POW / MIA
Memorial Service

Due to this unprecedented time with the Covid-19 pandemic and other unforeseen circumstances, the annual POW/MIA Memorial Service will be postponed this year.

The memory of our remaining 1586 service men who are still missing will continue to be honored by all of us.
DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC WE CONTINUE TO CEASE ALL GATHERINGS. TO THIS END I AM SORRY TO SAY THAT OUR SEPTEMBER 10TH MEMBERSHIP MEETING IS CANCELLED.

THE SEPTEMBER 1 BOARD MEETING WILL BE HELD.

ADDITIONALLY,

- THE ANNUAL ELECTION WILL BE POSTPONED
- THE MEMORIAL SITE CLEAN UP DAY IS ON HOLD UNTIL WE ARE GIVEN THE “ALL CLEAR’ FROM THE STATE GOVERNMENT
- THE ANNUAL POW/MIA MEMORIAL SERVICE WILL NOT BE HELD AT HIGHLAND PARK. HOWEVER, THE POW’S AND MIA’S ARE NEVER FORGOTTEN!

THANK YOU.
VAL GATTO
CHAPTER 20 PRESIDENT
Next time you're stressed, take a step back, inhale and laugh. Remember who you are and why you're here. You're never given anything in this world that you can't handle. Be strong, be flexible, love yourself, and love others. Always remember, just keep moving forward.

You are strong for getting out of bed in the morning when it feels like hell. You are brave for doing things even though they scare you and make you anxious. And you are amazing for trying and holding on no matter how hard life gets.

Be thankful every chance you get. Not because life has been easy, perfect, or exactly as you had anticipated, but because you choose to be happy and grateful for all the good things you do have and all the problems you know don't have.

Val
Richard G Pearce
Candidate for Treasurer of Chapter 20

Shortly after I finished my first college degree, I was asked by our government to go on an all-expense paid trip to Southeast Asia. I did not know where in Vietnam or with whom I would be serving. Imagine my surprise when my name was called to join the First Cav. I served a 12-month tour and was released from the Army the day after I landed in California. Four weeks later I was married.

Two years later I joined the Army reserves for a short time to earn some extra money. 19 years later, I retired as an E-8.

I live in Chili with my wife. We will celebrate 50 years of marriage this year. We have 2 sons and four grandchildren.

I have only been a member of Chapter 20 for 4 years. I have joined the Marching Unit, the Honor Guard and the Finance Committee. Last May, I was at the memorial for a school tour and went to Rush Henrietta Junior High for a discussion with the members of the Eighth-grade class.

I want to be Treasurer of the Chapter because I two degrees, one in Business and one in Accounting, I have 30 years of accounting experience in business. I have been an Accounting Manager, a Regional Controller and a Financial Analyst

I have built Accounting systems to include one with Quickbooks, the same software Chapter 20 is currently using. I have put together budgets as part of my duties. I have worked with outside accounting companies for annual audits, and I have worked part time doing individual tax returns.

As you can see, I am very well qualified to help and support Chapter 20 in one of the most critical functions in the Chapter.

Thank you for your consideration
Draper, William Michael 9-3-1947
Michalik, Willy R. 9-4-1947
Albanese Jr., John Ernest 9-5-1946
Sweet, James Newton 9-8-1945
Lesure, Ernest Estell 9-8-1946
Riccione, Steven Blaine 9-8-1947
Brady, Michael Edwin 9-8-1949
Kohlrusch, William Frederick 9-9-1931
Green Jr., Richard 9-9-1942
DeWispeleare, Rexford John 9-9-1945
Costanza, Kenneth David 9-9-1948
Marshall, James Alfred 9-12-1940
DeLooze, Jerald Frederick 9-13-1943
Hentschel, Robert Edward 9-16-1948
Zornow, Robert Lawrence 9-17-1949
Bullock, Gary E. 9-18-1942
Matteson, Thomas William 9-18-1947
Beck Jr., Edgar Peter 9-18-1950
Ehrmentraut Jr., John E. 9-19-1945
Davis, John Powers 9-20-1934
Robles-Miranda, Jose Anton 9-20-1941
Luckenbach Jr., Richard M. 9-24-1948
Crowley, John Edward 9-25-1949
Ottman, Todd Whitney 9-27-1948

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
VETERANS WALK COMMITTEE
154 Mendota Drive
Rochester, New York 14626

From:
Name: __________________________
Address: _________________________
City/Zip: _________________________
Phone: ___________________________

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 new reports from the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), the National League of Families and the DOD that another Service member was recovered, returned and identified this month. The total number of Americans who are still missing from the Vietnam War still stands at 1586.

