

Vietnam Veterans of America



*Westchester
County
Chapter #49*

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL, LASDON PARK, SOMERS, NEW YORK

If box is checked
your dues are due now.

All the POW's are not home yet!
Do you know?
Do you care?



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Vietnam Veterans of America
P.O. Box 224
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Vice President: Al Zawiski 428-9352
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Treasurer: Al Singerman 930-7433

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Dan Griffin

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Yonkers: Dan Morea 377-6700
Carmel: Brennen Mahoney 845-808-1620

Vet Center: 300 Hamilton Ave, White Plains, NY 10601

Roger Paulmeno 682-6250

White Plains Clinic 421-1951
23 S. Broadway, White Plains, NY 10601

FDR Montrose Hospital 737-4400

Westchester County Veterans Service Agency:

Dan Griffin 995-2146 / 2145

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Comm. Affairs Dan Griffin 682-4949
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Scholarship Bob Miller 391-8723

WESTCHESTER COUNTY VETERANS MUSEUM

HOURS:

11:00 - 3:30

914-864-7068

WEDNESDAY - SUNDAY
AND HOLIDAYS

Chapter 49

Telephone / Fax Number
(914) 682-4949

Website:

www.vietnamvets49.org

E-Mail:

mailto: Chapter49@aol.com

Meetings: 1st Thursday of the month
at
Armonk Post 1097
35 Bedford Rd.
Armonk, NY 10504

This newsletter is a publication of Chapter 49, however the opinions expressed herein are those of the contributors, and as such, they do not necessarily represent those of Chapter 49. All views are welcome for publication. