2020
Issue 91
DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC WE CONTINUE TO CEASE ALL GATHERINGS. TO THIS END I AM SORRY TO SAY THAT OUR AUGUST 4TH BOARD AND AUGUST 13TH MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS ARE CANCELLED.

ADDITIONALLY, THE ANNUAL ELECTION WILL BE POSTPONED AND THE MEMORIAL SITE CLEAN UP DAY IS ON HOLD UNTIL WE ARE GIVEN THE “ALL CLEAR’ FROM THE GOVERNMENT.

THANK YOU.
VAL GATTO
CHAPTER 20 PRESIDENT
If 2020 is telling us anything, it's telling us, enjoy the moment you have, and don't take any day, anything or anyone for granted.

Be the kind of person who is not afraid to ask someone if they are okay twice if they say they are, but look like they are not. Be the kind of person who smiles at people even if they don't smile back.

Be the kind of person you wish for when no one was there for you. Be kind of is brave enoughto stand alone in a crowd for what is right. Be the person because we need more people like that in the world. Be that person because people like that are rarer than the rarest.

Never forget how far you've come. Everything you have gotten through. All the times you have pushed on even when you felt you have pusheed on even when you felt you could not. All the mornings you got out of bed no matter how hard it was. All the times you wanted to give up but you got through another day.

Val
Hello, my fellow Vietnam veteran brothers and sisters. My name is Larry (Gunny) Strassner. I am a “Life time” member of VVA Chapter 20. I, sadly and unfortunately, have not been able to attend very many Thursday evening membership meetings due to personal scheduling conflicts. I do try to keep up with some things going on at the Chapter and nationally through the newsletter and the BTL.

I served in the US Marine Corps from 1966 to 1972. I went to “Boot Camp” at Paris Island, SC, Infantry training at Camp LeJeune and then to “Avionics School” in Jacksonville Fla.. My first permanent duty station was Marine Corps Aircraft Station, Beaufort, SC attached to Headquarters And Maintenance Squadron 32, Marine Aircraft Group 32 of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. From Dec. 1967 to March of 1969, I served with VMFA 323 (Death Rattlers) Squadron, MAG 13 of the 1st MAW in Chu Lai, Vietnam. My Military Occupational Specialty was Avionics, Aircraft Electrician for various “tail hook” jet aircraft and helicopters. My expertise was with the Phantom II F4-B. A couple of highlights of my tour in Viet Nam were being able to see two Bob Hope USO shows and participate in two “Tet” offensives. I returned stateside and was attached to VMAT-102, MCCRTG-10, 3rd MAW, Fleet Marine Force Pac, MCAS, Yuma, Arizona as a Staff Non-Commissioned Officer, helping train Marines on A4 Skyhawk aircraft. I was released from active duty in 1970 as an E5 Sergeant, transferred to active reserve with the Radio Relay & Construction Co. of the 12th Comm. Bn., FMF, USMCR training center here in Rochester, NY. I was planning on “shipping over” but promptly changed my mind just days after attaining the rank of Gunnery Sergeant E7 when they told me that I’d be going back to Nam in about a year. The rank and $5800 bonus just weren’t enough incentive, so I got out. Hence, the nick name “Gunny”.

In May of this year, I celebrate my 33rd anniversary of my 39th Birthday. I am married with three daughters and four grandkids. All of them have moved away from Rochester which gives me a super excuse to go “visit”, vacationing in the beautiful south east (Nashville, TN and Huntsville, AL) as well as the Albany area throughout the year. In 2001, I retired from Delphi Products as a Manufacturing Engineering supervisor, (formerly the Rochester Products Div. of GM) but returned to Delphi on a contract basis for the following 9 years for a total of 41 years at the same company. This experience only enhanced my record keeping experience and prepared me for future challenges.

I have also been blessed to have been able to keep quite active over the years. I basically don’t like to let grass grow under my feet. From about 1999, for about 12 to 14 years I had the pleasure of leading the design and construction of theater sets for Blackfriars, Geva, RAPA and other semi-
professional theater companies but most of all, I enjoyed doing this for the Greece Athena Middle and High School productions yearly. These were phenomenal productions where I was able to teach as well as learn from everyone around me. During the end of this time frame and beyond (about 9 years), I was privileged to be a volunteer for Honor Flight Rochester. I was on the leadership board and the director of “Ground Events” and “Speaker’s Bureau”. Believe me, this was a fulltime job and is one of the most rewarding things I’ve ever done. This too, was another record keeping and scheduling challenge. In 2018, I stepped aside from Leadership positions with HFR but still volunteer. I currently hold the offices of “Sgt. At Arms” for our American Legion Post 468 and “Quartermaster” for our VFW post 4658.

Again, keeping busy and not wanting to let grass grow under my feet (beside the fact that I was quite concerned to hear about our chapter possibly deactivating and VVA changing our name, I was hoping that I could help fill the need as VVA Chapter 20 Secretary.