1st Lieutenant Alva Ray Krogman, US Air Force from Worland, Wyoming was a pilot of a forward air control (FAC) Cessna O-1F Bird Dog assigned to the 23rd Tactical Air Support Squadron, 504th Tactical Air Support as part of the 7th Air Force in Thailand. On January 17, 1967, 1st Lt. Krogman left Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand on a two plane mission for visual reconnaissance in Savannakhet Province in Laos. While over the target area, 1st Lt, Krogman’s aircraft was hit by enemy ground fire. The pilot of the 2nd aircraft saw the damage to Krogman’s rear left wing. The 2nd aircraft came under fire and had to take evasive action. 1st Lt. Krogman’s burning wreckage was located but there was no signs of the parachute or 1st Lt. Krogman. Search and rescue teams attempted to reach the crash site but resistance from enemy forces in the area forced them to abort their attempts. Reports from the DPAA indicate that 1st Lt. Alva Ray Krogman was identified on July 7, 2020 and officially accounted for on July 14, 2020.

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

- Pfc. John P. Langan, US Marine Corps was lost November 22, 1943 at Tarawa. He was accounted for on July 15, 2020.
- Pfc. Frank L. Athon, US Marine Corps Reserves was lost November 22, 1943 at Tarawa. He was accounted for on July 31, 2020.
- Sgt. James N. Stryker, US Army was lost May 18, 1951 in South Korea. He was accounted for on August 10, 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) 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)

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

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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.
September is here! Which marks for me a transition month on my “memory calendar” from when I had completed 6 months near the DMZ in Vietnam, and only 6 months remaining on my year’s tour. Indeed, I was fortunate and lucky. But, when it comes to the Corona virus, there really is no sense of a transition by today’s calendar. Yes, I could be a short timer now, but who really knows for sure. I’m just trying to do what I feel is the correct thing at the moment. This is a strain and can evoke stresses, for all of us. But take one day at a time, just like we used to do with our short timer’s calendar. Certainly, keep an eye out for your friends and family members, just like we did for our buddies back in the day. If anyone seems stressed, please don’t be afraid to ask if they need anything. Kind of like... if you see something, say something...are you okay, can I help? We all handle stress in different ways, but sometimes a little help is all we need!

There are a few housekeeping items that I would like to add for your use in reporting this month’s BTL information.

First, incase you did not notice, VVA National’s bi-monthly magazine the Veteran is not coming to you in the mail. The July/August issue is available on line, and will be going forward. The cost is too much for the National organization to justify with reduced income from traditional sources such as the House Hold Goods donations that were a huge part of National’s operating budget. Please check out the publications electronically @ VVA.org (https://VVA.ORG) you can find not only the current issue of the Veteran, but also legislative issues, membership info, and other things related to being in the VVA. Furthermore, our NYS Council’s website has an electronic news publication too. Go to NYVietnamvets.org (https://NYVietnamvets.org) to access other related info happening around the state and nationally too.

Some info worth your attention. The VA has approved and will make available the extension for the Caregiver’s program to help older veterans such as Vietnam vets. Please realize that some additional benefits could possibly come your way based upon these new guide lines. At the July BOD meeting it was suggested, we try and locate a list of benefits or sources provided by the VA that we could access easily. The VA Data Availability listing may be one way of getting information out to you for your use. Included too, is information that VVA National is asking the VA Headquarters to investigate some to the state veteran homes that saw large outbreaks and deaths of veterans throughout the country from Covid-19. The VA does not have direct supervision, but the VA is some cases will fund budgets of various state veteran homes, so morally they should have some oversite and safeguards. September is the time of the year when I beat the drum for attention to the upcoming flu season, and getting...
your shots, so until we meet in person, I will beat the drum via the BTL. Get your shots, included is an article about further benefits for getting the flu shot, perhaps avoiding dementia. A way of obtaining your needed prescriptions is also enclosed. Gold Star Mother’s Day, 09-27-20, keep them in your thoughts. As always, if you need anything, email or call.
Respectfully submitted by:  Jerry McDermott, Chair Health Affair

