and approved. This changed the wording of a sentence. Another resolution dealt with the post 9/11 GI bill in regards to giving college credit for military classes.

In Public Affairs, discussion was mostly on a publicity campaign at $50,000 per year for 5 years. The campaign was to be aimed at getting the info about benefits available to veterans. (As we all know, this is a topic that a lot of veterans never get the info.) The flaw in this resolution was that the money was going to one person and he was the proposer of the item. He said in committee that if it was defeated that he would still do what he could to get the word out about benefits (which is something that most chapters do anyway). The resolution was defeated on the convention floor.

In Government Affairs, the discussion was about pushing for legislation in both houses in regards to exposures to Agent Orange and other toxic chemicals. This is and has been an ongoing process.

The other big thing to accomplish at the convention is the election of new officers and board members. As many of you know, our own Fred Elliott was elected to Vice-President (the best thing to happen at the convention), and for the most part I was OK with the election results.

The VVA awards banquet was done very well, a pleasure for end of the convention. To conclude, I will only say that the flights home were a nightmare. There is not enough room in this newsletter to print all that happened.

**Rich Isaman**

This was the 6th VVA National convention that I have attended over the last 28 years. I attended the first four conventions then took a long rest before attending the Reno convention in 2005 and then Reno again this year.

In the opening ceremony, John Rowan asked those who had attended all of the conventions to stand, of which there were several. I then was able to join a small group who were asked to stand having been a delegate to the founding convention. I recalled how Rob MacLauchlan, Paul Gianonne, Jim Kurtz and I wondered if the thing would ever end. Sixteen to eighteen hour days with “Points of Clarifications,” “Calling the Question,” and standing division of the house with each side counting off by numbers to determine if the Yeas or Nays had it on every paragraph in the VVA Constitution. Roberts Rules were challenged to the maximum!!

John Rowan mentioned that the next convention in Jacksonville will be the 30th anniversary of the founding convention and maybe they’ll try to do something special. Hopefully they can find some of the “I survived the VVA Founding Convention” T-shirts or the banner that Rob MacLauchlan insisted we sign our name to because it might mean something someday.

The earlier conventions laid the foundation that the organization has lived with for several decades and that foundation came through much disagreement and compromise. With that foundation in place this convention, though important business was conducted, was completed on schedule without major controversy. During the early years of VVA, Chapter 20 was well represented at National and we now have a member of the chapter Fred Elliott as National Vice President.

We were able to hear of many worthwhile projects and relationships that VVA is currently working on. The one issue that was continually hammered home is a recent attempt in Congress that all future ailments added to the VA regulations for compensation pass a “cause” test rather than a “presumptive” test. Currently there are many diseases and ailments that have been added to the VA compensation list as presumptive because of our service and exposure to Agent Orange that we, as veterans, have a higher rate of these diseases than the non-veteran population. If Congress were to pass this change, it would then be almost impossible to have new conditions added to the VA list. The explanation that best explained it to me was the lung cancer and smoking connection. It is well accepted that smoking can lead to lung cancer, but many smokers never contract lung cancer and many non-smokers do. So even though smoking puts you at risk it does not mean that it was the cause. We as veterans need to work hard to stop any attempt to add such language to the VA.

VVA is a small veteran’s organization when you count total membership, but I think every member should be proud of the amount of work we are doing to support our members and veterans of other eras. I was in Washington when the motto of “Never again will one generation of veterans forget another” and VVA is living that motto!!!

**Joe Peck**

Well the Vietnam Veterans of America 15th National Convention has come and gone, but it has left us with many new resolutions, new leadership positions being filled and old friendships and memories being renewed. Our own Fred Elliott from Chapter 20 was voted in as the new Vice-President of the National VVA, beating out his incumbent, Barry Hagge. Congratulations Fred! You have worked hard for all veterans and deserve this position with VVA. The BTL again was voted as the best newsletter of the year by VVA and the award is now jokingly referred to as the Chapter 20 Newsletter Award. Congratulations to Kathy Gleason for a job well done.

This convention trip of course had it’s drawbacks which included long drawn out air flights (someone said it took less hassle and time to fly to Vietnam than it did to fly to Reno), delays at airports due to bad weather, bird collisions, mechanical breakdowns, diverted flights (I think we actually flew into Bangkok at one point!), cancelled flights and of course, invalid travel tickets. There were also issues with missing property from luggage and the theft of purses at the convention hall, and let’s not forget the day our rental cars were towed from a fire zone only...
During the convention, we attended a session where Vietnam Veterans voted on new resolutions for the betterment of all veterans. It was a very interesting session and I believe that most of the older resolutions being retired, some being defeated, as well as some new ones being voted on, with many being adopted and read, discussed with pros and cons. The business of the convention included new resolutions concerning Agent Orange and other veterans health issues and incarcerated veterans.