Thank you,
Larry (Gunny) Strassner

Alan J. Frisa

I like to rerun for the position of treasurer.
I have taken care of the books for the chapter for the past 10 years. I fine the job challenging and I am up for the task.
I have had the great pleasure of working with a great president Val, VP Hank, Secretary Joe we got things done, and saved money for the chapter.
Please consider me for the position of treasurer.

Was drafted in 1966 into the US Army took basic training at Ft Dicks went on to Ft Knox for armor training. I received orders for Germany where I was stationed in Schweinfurt, where I was a track mechanic. 3rd Infantry Division 2nd Battalion 64th Armor. My job was to keep the tanks running to protect the boarders from the Russians.

Thank you for your time.
Your brother
Alan J. Frisa
Remembering Our Fallen Heroes
Born in August

Website - http://rochestervietnammemorial.org/

Butler, Lionel 8-1-1931
Cook, Roger John 8-1-1948
Prete, Robert Nicholas 8-2-1947
Warren, Stephen Edward 8-2-1950
Holleder, Donald Walter 8-3-1936
Bernreuther, John Walter 8-3-1942
Duryea, Arnold M. 8-7-1947
Perkins, William T. 8-10-1947
Lane, Louis Michael 8-11-1946
Case, David Duane 8-14-1945
Moore, James Rodney 8-16-1947
Jamrock, Stanley M. 8-17-1943
Crane, David Chauncey 8-18-1947
Elliott, Richard 8-19-1948
Skebeck Jr., Edward John 8-21-1946
Howard Jr., Taylor Brooks 8-22-1939
Hornyak, John Joseph 8-24-1938
Bortle, Jonathan R. 8-25-1946
Coye, Roger Herbert 8-26-1930
Hopps, Gary D. 8-28-1936
Papke, Theodore Arthur 8-28-1947
Cornish, Larry Irving 8-30-1948
Grauert, Hans Herbert 8-31-1942

Memorial Tours & Presentations
Persons interested in on-site tours or presentations at schools or organizations, contact Chuck Macaluso at 585-225-8288 or Chuckmac66@yahoo.com

Friends of the Memorial
To be placed on the volunteer contact list, contact Chuck Macaluso at 585-225-8288 or Chuckmac66@yahoo.com
The Veterans Walk Committee of Chapter 20, VVA wants to thank you for your purchase of a personalized, engraved paver brick.

Each paver brick (4” x 8”) can have from one to three lines of engraved information. The cost will be $50.00 per brick. Make checks or money order payable to:  
VVA Chapter 20, Veterans Walk

The engraved line(s) can include any of the following information:

Full name  
Branch of service, rank  
Dates of service (1967-1969, etc.)  
Conflict (WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Persian Gulf, etc.)

Please print the information you would like engraved on the brick below. (Maximum of 14 letters/numbers, including spaces per line).

1.  
2.  
3.  

Return the completed form to the - Veterans Walk Committee, c/o Chuck Macaluso, 154 Mendota Drive, Rochester, New York 14626.  
Include: Payment and “Proof of Service” for above recipient.

Please Note: Engraved bricks will be installed prior to Memorial Day and Veterans Day (twice annually).  
Questions please call Chuck or Joan Macaluso as 585-225-8288
There are currently no new reports from the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), the National League of Families and the DOD on any servicemen recently recovered, returned and identified this month. The total number of Americans who are still missing from the Vietnam War still stands at 1587.

There are reports of the recoveries and identifications of individuals from the following wars:

- Cpl. Francis J. Rochon, US Army was lost September 1, 1950 at Changnyeong, South Korea. He was accounted for on June 19, 2020.
- Pfc. John M. Fahy, US Marine Corps was lost November 22, 1943 at Tarawa. He was accounted for on June 23, 2020.
- Master Sgt. James L. Quong, US Army was lost December 2, 1950 in North Korea. He was accounted for on June 23, 2020.
- Cpl. Richard L. Henderson Jr., US Army was lost December 6, 1950 in North Korea. He was accounted for on July 2, 2020.
- 2nd Lt. William H. Melville, US Army Air Corps was lost October 28, 1943 in Papua. He was accounted for on July 7, 2020.
- Radioman 3rd Class, Irvin F. Rice, Seaman 1st Class Wesley E Graham, Seaman 2nd Class James M. Flanagan and Fireman Controlman 3rd Class Robert T. Stout, US Navy were all lost on December 7, 1941 on board the USS Oklahoma. They were all accounted for from June 16th to June 25th, 2020.

WE WILL NEVER GIVE UP HOPE
UNTIL THEY ARE ALL ACCOUNTED FOR.
WELCOME HOME BROTHERS AND REST IN PEACE
Membership Update
Mike General Membership Chair

Chapter 20 Membership currently is at 632 members and AVVA is at 40 members as of 06/30/20. Membership has been growing slow (only 2 new members transferred in the last month), *Need your help in recruiting new members*. Don’t forget to renew on time. Don’t let your membership expire. We had 0 members who did not renew this last month and members who passed away..

**Please Renew Your Membership!**

**Only Life Memberships are available $50.00**

If you a renewing as a “Life Member”, please remember to include a copy of your DD-214 with your application..