Update 13: Getting These 2 Shots Could Reduce Your Risk of Dementia

Getting a flu shot is always wise, but especially so this year. The vaccine helps protect against influenza, which can be dangerous and even deadly. Getting more people vaccinated against flu should mean fewer patients in hospitals, which is crucial during a time when the coronavirus pandemic continues to rage. Now, another reason has emerged to get the flu shot: Doing so may reduce your risk of being diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease. Three separate studies presented at the Alzheimer’s Association International Conference in late July all point in that direction. According to these studies:

- Getting at least one flu vaccination drops the risk of Alzheimer’s by 17%. Additional, frequent vaccinations drop the risk by another 13%.
- Being vaccinated for pneumonia when you are between ages 65 and 75 lowers Alzheimer’s risk by up to 40%. However, the impact here depends on an individual’s genetic makeup.

These vaccinations also can protect people who already have dementia, because those with dementia have a six-fold higher risk of dying after contracting an infection such as influenza or pneumonia. The Alzheimer’s Association notes that earlier, smaller studies also had found links between vaccinations and reduced risk of cognitive decline. But the research presented at this year’s conference involved larger studies.

One study — out of the McGovern Medical School at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston — involved an analysis of a large dataset of American health records. It found that people who consistently got their annual flu shot had an almost 6% reduced risk of Alzheimer’s disease when they were between the ages of 75 and 84. Being vaccinated at an earlier age — for example, getting one’s first flu shot at age 60 rather than age 70 — lowered the risk of developing Alzheimer’s even more, the researchers note. Another study — out of the Duke University Social Science Research Institute — found that people who had pneumonia vaccination between the ages of 65 and 75 reduced their risk of developing Alzheimer’s by between 25% and 30%, after adjusting for a known genetic risk factor for Alzheimer’s and other characteristics. This reduction was as high as 40% among the people who do not have the gene associated with Alzheimer’s risk.

The Alzheimer’s Association adds: “Total number of vaccinations against pneumonia and the flu between ages 65 and 75 was also associated with a lower risk of Alzheimer’s; however, the effect was not evident for the flu shot alone.” For more on preventing dementia, check out:

- “7 Lifestyle Changes That May Help Prevent Dementia“
- “Eating This Food Can Reduce Your Risk of Alzheimer’s Disease“

[Source: MoneyTalksNews | Chris Kissell | August 3, 2020++]
VA Caregiver Program
Update 64: Final 1 OCT PCAFC Regulation Posted

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) on 31 JUL published its final regulation to improve and expand the VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) with the final regulation going into effect on 1 OCT. Under the final regulation, PCAFC will include eligible Veterans that have a single or combined service-connected disability rating by VA of 70% or higher, regardless of whether it resulted from an injury, illness or disease.

This is a notable change to the definition of serious injury from the current regulations, among other improvements aimed at standardizing the PCAFC and improving transparency in the program. Expansion of VA’s PCAFC to eligible Veterans of earlier eras will occur in two phases. The first phase will begin October 2020 and will include eligible Veterans who incurred or aggravated a serious injury in the line of duty in the active, military, naval or air service on or before May 7, 1975. Phase two will go into effect two years later and include eligible Veterans of all eras.

“The expanded regulation addresses the complexity and expense of keeping Veterans at home with their families who provide personalized care,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “This will allow our most vulnerable Veterans to stay with their loved ones for as long as possible. Expanding the program and eligibility for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers ensures we can continue to meet the changing needs of America’s Veterans and their caregivers.” Additionally, the new regulation will change the PCAFC stipend payment methodology, define new procedures for revocation and discharge, and include certain advance notice requirements aimed at improving communication between VA and PCAFC participants as well as include information for current program participants.

VA is also standardizing operating procedures for the Caregiver Support Program, providing new training for staff and caregivers, and boosting operational capacity by hiring additional staff. With this expansion, Primary Family Caregivers in PCAFC will also have access to financial planning and legal services. VA is also working to fully implement the new information technology system required by the VA MISSION Act of 2018 by October 2020. VA’s Caregiver Support Program offers support services for caregivers including training, peer mentoring, respite care, a telephone support line, and self-care courses for caregivers of covered Veterans enrolled in VA health care who need personal care services.