Over the next two days, amendments were reviewed and approved by all delegates. The new convention rules were presented and new resolutions concerning Agent Orange and other veterans health issues were read, discussed with pros and cons and voted on, with many being adopted and some being defeated, as well as some of the older resolutions being retired. It was a very interesting session and I believe that all that was discussed and voted on was for the betterment of all Vietnam Veterans.

During the convention, we attended caucuses for the candidates running for the office of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer as well as representatives for the at-large positions. The voting took place on Friday with a runoff vote on Saturday and the results were:

- President: John Rowan
- Vice President: Fred Elliot
- Secretary: Bill Meeks
- Treasurer: Wayne Reynolds

One other mention I would like to make is that Ned Foote was awarded the VVA National Achievement medal for his work on behalf of all Vietnam Veterans. Congratulations to them all!

With the start of the official business, new convention rules were reviewed and approved by all delegates. Over the next two days, amendments and new resolutions concerning Agent Orange and other veterans health issues, incarcerated veterans, women veterans and homeless veterans were read, discussed with pros and cons and voted on, with many being adopted and some being defeated, as well as some of the older resolutions being retired. It was a very interesting session and I believe that all that was discussed and voted on was for the betterment of all Vietnam Veterans.

The Honorable Nguyen Ba Hung who is the Consulate General of Vietnam, also addressed the delegation. He spoke in great depth about the improvements of the VA system and especially the time it takes for claims and burial sites to contact their offices or US agencies so they can get the coordinates and maps needed in the possible recovery of those still missing.

With most of the convention business starting to wind down, many of us had the opportunity to enjoy some of what Reno had to offer. We did spend a little time in the casinos and we made damn sure that we donated a lot of our money to the education system and its children in Reno, Nevada via the slot machines. We enjoyed the company of everyone who went with us to the many restaurants and bars that were available. We really enjoyed ourselves and our company.

Johnny Rivers himself could not attend the event that evening so he sent a video containing a song he wrote for all the Vietnam Veterans there that night. Videos of the USO and Bob Hope shows in Vietnam, Germany and Alaska were viewed throughout the evening and were very touching. I am sure they brought back many memories to those who were there.

Sunday was our final leg of the journey and we could hardly wait to get home. As each convention begins and ends, our numbers get smaller and smaller and we all get a little older and a little slower but our pride as Vietnam Veterans and our friendships and camaraderie will always stay strong for we are all brothers.

**Juil Robinson, Jr.**

This trip to Reno, Nevada, went very well given its interest and travel for us Vietnam Veterans. I was able to learn that beyond our local Chapter of this organization, that there are many chapters at the National level, all working together. This encouraged me to pick up my efforts further, knowing it is not falling on deaf ears. I attended the committees on Homeless Veterans and Minority Affairs.

**Homeless Veterans** - It’s very encouraging that there may be someone from National that can assist us in possibly recruiting more veterans. From the information that we give about these steps, we hope to present to the veteran the beds that are available in several organizations. There are numerous programs they can use my learning experience.

I was enlightened by attending the convention in Reno. Regarding the process on resolutions prepared and passed, the Minority Affairs committee needed a real shot in the arm. There is a great deal of responsibility to try and get this much needed information to the respective clients. This also ties in with the Ethnic groups of minorities by some of the sessions I attended at the convention. Some people did not want to be identified by their racial ethnicity but just as American, which is the way I see it as well. In this case, I believe that pride plays a great role as to how people want to be received.

The Indians and women Vietnam veterans are still not fully accepted for their contribution to the defense of the USA. I am inclined to believe the women had a double role -- the trauma of being there and the trauma of treating the soldiers. This placed an added duty and much additional stress on the female soldiers without their being much assistance offered. When it became available, a great deal of damage had been done.

We may not be able to answer all of the female and other minority people’s questions, but there are sources of contact with the answer to most of their questions. Finding the information and getting it to the people is one of the few steps in solving this crisis among veterans. There is a lot of work to be done.
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Tuesday... Left Rochester 2pm, Cleveland 9am, then San Francisco to Reno. Huh left Cleveland 9am? Boarding Pass don’t look right. Dan Corona caught that one and the fix took us into Phoenix, then Reno at near midnight. US and POW/MIA flags all through the Reno airport! No suitcase for Jerry McDermott tonight though, so we take up an underwear collection for him.