When you have an Address Change, Phone Number change please notify Mike General @ [mwgeneral@aol.com](mailto:mwgeneral@aol.com) so we can keep our Roster up to date and notify National.

**Need your help in recruiting new members.**

Membership Applications are available on our Website or by contacting me. ([mwgeneral@aol.com](mailto:mwgeneral@aol.com))

Chapter 20 Membership is open to U.S. Veterans who served active duty (other than training purposes) in the Republic of Vietnam between February 28, 1961 and May 07, 1975, or any duty location between August 05, 1964 and May 07, 1975.

Membership includes a subscription to our award-winning newspaper The BTL, and The VVA Veteran, bringing you updates on issues and legislation affecting veterans, as well as unique articles on the people, places, and history of the Vietnam experience.

Associate Membership is open to anyone; you do not need to be a Veteran.
We are offering an “Honorary Membership” to Chapter 20 to all spouses who husbands have passed away (Must have been an Active Member). If you know of someone who has lost their loved one, please contact Mike General.

Mike
Member Application

For new members, print this membership form and complete, then mail with your payment and a copy of the DD214 form. Renewal members may complete and print the form and mail it with your payment. Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter #20, P.O. Box 12580, Rochester, NY 14692

Membership Application

(bold fields are required.)

First Name

Last Name

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Home Phone, Ext.

Work Phone, Ext.

Primary Email

Date of Birth [MM/DD/YYYY]

As of October 20, 2018, there will be one paid class of membership.

1. LIFE MEMBERSHIP: $50.00
2. All 3-year members who have paid $50 will automatically become a life member.
3. All one-year members will continue as an individual 1-year member until their membership expires, one-year members will then be required to pay $50.00 to remain a member of VVA.
Summer is moving on, and my new normal of daily living is becoming a regular routine of actions in response to the Covid-19 virus. Personally, I have had to increase my supply of masks, and hand sanitizer from my initial purchases and supply. I guess this may be around for a while longer than I originally thought. The practical side of me keeps saying “enough already” but the reality of the situation shows up every day and it is still here, damn it! Amazing how we humans cope with things from time to time. Some circumstances we certainly tolerant better than others, and somethings can seem to crush you. Find the balance for yourself and make an effort to keep your eyes open to help others around you. Laugh more, and try to keep all of the daily stresses in stride without putting pressure on yourself to do more than possible right now.

Things of interest you can follow below. Information about Gold Star families, (Sunday, September 27, 2020 is Gold Star Mother’s Day) keeping the day in the forefront for the sacrifices made by our men and women in uniform and their families. They shall never be forgotten! A new and expanded effort by the VA and President Trump’s White House to maximize awareness for suicide prevention (132 fellow Americans take their life each day) that all can review. Remember, suicide is preventable! If you know what to look for you can help save a live. Information about extra research for PTSD. Help veterans suffering with PTSD by the purchase of postage stamps that you can buy.

An amendment, Senate Bill Number S.3444 that would be added to the National Defense Authorization Act new funding. This would place three new presumptives, Bladder Cancer, Hyperthyroidism, and Parkinson Disease into law as presumptive illness. Nothing was said about the Hypertension issue concerning this particular Senate amendment.

Respectfully submitted by:
Jerry McDermott, Chair
Health Affairs Committee
Gold Star Pins
Understanding Their Significance

More than 7,000 American service members have been killed in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq alone since Sept. 11, 2001. More than 16,000 have died of other causes in that time. Gold Star families have borne the losses, and Defense Department officials want Americans – especially those serving in the department – to understand what the Gold Star lapel pin and Next of Kin lapel pins mean. The pins were created "to recognize the sacrifices of so many," said Deborah Skillman, the program director at the Military Community and Family Policy Office in the Pentagon. Skillman's office has created and posted an "eTutorial" on Military OneSource to educate people about the program.

Service members know what the Gold Star represents, and, unfortunately, in a time of conflict, many service members have lost friends. Still, the force has a large turnover of personnel, Skillman noted, and there may be some who do not understand the Gold Star program and what it represents. The eTutorial is for them, she said. The education effort is in response to input from family members who, because of a general lack of knowledge, sometimes get "unintentionally insensitive questions about the Gold Star lapel button and Next of Kin lapel button," Skillman said.

The Gold Star symbol began during World War I. At the start of the American involvement in 1917, families hung banners with blue stars representing family members in the services. If the service member died in combat, the family changed the blue star to gold. After the war, Gold Star mothers banded together. The group incorporated in 1928. This year’s Gold Star Mothers Day is 27 SEP. There are still Gold Star families from World War I, and many thousands from World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Desert Shield/Desert Storm, and the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. For more information, go to https://millifelearning.militaryonesource.mil. [Source: DOD News July | Jim Garamone | July 2, 2020 ++]

VA Suicide Prevention

Update 63: White House/VA Launch REACH

The White House and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) on 7 JUL launched the REACH national public health campaign aimed at empowering all Americans to play a critical role in preventing suicide. The goal of REACH, which was established by the President’s Roadmap to Empower Veterans and End a National Tragedy of Suicide (PREVENTS) is to change the conversation around suicide by urging people to recognize their own risk and protective factors — as well as the risk and protective factors of their loved ones.