Caregivers can visit VA Caregiver support website https://www.caregiver.va.gov or call the Caregiver Support Line at 855-260-3274 for questions. The final regulation can be found here. If necessary, search for RIN 2900-AQ48, Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers Improvements and Amendments under the VA MISSION Act of 2018. [Source: VVA Web Weekly | July 31, 2020++]

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VA Caregiver Program
Update 65: DAV Memo on PCAFC Regulation

MEMO TO: Department Commanders and Adjutants
Department Benefit Protection Team Leaders
FROM: Joy J. Ilem, National Legislative Director
SUBJ: CAREGIVER INFORMATION UPDATE
DATE: August 6, 2020

Last week the VA issued its final regulation concerning the expansion of its Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers to pre-9/11 veterans as required by the VA MISSION Act. We are pleased to be moving closer to expanding eligibility for this program to veterans and caregivers who, despite their needs, have been unable to access these benefits for a decade. While we thoroughly review the details of the new regulations, it is important to note a few points.

• First, VA has not yet announced when or how pre-9/11 veterans may apply for caregiver benefits based on the new regulations. Even though these regulations will take effect on October 1, 2020, the program cannot begin expanding to cover these earlier eras of veterans until the Secretary has certified that a new caregiver IT system is fully implemented, which is already a year late. As soon as VA makes this certification or provides additional information on application procedures, we will pass it along to you. You can also find VA’s latest information about the program and the expansion to pre-9/11 veterans at https://www.va.gov/family-member-benefits/comprehensive-assistance-for-family-caregivers.
• Second, we are very pleased that the new regulations will finally open eligibility for the caregiver program to include not just severely injured veterans, but also those who incurred or aggravated an illness in the line of duty, which includes diseases and conditions like cancer, diabetes, etc. These veterans may be eligible for VA’s caregiver support program if they have a single or combined service-connected rating of 70% or more and meet the other applicable program criteria in the new regulations. More information on the updated eligibility criteria can be found at https://www.caregiver.va.gov/pdfs/MissionAct/CaregiversPCAFCaregiverSupportUpdate%2073120%20150%208.7.20.pdf

For years, DAV has advocated for inclusion of these veterans and their caregivers, knowing their disabilities take just as heavy a toll as do many physical wounds. This is a decisive victory for our nation’s veterans, and is long overdue recognition of their sacrifices and those of their family caregivers.

Finally, while VA’s final rule will open eligibility to phase one immediately following IT certification, it also states that phase two expansion will not happen for another two years after that date (phase one includes veterans who became injured or ill on or before May 7, 1975, phase two includes veterans who became injured or ill between May 8, 1975 and September 10, 2001). Congress clearly intended the second phase to occur by October 2021, and we believe that veterans and their caregivers should not have to wait another year for these benefits due to VA’s continued delays in certifying the IT system.

We will continue to provide updates on the expansion of the VA’s caregiver program, including information about when veterans may begin applying under the new criteria, as well as our efforts to accelerate the second phase of the expansion. Thanks for all your continued efforts to support the men and women who served.

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**VA Caregiver Program**

**Update 66: Stipends Set to Expand To Vietnam Vets & Older Generations**

Veterans Affairs officials are planning to expand caregiver’s stipends to additional families starting this October, one year after advocates had originally hoped for the financial assistance to be put in place. About 20,000 veterans — all of whom left the service after Sept. 11, 2001 — are currently participating in the VA caregiver program. The payouts provide thousands of dollars a month in compensation to spouses, parents and other partners of severely injured veterans who otherwise would require expensive institutionalization.

Under new regulations released 31 JUL, department officials said caregivers of veterans injured on military duty before May 7, 1975, would be eligible for the monthly payouts as early as 1 OCT, although when the bulk of payouts would occur remains unclear. Caregivers of veterans injured between 1975 and 2001 would have to wait two more years to enter the stipend program, under rules previously established by Congress. That leaves those families with a wait until at least October 2022 to enter the program. VA Secretary Robert Wilkie said the changes “will allow our most vulnerable veterans to stay with their loved ones for as long as possible” while recognizing the complexity of adding up to 41,000 new families to the program in coming years.