Wednesday... We can see the mountains from our window at Silver Legacy, slots are everywhere and bars are 24/7, there’s a 4-story silver mine inside the hotel! Huge turnout at the Convention Hall even guys from Alaska, Hawaii, Guam... Ida Gatto’s purse gone/stolen! Looking everywhere ladies’ room mens’ room lobby backstage storage room hey it’s under this table!! Are the passports still here yes I think so Thank You God!

Thursday... First day of voting for officers, vote for Fred Elliott for VP! Ralph Pascale has “food eyes” and keeps talking about the burger that comes between two grilled cheese sandwiches.

Friday... BTL Newsletter wins again for best chapter newsletter OMG! Then finally we have a free afternoon to head out to the countryside, ten of us in 2 rented cars, the real Nevada, even saw wild horses among the gorgeous rock formations and canyons. Virginia City quaint old western town, preserved old brick buildings and wooden boardwalks now filled with jewelry shops, restaurants, casinos, casinos and casinos. Army surplus store had a very nice selection of pink camo undies (but what size is Kenny?). Lunch on outdoor deck with a 200 mile view up here. Where is the car where is the car I think the cars are towed?! No parking during Snow Emergency. But we did get to (have to) see Carson City to retrieve the car and contribute $450 to the local economy.

Saturday... Fred won VP! Hallelujah he so deserves it!

Sunday... I am ready to go home and sleep in my own bed with my own kitty cats, I have had enough city noise and people and lights. Jumped an early hotel shuttle to the airport in Reno, caught breakfast there with time to kill. As we near San Francisco, our connecting flight leaves the gate and takes off?! Yes we know you are a group of 12 people yes we know your connection was tight lets see if we can get you on the next flight. well no I guess not since there is only one seat available there. Lou Cavicchioli took that seat and also took on escort duty with all of our luggage going back to Rochester with him that night. Well there’s always the next next flight 12 hours from now no problem. We were all very sad. Even Jerry McDermott’s peeps could not save us as they cruised by in their shiny air Canada jet. We commandeered some prime real estate in the terminal (squatter’s rights). Ron Trovato graciously offered to write out the rent check. Kenny had no problem napping for hours stretched out in the presidential suite. But jackets! we did get jackets! After hanging around the San Francisco airport for around a week, the red-eye took us into Newark. We were so comfy we slept the entire trip LOL! Finally landed in beautiful wonderful Rochester. We really really made it!
I’m in an awful way leaving for the convention, laboring under the agony of a swollen, infected eye. I am greeted with a “Hey Cyclops” by Kenny Moore as he points out my hideous deformity to everyone in the Monroe County Airport. Most of my compatriots ignore his violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act with the exception of Lou Cavicchioli, who uses his XL convention shirt to erect a tent around me on the flight out.

I sit next to an old lady who recoils in horror at the stalactite growing out of my festering eye while burrowing herself as far as she can into the side of the plane. I think she may be Carol Channing and I ask for her autograph, fondly remembering the album she did with Alvin and the Chipmunks. She cringes some more so I give up and doze off. Several weeks later an anonymous article appears in the National Enquirer entitled “I slept with Carol Channing.”

Thoroughly exhausted physically and humbled by my grotesque appearance, we arrive at the hotel in Reno. I stumble up to the room with Kenny wondering how my life could sink any lower. Then I watch in mute horror as Kenny unpacks his suitcase which is stuffed with fruit, bran muffins, industrial laxatives, a plunger, Lysol and a wet vac. Nothing good can come from this and my hopes that he will hold back the volcano raging inside him are dashed. I look up the FEMA hotline number.

Jerry McDermott’s luggage is lost somewhere between Rochester and Wake Island. I offer him a pair of my underwear.

“Ron, this is just the elastic band,” he says.

“I pretty much wear them till they vaporize,” I proudly reply.

“Thanks anyway brother,” Jerry says with the feeling and emotion only one Vietnam veteran can have for another as he hands them back using tongs.

The proposed 2011 Convention Rules include a Decorum Section which was largely due to several unfortunate incidents attributed to Nick Deleo, in particular the sordid affair on Farmers Drink Free night at the Kansas City Convention. I ask Valentino Gatto to put the arm on Nick to avoid a repetition of those unpleasant events. Nobody sees Nick again and Valentino asks me to drop a shovel into Lake Tahoe.

Kenny takes Fred Elliott around to the Regional Caucuses seeking votes. Fred starts off speaking like Al Gore on Seconal. Kenny slips Fred an energy drink laced with everclear and Fred roars to the finish line like Jim Morrison on crystal meth. Fred lurches into the Region 5 caucus screaming, “Gimme an F! Gimme a U! What’s that spell??!!!! What’s that spell????!!?” Blue shirt VVA security are called and Fred tears through them like a breakfast burrito through Joe Peck. I am reminded of the carnage at the end of “Platoon”. Fred barely loses Region 5 by a margin of 98-17.