VA Secretary Robert Wilkie said, “REACH will empower our nation’s Veterans to seek and receive help and it will encourage them to reach out to their brothers and sisters in need who may be vulnerable. The power of this campaign will change how we talk about mental health and suicide in our nation. It will ensure that those in need, especially the men and women who have served our great nation, will receive the care and support they deserve.” PREVENTS Executive Director Dr. Barbara Van Dahlen said, “The REACH campaign will inspire and educate all Americans — encouraging them to share their own struggles and to reach out to those who are hurting. It will engage our Veterans to help lead the way as we change how we think about, talk about and address suicide. I urge everyone to go to https://www.wearewithinreach.net and take the PREVENTS Pledge to REACH and be part of the solution. Together, we will prevent suicide.”
The website also includes information on factors that may protect against suicide, such as belonging to a faith-based community, healthy family relationships, having a purpose in life and strong problem-solving skills. REACH encourages everyone to intentionally strengthen their protective factors — to care for their emotional health and well-being.

Although suicide is preventable, the nation is facing an epidemic in deaths, with 132 Americans dying by suicide each day. In 2017 there were 47,173 suicide deaths and an estimated 1.4 million suicide attempts. For Veterans, the overall suicide rate is 1.5 times higher and the female Veteran suicide rate is 2.2 times higher than the general population after adjusting for age and/or gender. To that end, the REACH campaign website, we are within reach, provides information to help people recognize risk factors for suicide, including financial stress, chronic illness or pain, isolation and mental illness, in themselves and in their loved ones. It also links to resources that can provide assistance in avoiding the hopelessness that can lead to suicide. Campaign messages and imagery using the hashtag #REACHNow will be evident on a wide range of digital platforms immediately after the launch. The website will include a video public service announcement supported by a partnership with the PenFed Foundation and SoldierStrong and created by Tree Media. Media covering this issue can download VA’s Safe Messaging Best Practices fact sheet for important guidance on how to communicate about suicide. If you or someone you know are experiencing thoughts of suicide or are in crisis, please contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline for confidential support 24 hours a day at 800-273-8255. Veterans and service members, including National Guard and Reserve, who need immediate help should call the 1-800 number and press 1 to reach the Veterans Crisis Line, chat online at www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat or text 838255. [Source: VA News Release | July 7, 2020 ++]

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**VA Presumptive AO Diseases**

**Update 33: Landmark Coverage Bill Will be in NDAA**

U.S. Senator Jon Tester successfully secured his landmark *Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act* (S.3444) in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) – a must-pass annual defense bill that the Senate will vote on later this month. Tester’s bill requires the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide benefits for veterans suffering from diseases associated with exposure to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War.

Currently, thousands of Vietnam veterans living with chronic health conditions developed as a result of their service are being denied critical benefits and health care from VA. Tester’s amendment would provide a presumption of service-connection—based on scientific review by the National Academy of Medicine (NAM)—for Bladder Cancer, Hypothyroidism, and Parkinsonism. Under a presumption of service-connection, veterans suffering from these three conditions would be eligible for essential benefits and care under VA. “Justice is long overdue for our aging veterans currently dying from conditions resulting from their exposure to Agent Orange chemicals in Vietnam,” said Tester, Ranking Member of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee. “The reality is that taking care of our veterans is the cost of war—and it must be paid. By adding my bill to do that to the Senate’s must-pass annual defense bill, we are living up to the promises made to those who served by ensuring they get the care and benefits they’ve earned.”

In addition to the Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act, Tester also successfully included an amendment to allow veterans to access their toxic exposure records online from VA or the Department of Defense. For years, Tester has fought tirelessly in Congress to ensure Vietnam veterans get the treatment and benefits they have earned. In September 2017, Tester led a group of Senators in pressuring VA to make a decision on NAM’s recommendations regarding expanding the list of presumptive conditions. Tester continued his push in September 2018, urging the Department to take action by expanding its list of medical conditions associated with exposure to Agent Orange and repeated the call in March 2018. In April 2018, Tester urged the Office of Management and Budget to assist the VA in this effort.

In January, Tester led 42 Senators in blasting the Trump Administration for stonewalling critical benefits for more than 190,000 Vietnam veterans suffering from health conditions connected with their service. He also held a roundtable discussion last month with Senate Veterans’ Affairs Chairman Jerry Moran (R-Kans.), stakeholders, and veterans’ advocates to address longstanding issues associated with the effects of toxic exposures on our nation’s servicemembers and veterans. This bill is supported by The American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), AMVETS, and Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). [Source: Press Release | Sen. Jon Tester | July 2, 2020 ++]
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**Check out the new version of Lee Greenwood’s “God Bless America” in which Lee joins with the Air Force Singers.**

[https://youtu.be/SrMftm6Km3g](https://youtu.be/SrMftm6Km3g)
BREAKING: Tester’s Landmark Bill to Provide Benefits to Vets Exposed to Agent Orange Passes Senate

After urging support for his amendment on the Senate floor, Senator successfully passes legislation as part of the must-pass annual defense bill (U.S. Senate) – Vietnam veterans suffering from diseases associated with exposure to Agent Orange are one step closer to receiving critical care and benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) following sustained efforts from U.S. Senator Jon Tester to include his bipartisan legislation in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) – a must-pass annual defense bill.