The expansion is expected to cost about $3 billion over the next five years, according to previous VA calculations. The expansion was mandated under the VA Mission Act passed by Congress and signed into law by President Donald Trump in summer 2019. The law is best known for an overhaul of VA’s community care programs, which Trump often refers to as
“veterans choice” in campaign stump speeches. But the caregiver provisions were a major issue for veterans advocates at the time of passage, because of concerns that many elderly veterans had been unfairly excluded from the program. The program was due to be expanded in fall 2019, but delays in mandated technology upgrades pushed back the initiative by a year.

Under the final regulation, the revised Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers veterans with a service-connected disability rating of 70 percent or higher, regardless whether their condition resulted from an injury, illness or disease. Lawmakers say the VA is not doing enough to help family members who care for wounded veterans. Monthly stipends are based on federal locality pay rules where veterans live. For a veteran living in Phoenix, for example, the caregiver of a veteran unable to live without full-time assistance would receive about $2,700 a month, and a caregiver of a veteran who needs only partial help would receive about $1,700 a month.

Department officials said they will also provide new training for staff and caregivers, to include financial planning and legal services for families. The caregiver support program already provides eligible recipients with peer mentoring, respite care, and other support services. More information is available on https://www.va.gov/family-member-benefits/comprehensive-assistance-for-family-caregivers. [Source: MilitaryTimes | Leo Shane III | July 31, 2020 ++]
• **Housing assistance** -- Find out if you're eligible for VA home loan programs to help you buy, build, repair, or keep a home. If you have a service-connected disability, see if you qualify for a housing grant to help you live more independently.

• **Careers and employment** -- Apply for vocational rehabilitation services, get support for your Veteran-owned small business, and access other career resources.

• **Life insurance** -- Explore VA life insurance options for Veterans, service members, and families. Manage your policy online, file claims for benefits, and access helpful resources.

• **Pension** -- Apply for monthly payments for wartime Veterans and survivors with limited or no income who meet certain age and disability requirements.

• **Burials and memorials** -- Get help planning a burial in a VA national cemetery, order a headstone or other memorial item to honor a Veteran's service, and apply for survivor and dependent benefits.

• **Records** -- Apply for a printed Veteran ID card, get your VA benefit letters and medical records, and learn how to apply for a discharge upgrade.

• **Benefits for spouses, dependents, survivors, and family caregivers** -- Learn about benefits for spouses and dependents of a Veteran or service member, including added support if you're caring for a Veteran with a service-connected disability.

[Source: https://www.va.gov/welcome-kit | Kevin Secor | August 12, 2020 ++]

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**VA Prescription Refills**

**Update 03: Four Ways to Do It During the Pandemic**

As COVID-19 spreads, people who regularly take prescription drugs for chronic conditions such as diabetes or high blood pressure may be wondering what will happen with their refills. VA wants you to know we're working hard to make sure you get your prescriptions on time, and when you need them. They ask that you request refills of your VA Prescriptions as soon as possible. VA will process your refill request and have it sent to you before you're scheduled to run out.

**How do Veterans request refills of their prescriptions?**

To prevent waste and reduce the risk that unneeded medications could fall into the wrong hands, VA does not automatically refill medications. To receive a medication refill authorized by your VA prescriber, you must actively request a refill using one of the methods described below:

• **Online with My HealtheVet:** You can request refills of your refillable VA-issued prescriptions, track VA prescription deliveries, view VA prescription history online.

• **The NEW Rx Refill Mobile App:** You can request refills of your refillable VA-issued prescriptions, track VA prescription deliveries, view VA prescription history from the convenience of your mobile device.

• **Telephone Call:** Most VA Pharmacies have automated telephone refill lines. You can find the phone number of your local VA Pharmacy on your prescription label. To order refills by phone, you will need the prescription number (shown as RX # on the prescription label) and your Social Security Number. For many prescriptions that are no longer refillable, this automated system may allow you to send a request for more of this medication to be sent to you. For some medications, the healthcare team will need to contact you first.

• **By Mail:** VA Pharmacy provides a refill request form with each prescription filled. To refill by mail, please complete the request form and mail it to your VA pharmacy at the address listed on the paperwork that arrives with your prescription.