On Friday I take a six hour trip to Lake Tahoe with Jui Robinson, Jerry McDermott and Hank Wallace, the first two hours of which are spent directing Hank out of the ramp garage. Hank drives 20 mph the entire trip, changing scenic hairpin switchback turns into Disney World parking lots. Traffic is backed up to Denver and drivers behind us experience terminal road rage.

“Hey Hank, that guy just gave us the finger,” I diplomatically point out.

“No, I think he means I’m number one with him,” Hank replies unfazed. Jui’s screams in the back seat have nothing to do with Vietnam and Jerry lights up a funny cigarette he scored off a hiker who passed us. Only when we are stopped by the Pacific Ocean several days later do we look at a map.

The final indignity begins with the flight out of Reno which is really little more than a station wagon with wings. During this turbulent flight I overhear one stewardess ask another if she has much experience counseling next of kin. Not sure if we landed in San Francisco or were shot down, I pick my way through the wreckage only to find out we have a 14-hour delay for our next connection. I wait with Kathy Gleason and the rest of our demoralized crew, establishing residency while Dan Corona applies for homeless veterans benefits. As I board the red eye flight I get a text informing me my kids are using my power of attorney. I wanna go home!!
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION  
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POW/MIA ......................................... Joe Peck • jpeck2@rochester.rr.com • 734-9046 (c)
Social Events ........................................... Speakers Bureau • 423-0206
Vet Center ................................. Joe Peck • jpeck2@rochester.rr.com • 734-9046 (c)

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 #475 ........................................... 663-7030
VA Clinic - 465 Westfall Road ............... 463-2600
Veterans Outreach Center ................. 546-1081
Vet Center ........................................... 232-5040
Veterans Administration ................... 800-827-1000
Monroe County Veterans Service Agency ... 753-6040
e-mail: serviceofficer@yahoo.com
Veterans Benefits Hotline .................. 800-827-1000
Veterans Bill of Rights ...................... 800-342-3358
VA Medical Center in Batavia ............. 585-297-1000
VA Hospital in Buffalo .................... 716-834-9200
VA Medical Center in Canandaigua ....... 394-2000
VA Medical Center in Bath ................ 607-664-4000
V.V. of America in Washington .......... 800-VVA-1316
V.V. Memorial Fund “The Wall” ........... 202-393-0090
Nat’l Lge. of Fam. MIA/POW Updates ........................................... 202-223-6848
Richards House ............................... 506-9060
The Resource Center ....................... 546-4250
Stars & Stripes ............................... 546-3524
Persian Gulf Vets, Inc. ................. 385-4097
Operation Welcome Home ................. 234-4694
National Caregivers Support Line ... 1-855-260-3274
Homeless Hotline ....................... 877-424-3838
Suicide Hotline ......................... 800-273-8255

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.rochestervietnammemorial.org/The_Memorial.html
Operation Welcome Home: www.operationwelcomehome.com
VVA New York State Council: www.nyvietnamvets.org
Honour Flight: www.honorflightrochester.org

MISCELLANEOUS

VVA 20 Thrift Store, LLC Mgmt., Beth Affeldt................................. 482-8036
Donation Pick-up ................................ 482-8016
VVA Vehicle Donations ..................... 224-8484
VVA Chapter 20 ........................ info@vva20.org • 482-7396
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/year

Provides professional counseling to veterans, their family members or friends.

Vietnam Veterans of America
Chapter 20, Rochester, NY
P.O. Box 12580
Rochester, NY 14612

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J Max Lill
288-2070
www.industrialfurnace.com

OCTOBER 2011

3 MON • Board of Directors, 7:00 pm
7–8 • Yom Kippur
9 SUN • Invasion of North Korea, 1950
10 MON • Columbus Day
13 THU • General Membership Meeting - 6:30 pm
   PLEASE NOTE NEW START TIME!
   • Navy Day, U.S. Navy established, 1775
21 FRI • National Mammography Day
31 MON • Halloween

NYSC Meetings
Owego, NY
Next Meeting TBA

Special Events
2011 National Veterans Job Expo
   Wed, Nov. 2, 2011 - 10am-3pm - Rochester
   Riverside Convention Center

MEETINGS

BOD
2011: October 3, November 7, December 5
2012: January 9, February 6, March 5, April 2

Membership
Now starting at 6:30 pm!
2011: October 13, November 10, December 8
2012: January 12, February 9, March 8, April 12