Tester took to the Senate floor earlier today to urge his colleagues to support his amendment which would expand VA’s list of medical conditions associated with exposure to Agent Orange to include Bladder Cancer, Hypothyroidism, and Parkinsonism—health conditions that each meet the historical standard for being added to the presumptive list for service-connection as it relates to Agent Orange exposure.

“This is a historic win for thousands of Vietnam veterans who have been suffering from illnesses after being exposed to Agent Orange, but who have been unjustly denied benefits for decades,” said Tester, Ranking Member of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee. “With the inclusion of my amendment in this must-pass defense bill, we are now one step closer to providing our Vietnam War heroes with the treatment and benefits they deserve from VA. But our fight is far from over—taking care of our veterans is a continuing cost of war, and we’ve got to keep extending the list of presumptive conditions to support an entire population of veterans living with other debilitating illnesses as a result of their service.”
Currently, thousands of Vietnam veterans living with chronic health conditions developed as a result of their service are being denied critical benefits and health care from VA. These veterans have been subject to additional and unwarranted delays as a result of the Trump Administration’s repeated calls for further evaluation of scientific research—even though such research has already been reviewed by the National Academy of Medicine (NAM), which has established the standard for scientific evidence of association for more than twenty years. Tester’s amendment would require VA to provide a presumption of service-connection for Bladder Cancer, Hypothyroidism, and Parkinsonism—expanding care and benefits for veterans suffering from these three conditions.

For years, Tester has fought tirelessly to push the Trump Administration to provide Vietnam veterans the treatment and benefits they earned. In 2017, he led the charge in urging VA to expand its list of medical conditions associated with exposure to Agent Orange. In 2018, he repeated the call and urged the Office of Management and Budget to assist the VA in this effort. Earlier this year, Tester led 42 Senators in blasting the Administration for stonewalling critical benefits for more than 190,000 Vietnam veterans suffering from health conditions connected with their service. He also held a roundtable discussion with Senate Veterans’ Affairs Chairman Jerry Moran (R-Kans.), stakeholders, and veterans’ advocates to address longstanding issues associated with the effects of toxic exposures on our nation’s servicemembers and veterans.

“The long-term negative health effects of Agent Orange have devastated thousands of Vietnam veterans,” said Stephen Whitehead, National Commander of Disabled American Veterans (DAV). “Bladder Cancer, Hypothyroidism and Parkinsonism have all been scientifically linked to Agent Orange exposure, yet VA has not taken action on these three diseases in almost four years. DAV supports Senate Amendment No. 1972 in the NDAA, which would provide presumptive service connection for these conditions. Vietnam veterans and their families need the Senate to pass this amendment now to ensure access to VA health care and benefits.”

“For too long, our Vietnam veterans have had to fight for and have been denied the critical health care they need to treat medical conditions resulting from exposure to Agent Orange. We have made significant strides in ensuring that these veterans are given the care they deserve for their service and sacrifice to our nation. However, there is still more work to be done and these veterans continue to suffer the detrimental effects of their exposure each day. This amendment would provide a presumption of service-connection for Bladder Cancer, Hypothyroidism, and Parkinsonism for veterans exposed to certain herbicide agents while serving in Vietnam,” said James W. “Bill” Oxford, National Commander for The American Legion. “The American Legion is proud to support this amendment and believes the evidence overwhelmingly supports adding these diseases to the presumptive list.”

“Vietnam veterans did their part and served with honor,” said Matthew Doyle, Deputy Director of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). “Unfortunately, many of them have lost the fight to the health conditions they developed as a result of their exposure to Agent Orange. The scientific community has already determined that sufficient evidence exists linking Bladder Cancer, Hypothyroidism, and Parkinson-like symptoms to Agent Orange exposure. The VFW urges inclusion of Amendment No. 1972 in the FY2021 NDAA, which would add these disorders to the list of presumptive conditions associated with exposure to Agent Orange.”

“AMVETS is supportive of all efforts to add Parkinsonism, Bladder cancer, and Hypothyroidism to the list of presumptive health outcomes for service-connected exposure to Agent Orange,” said Joe Chenelly, Executive Director of AMVETS. “Tester Amendment No. 1972 would provide health care and disability benefits to more than 20,000 affected veterans who have already waited too long for this change.”