The COVID-19 situation is changing fast. Try not to forget to take your medications or refill your prescriptions. Not having certain medications could cause health problems that require medical attention, putting you at risk of exposure with a facility visit. Veterans who forget to re-order their medications in time have three options. You can contact your VA medical center pharmacy, call the phone number on the prescription label, or use My HealtheVet's Secure Messaging (sign in required) to get in touch with your health care team, especially if your prescription is no longer refillable. As a last resort, you may visit your VA pharmacy in person to request a refill. You may be subject to screening before entering the facility. You might also have a very long wait to have your prescription refilled. Visiting in person can unnecessarily put you and others at risk of infection.
Delivery times can be affected by weather and the COVID-19 pandemic. Using the Track Delivery feature on My HealtheVet (sign in required), you can obtain the tracking number in use by either the U.S. Postal Service or UPS. Keeping yourself healthy is one of the best ways to defend yourself against COVID-19. VA knows that this can be a stressful time for Veterans, make sure you're doing everything you can to keep your immune system strong and healthy. [Source: VA News | August 12, 2020 ++]

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**Vet Home Covid-19 Impact**

**Update 01: Aging Veterans at State Homes 'Left Behind'**

Aging, ill and disabled veterans living at state homes across the country were "left behind" during the coronavirus pandemic, according to a recent report, and now more than 1,000 have died. At least 1,011 residents of state veterans' homes across the country died from complications of the coronavirus as of 17 JUL, according to a report released last week by Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA). But that number is likely much higher. Only 47 of the 162 total state veterans' homes have reported data to federal officials so far -- five months into the pandemic.

As the numbers of veterans dying in state homes began to grow, VVA assembled a committee to investigate. VVA leaders called what they discovered "disturbing" -- a lack of oversight, transparency and most of all, accountability, investigators said. So far, the committee has been unable to obtain pandemic data for 115 of the state homes, leaving the extent of the virus' effects on older veterans unclear. But advocates and lawmakers said the number of known deaths is startling enough to question the Department of Veterans Affairs' role in managing the homes. VVA leaders said VA refused to own any responsibility for the failings at state homes that led to so many deaths. The rising death toll, VVA said, "called into question the entire spectrum of the state veterans' home/VA relationship." "There is a sense that VA does not embrace the care of these veterans as being part of its mission," VVA's report reads.

The report, "[America's Aging Veteran Population and the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)" is the result of five months of investigation into the state homes, and comes to one major conclusion: VA should have a greater role in overseeing the state homes. “We were disturbed that VA officials, including VA Secretary Wilke, have denied having any authority or responsibility for veterans in the homes,” said VVA National President John Rowan. “In truth, VA’s Geriatric and Extended Care Programs offer a continuum of services and programs -- which include the state veterans’ homes. We were dismayed that VA leadership had chosen to view this group of veterans as part of VA’s Fourth Mission -- to assist civilians in times of emergency.”

Veterans eligible for VA-funded assisted living care are split up among several types of facilities. Some receive care at 157 state veterans’ homes. Others, at VA-managed community living centers (CLCs). Still others receive care at private facilities paid for by VA. VA provides federal grants to the veterans' homes, but they are owned and managed by the states under federal law. VA officials told lawmakers during a hearing last month that the department “does not have authority over the management or control of a (state veterans’ home).” But VVA leaders said VA "relies heavily on state homes to provide the bulk of long-term care for our elderly veterans." VA is responsible for ensuring the homes meet department standards through annual surveys, audits, inspections and other checks. In some cases, VA is the only agency inspecting the facilities, a 2019 Government Accountability report revealed. That report also showed VA allowed its inspectors to disregard failings at some state homes.

But a sharp disparity has emerged over the course of the pandemic. In an interview last month, Secretary Robert Wilkie said just two of the about 7,500 veterans in CLCs nationwide were battling the virus. In other interviews, Wilkie stressed his lack of direct authority over the homes, but said VA had moved into some of them to offer aid. VA officials said the department has admitted more than 120 patients from at least 12 state veterans' homes, in addition to deploying staff to state homes directly. VA offered that aid through the agency's Fourth Mission, to serve as a last line of defense for the American health care system in emergencies such as natural disasters or pandemics. VVA's report revealed that at least 33 of the state homes saw 10 or more veterans die because of the coronavirus. The facilities with the greatest number of deaths were the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke, Mass., and the Paramus Veterans Memorial Home in New Jersey. Both reported more than 80 COVID-19 deaths. VA does not include the deaths of veterans at state homes in its COVID-19 data, Press Secretary Christina Noel previously told Connecting Vets.
Lawmakers were dissatisfied with what several viewed as VA shirking responsibility, arguing that there should not be separate standards of care for veterans under VA's direct authority and those at state homes. VVA's report reflects that, saying Wilkie "disavowed any responsibility" and calling his comments "puzzling," "disappointing and disturbing." The report concludes, "The scope of his responsibility applies to every one of the 20 million living veterans and the 3.83 million veterans buried in 143 VA cemeteries, not to mention America’s men and women in uniform serving on the frontiers of freedom today". Federal law states that VA "shall have no authority over the management or control of any state (veterans') home, Noel pointed out, arguing that states are "solely responsible" for the homes "and any problems that arise within them."