“PVA endorses this effort to ensure Vietnam veterans receive appropriate care and compensation for conditions related to Agent Orange exposure,” said Roscoe Butler, Associate Legislative Director of Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA). “Adding these three diseases to VA’s list of presumptive conditions is the right thing to do for these veterans and their families.”
“I’m heartened to see that Congress is not forgetting our Vietnam veterans,” said Lieutenant General Dana Atkins, President and CEO of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). “As a nation, we must ensure all our veterans are taken care of when they experience negative health consequences like toxic exposures from their service. When illnesses like Bladder Cancer, Hypothyroidism, and Parkinson’s-like symptoms meet the scientific standards to be connected with Agent Orange, we must add them to the list of presumptives. Tens of thousands of veterans are suffering from these illnesses. I’m glad to see this year’s NDAA includes Sen. Tester’s amendment so Congress can provide the benefits and compensation our veterans deserve.”

“The Agent Orange Act of 1991 called for a decision by the Secretary no later than 60 days after receiving the Institute of Medicine’s report and another 60 days after the Secretary’s decision to issue proposed regulations setting forth his determination. This has patently not been followed,” said John Rowan, National President and CEO of Vietnam Veterans of America. “Now the current VA Secretary wants to wait until the end of calendar 2020. This is unacceptable. We are losing over 500 Vietnam veterans a day, many of them from conditions associated with exposure to dioxin. Further delays are not an option. It’s time for Congress to act.”

“Within one hour of alerting our membership, hundreds of TREA members wrote to their Senators in support of this critical amendment – making thousands of Vietnam veterans eligible for Agent Orange benefits,” said Ken Greenberg, Director of Veterans and Military Policy for TREA: The Enlisted Association. “TREA is grateful for the tireless efforts of Ranking Member Jon Tester and Committee staff to secure Amendment No. 1972 in the NDAA.”


Founded in 1978, Vietnam Veterans of America is a national non-profit organization that advocates for Vietnam Vets through legislation, community support, and local and national events that recognize veterans from all service eras.
Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic we continue to cease all gatherings. Our August 4th Board and August 13th Membership meetings are cancelled.

The annual election has been postponed and the Memorial Site clean up day is on hold until we are given the “all clear” from the government.
Thank you,
-Val Gatto

HONOR FLIGHT UPDATE
Due to the Coronavirus pandemic the 3 fall trips are not being schedule pending official notice from the government.

Thank you,
Steven Wendell
The military salute is a motion that evolved from medieval times, when knights in armor raised their visors to reveal their identity.

If you get into the bottom of a well or a tall chimney and look up, you can see stars, even in the middle of the day.

When a person dies, hearing is the last sense to go. The first sense lost is sight.

In ancient times strangers shook hands to show that they were unarmed.

Strawberries and cashews are the only fruits whose seeds grow on the outside.

Avocados have the highest calories of any fruit at 167 calories per hundred grams.

The moon moves about two inches away from the Earth each year.

The Earth gets 100 tons heavier every day due to falling space dust.

Due to earth's gravity it is impossible for mountains to be higher than 15,000 meters.

Mickey Mouse is known as "Topolino" in Italy.

Soldiers do not march in step when going across bridges because they could set up a vibration which could be sufficient to knock the bridge down.

Everything weighs one percent less at the equator.

For every extra kilogram carried on a space flight, 530 kg of excess fuel are needed at lift-off.

The letter J does not appear anywhere on the periodic table of the elements.
Board Meetings | Membership Meetings
---|---
Aug 4, 2020 | Aug 13, 2020
Cancelled | Cancelled
Sept 1, 2020 | Sept 10, 2020
Oct 6, 2020 | Oct 8, 2020

Monthly Membership Meetings start at 6:30 pm

*At the Italian American Sports Club, 1250 Buffalo Road, Rochester*

Driving Directions to the Italian American Sports Club:

The Club is located at 1250 Buffalo Road close to the intersection of Howard Road, directly across from the stone quarry, next to the Eagles Club and the Catholic Diocese of Rochester.

From the East: Heading west on 490, exit Mt. Read Blvd. and turn left; south on Mt. Read to Buffalo Road circle, turn right, west on Buffalo Road, 1.4 miles, the Italian-American Sports Club is on the right side.

From the West: Heading east on 490, exit 33 east, Buffalo Road (Gates Center); head east on Buffalo Road; continue past Howard Road; the Italian-American Sports Club will be on the left side in about .5 mile.
Your business card could be here. Contact Chapter Treasurer, Alan Frisa (afrisa@rochester.rr.com), for details.
In Memory Donations

When the simple act of placing flowers on a casket or placing stones on a headstone does not seem to be enough to honor the memory of a special someone who has passed away, one may choose to make a donation in his or her honor to commemorate the values and beliefs of the deceased. Chapter 20 VVA is committed to recognizing the sacrifices made by all military personnel in every branch of the armed forces. The memory of the deceased veteran is honored in the continuous work and service carried out by the dedicated Chapter members and associates. The monetary donations sent by individuals help make it possible to continue serving veterans and their families. The combined efforts of donors, lawmakers, members, and associates have far-reaching effects on the quality of all our lives.

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 20 offers several ways of commemorating a special person. One of those ways is the Memorial Walk at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial at Highland Park. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Walk is a pathway of bricks inscribed with the names of individuals who have served their country with valor. Their names will forever remain a reminder of the dedication and tenacity demonstrated by the thousands of men and women who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

If you wish to make a monetary donation directly to Chapter 20 in support of all the functions and services they provide to veterans and their families, send your check or money order payable to Chapter 20, VVA:

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

465 Westfall Road
Rochester, NY 14620

Phone: 585-463-2600
Fax: 585-463-2649
Map  Driving Directions

Rochester Calkins VA Clinic
260 Calkins Road
Rochester, NY 14623

585 463- 2600

Rochester Westfall VA Clinic
465 Westfall Road
Rochester, NY 14620

585 463- 2600

Hours of Operation for both Rochester VA Clinics are:

Monday – Friday
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Extended hours by appointment

Parking is free and the Clinics are handicapped accessible.
Rochester Calkins VA Clinic offers:

Primary Care
Pharmacy
Podiatry
Respiratory/Sleep
Psychiatry
Eye Care
Radiology
Cardiology Dental
Laboratory
Prosthetic
Home Based Primary Care
Audiology/Speech Pathology
Dermatology
Women’s Health
Gastroenterology (soon to be opened)

Rochester Westfall VA Clinic offers:

Physical Therapy
Chiropractic
Mental Health Services
Chemical Dependency Counselors,
Psychotherapy
PTSD
Military Sexual Trauma Counseling
Skills Training
Social Work
Substance Abuse

Community Resources
Monroe County Department of Human Services / Office for the Aging *
VA Health Care Benefits
Contacts and References

E-Benefits Portal Site
https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal

Enrollment/Eligibility
http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility
Health Resource Center 1-877-222-8387 (VETS)

OEF / OIF
http://www.oefoif.va.gov

Women Veterans Benefits Line 1-855-829-6636
http://www.va.gov/womenvet

Dental Care

Copays
http://www1.va.gov/CBO/brochures.asp
Health Resource Center 1-877-222-8387

Suicide Prevention Hotline 1-800-273-8255 (TALK)

Prosthetics
http://www.prosthetics.va.gov

My HealtheVet
http://www.myhealth.va.gov

Homeless Veterans Hotline 1-877-424-3838
### Contact Information

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Valentino Gatto</td>
<td><a href="mailto:valentinogatto1969@gmail.com">valentinogatto1969@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>737-7275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. President</td>
<td>Hank Wallace</td>
<td><a href="mailto:whwnbt@rit.edu">whwnbt@rit.edu</a></td>
<td>585-482-7396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td></td>
<td>585-322-6722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Alan Frisa</td>
<td><a href="mailto:alanfrisa@gmail.com">alanfrisa@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>518-338-8147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DIRECTORS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ken Allocco</td>
<td><a href="mailto:KBUD920@yahoo.com">KBUD920@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>392-9424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Auble</td>
<td><a href="mailto:wauble@hotmail.com">wauble@hotmail.com</a></td>
<td>683-2213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Corona</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nycoronasgt@gmail.com">nycoronasgt@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>406-6108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred Elliott</td>
<td><a href="mailto:felliott@rochester.rr.com">felliott@rochester.rr.com</a></td>
<td>317-7619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike General</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mgeneral@aol.com">mgeneral@aol.com</a></td>
<td>227-4383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn Gursslin</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lynngursslin@gmail.com">lynngursslin@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>737-0976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chuck Macaluso</td>
<td><a href="mailto:chuckmac66@yahoo.com">chuckmac66@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>225-8288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerry McDermott</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jerrymcdermott648@gmail.com">jerrymcdermott648@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>313-8188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dick Oleksyn</td>
<td><a href="mailto:roleksyn@yahoo.com">roleksyn@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>663-5255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stan Patykiewicz</td>
<td><a href="mailto:SNMPATYK@rochester.rr.com">SNMPATYK@rochester.rr.com</a></td>
<td>247-4830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Sanfilippo</td>
<td><a href="mailto:guardian175@yahoo.com">guardian175@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>594-2649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron Trovato</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Ronbo215@gmail.com">Ronbo215@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>857-3630</td>
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**STATE COUNCIL DELEGATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bill Auble</td>
<td><a href="mailto:wauble@hotmail.com">wauble@hotmail.com</a></td>
<td>683-2213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nick DeLeo</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ndeleo52@yahoo.com">ndeleo52@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>334-7043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valentino Gatto</td>
<td><a href="mailto:valentinogatto1969@gmail.com">valentinogatto1969@gmail.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerry McDermott</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jerrymcdermott648@gmail.com">jerrymcdermott648@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>313-8188</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COMMITTEE CONTACTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between The Lines</td>
<td>Editor – Vito Scarpetta</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vietvet6748@gmail.com">vietvet6748@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>301-5348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chaplain - Tom Puff</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tpuff@frontiernet.net">tpuff@frontiernet.net</a></td>
<td>227-3426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter Gear – Lynn Gursslin</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lynngursslin@gmail.com">lynngursslin@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>737-0976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Constitution – Fred Elliott</td>
<td><a href="mailto:felliott@rochester.rr.com">felliott@rochester.rr.com</a></td>
<td>288-5756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finance – Jerry McDermott</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jerrymcdermott648@gmail.com">jerrymcdermott648@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>313-8188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health – Jerry McDermott</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jerrymcdermott648@gmail.com">jerrymcdermott648@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>313-8188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Honor Guard – C. Macaluso</td>
<td><a href="mailto:chuckmac66@yahoo.com">chuckmac66@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>225-8288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incarcerated – Ron Trovato</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Ronbo215@gmail.com">Ronbo215@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>857-3630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Legislative – Bill Auble</td>
<td><a href="mailto:wauble@hotmail.com">wauble@hotmail.com</a></td>
<td>683-2213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marching – Hank Wallace</td>
<td><a href="mailto:whwnbt@rit.edu">whwnbt@rit.edu</a></td>
<td>334-5352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Membership – Mike General</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mgeneral@aol.com">mgeneral@aol.com</a></td>
<td>227-4383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Memorial – Chuck Macaluso</td>
<td><a href="mailto:chuckmac66@yahoo.com">chuckmac66@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>225-8288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>POW/MIA – Joe Peck</td>
<td><a href="mailto:peckfam@hotmail.com">peckfam@hotmail.com</a></td>
<td>734-9046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Affairs – Mike Sanfilippo</td>
<td><a href="mailto:guardian175@yahoo.com">guardian175@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>594-2649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Events – V. Gatto</td>
<td><a href="mailto:valentinogatto1969@gmail.com">valentinogatto1969@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>227-2741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Speaker’s Bureau – Ken Allocco</td>
<td><a href="mailto:KBUD920@yahoo.com">KBUD920@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>392-9424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Vet Benefits – Stan Patykiewicz</td>
<td><a href="mailto:SNMPATYK@rochester.rr.com">SNMPATYK@rochester.rr.com</a></td>
<td>247-4830</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Veterans Walk – C. Macaluso</td>
<td><a href="mailto:chuckmac66@yahoo.com">chuckmac66@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>225-8288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women’s Affairs – Rosemary Rossi-Williams</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pefrose@gmail.com">pefrose@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>738-6138</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WEB SITES / EMAIL ADDRESSES**