VA data estimates that nearly 55% -- more than 10.8 million -- of all American veterans are 65 or older. Congress, veteran service organizations and other advocates have continually questioned whether VA is prepared to handle a growing number of aging and ill former service members. The pandemic has deepened those concerns. “The idea of not abandoning a fallen soldier on the battlefield is a tightly held credo,” Rowan said. “Images of overflowing emergency rooms, body bags stacked on loading docks, refrigerated trucks for morgues and stories of patients dying without their families triggered memories of our own wartime experiences, and we recognized that today’s battlefield is the COVID-19 pandemic.” [Source: ConnectingVets.com | Abbie Bennett | August 11, 2020 ++]

**U.S. Flag**

**Why Do We Stand**

Why do Americans stand for the U.S. flag and the national anthem? In the midst of the NFL controversy over players who take a knee instead of standing for the national anthem, let us remember the many reasons why many of us stand for the flag and how it all began.

Americans have stood for the U.S. flag since June 14, 1777, the day the Continental Congress declared “that the flag of the (thirteen) United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white: that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation.” Thirty-seven years later in Aug. 1814, the White House and U.S. Capitol lay in ashes after the British military burned the public buildings in Washington D.C. In the immediate aftermath, many Americans understandably feared that the Union Jack, the British flag, would soon fly over all of America again. Hence, three weeks after the sacking of Washington, Francis Scott Key, a Maryland attorney who politically oppose the current president, was so moved at seeing the U.S. flag flying victoriously at the end of the battle for Baltimore’s Fort McHenry, that he wrote lyrics for The Star-Spangled Banner, the song we now call the national anthem.

1. **We stand for the flag today, not to please ourselves but to honor those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.** The more than 1.2 million Americans who have died because of war. We stand for soldiers who initially inspired our national anthem, such as William Williams, a runaway slave who later died after having his leg blown off as part of the 38th U.S. Infantry at the Battle of Fort McHenry. We also stand for more recent heroes, such as Robert Kelly, the son of White House Chief of Staff John Kelly, a marine lieutenant who died in a roadside bomb blast in Afghanistan in 2010.

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“I believe every American, when the national anthem is played, should cover their hearts and think about all the men and women who have been maimed and killed. Every American should stand and think for three lousy minutes,” John Kelly declared in response to the NFL controversy.

2. We stand for the flag not to focus on what divides us but on what unites us, which is being an American.

“The name of American, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles,” George Washington, our first president, declared in his farewell address in 1796.

The same is true today. More than being a New Yorker or a Texan or being a Steelers fan or Rams fan, the name “American” deserves our highest respect and pride. Standing for the flag and anthem at a sports game or other public gatherings, symbolically shows that we are all Americans, no matter our race or religion, no matter our preferred sports team, and no matter our political differences. Standing is the ultimate salute to sportsmanship.

3. We stand for the flag not to pledge allegiance to a president, but to honor the reality that we have an elected president and not a lifetime king.

By standing, we honor the fact that our country has had 45 presidents. Our flag reflects our system of government, divided by 50 states, the stars on the flag, but united under a federal government. The national anthem controversy in the NFL started during the term of our previous president and continues during our current president’s term.

4. We stand not because of past or present pain caused by injustice, but to salute the principle of justice.

This is one of the three definitions for the color blue that Congress gave us in 1782. “The colors of . . . those used in the flag of the United States of America. White signifies purity and innocence. Red (signifies) hardiness and valor and blue . . . signifies vigilance, perseverance and justice.” Patriotism is not pride in the pain of our nation’s past. Rather, patriotism is pride in the principles that paved the way for change, whether that change was trading royalty for representation in 1776 or exchanging enslavement for emancipation in 1863.