- **VVA Chapter 20**: [585-482-7396](tel:5854827396)
  - P.O. Box 12580 [www.vva20.org](http://www.vva20.org)
  - Rochester, NY 14612

- **VVA Region 2 Director**
  - Ted Wilkinson [twilkinson@vva.org](mailto:twilkinson@vva.org) [585-322-6722](tel:5853226722)

- **NYS VVA President**
  - Ned Foote [nfoote@vva.org](mailto:nfoote@vva.org) [518-338-8147](tel:5183388147)

- **AVVA Region 2 Director**
  - Nancy Rekowski [nrekowski@avva.org](mailto:nrekowski@avva.org)

- **NYS AVVA President**
  - Cherie Steers [csvva@optonline.net](mailto:csvva@optonline.net) [516-822-5938](tel:5168225938)

- **Veterans Organizations and Information**
  - Greater Rochester Vietnam Veterans Memorial [753-7275](tel:7537275)
  - (enter 9; enter 2 to leave a message)
  - VA Outpatient Clinic [260 Calkins Road](tel:260CalkinsRoad) [463-2600](tel:4632600)
  - VA Outpatient Clinic [465 Westfall Rd](tel:465WestfallRd) [463-2600](tel:4632600)
  - Veterans Outreach Center [459 South Avenue](tel:459SouthAvenue) [546-1081](tel:5461081)
  - VA Vet Center [232-5040](tel:2325040)
  - Veterans Administration [800-827-1000](tel:8008271000)
  - Monroe County Veterans Service Agency [753-6040](tel:7536040)
  - e-mail: serviceofficer@yahoo.com
  - VA Veterans Benefits Hotline [800-827-1000](tel:8008271000)
  - Women Veterans Call Center [888-829-6636](tel:8888296636)
  - VA Medical Center in Batavia [297-1000](tel:2971000)
  - VA Hospital in Buffalo [716-834-9200](tel:7168349200)
  - VA Medical Center in Canandaigua [394-2000](tel:3942000)
  - VA Medical Center in Bath [607-664-4000](tel:6076644000)
  - Vietnam Veterans of America National Office [800-882-1316](tel:8008821316)
  - Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund [202-393-0090](tel:2023930090)
  - National League of Families
  - POW/MIA Updates [202-223-6846](tel:2022236846)
  - Richards House at VOC [506-9060](tel:5069060)
  - The Resource Center at VOC [546-4250](tel:5464250)
  - Stars & Stripes – The Flag Store [546-3524](tel:5463524)
  - National Caregivers Support Line [855-260-3274](tel:8552603274)
  - Homeless Hotline [877-424-3838](tel:8774243838)

- **WEB SITES / EMAIL ADDRESSES**
  - Vietnam Veterans Memorial at Highland Park [www.rochestervietnammemorial.org/The_Memorial](http://www.rochestervietnammemorial.org/The_Memorial)
  - VVA New York State Council [www.nyvietnamvets.org](http://www.nyvietnamvets.org)