From John Adams and Thomas Jefferson to Martin Luther King, Jr., many Americans have stood for justice for a more perfect union. “When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men—yes, black men as well as white men—would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” King declared in his 1968 “I Have a Dream” speech. King tapped the principles created by our founders and applied them to make “justice a reality for all of God’s children.”

5. We stand for the flag not for our generation but to set an example for the next generation.

“If we do not advocate a love of country to our children and the generations to come, then why would our children grow up to fight for their countries, the founding principles and moral truths?” Melania Trump asked in a recent speech to the United Nations. Passing along patriotism is crucial to the future survival of America. The color of white in the flag symbolizes the purity and innocence of our children. When we stand for the flag and anthem, we are standing for our hopes for our children’s future, that they will embrace the principles of patriotism and live out its moral truths of justice, perseverance and courage. We stand for the flag and anthem so they can stand for the flag and anthem.

[Source: The Hill | Jane Hampton Cook (Opinion) | September 29, 2017 ++]
HOW DO COURT RECORDERS KEEP STRAIGHT FACES?

These are from a book called Disorder in the American Courts and are things people actually said in court, word for word, taken down and published by court reporters that had the torment of staying calm while the exchanges were taking place.

ATTORNEY: Now doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn't know about it until the next morning?
   WITNESS: Did you actually pass the bar exam?

ATTORNEY: The youngest son, the 20-year-old, how old is he?
   WITNESS: He's 20, much like your IQ.

ATTORNEY: Were you present when your picture was taken?
   WITNESS: Are you shitting me?

ATTORNEY: She had three children, right?
   WITNESS: Yes.
ATTORNEY: How many were boys?
   WITNESS: None.
ATTORNEY: Were there any girls?
   WITNESS: Your Honor, I think I need a different attorney. Can I get a new attorney?

ATTORNEY: How was your first marriage terminated?
   WITNESS: By death.
ATTORNEY: And by whose death was it terminated?
   WITNESS: Take a guess.

ATTORNEY: Can you describe the individual?
   WITNESS: He was about medium height and had a beard.
ATTORNEY: Was this a male or a female?
   WITNESS: Unless the Circus was in town, I'm going with male.
### Board Meetings | Membership Meetings
--- | ---
Sept 1, 2020 | Sept 10, 2020 Cancelled
Oct 6, 2020 | Oct 8, 2020
Nov 3, 2020 | Nov 12, 2020

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**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

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Could someone you know be in crisis?
The VA’s National Suicide Crisis Line
1-800-273-TALK or 1-800-273-8255
24/7 365 days/per year
Provides professional counseling to veterans, their family members or friends.

Do you know a veteran who is homeless?
The VA’s National Homeless Veterans Hotline
1-877-424-3838
24/7 365 days/per year
Rochester VA Outpatient Clinic

465 Westfall Road
Rochester, NY 14620

Phone: 585-463-2600
Fax: 585-463-2649

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

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
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- Greater Rochester Vietnam Veterans Memorial  
  753-7275
- VA Outpatient Clinic  
  260 Calkins Road  
  463-2600
- VA Outpatient Clinic  
  465 Westfall Rd  
  463-2600
- Veterans Outreach Center  
  459 South Avenue  
  546-1081
- VA Vet Center  
  232-5040
- Veterans Administration  
  800-827-1000
- Monroe County Veterans Service Agency  
  753-6040
- National League of Families
  e-mail: serviceofficer@yahoo.com
- VA Veterans Benefits Hotline  
  800-827-1000
- Women Veterans Call Center  
  888-829-6636
- VA Medical Center in Batavia  
  297-1000
- VA Hospital in Buffalo  
  716-834-9200
- VA Medical Center in Canandaigua  
  394-2000
- VA Medical Center in Bath  
  607-664-4000
- Vietnam Veterans of America National Office  
  800-882-1316
- Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund  
  202-393-0090
- POW/MIA Updates  
  202-223-6846
- Richards House at VOC  
  506-9060
- The Resource Center at VOC  
  546-4250
- Starks & Stripes – The Flag Store  
  546-3524
- National Caregivers Support Line  
  855-260-3274
- Homeless Hotline  
  877-424-3838

**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)
- Honor Flight  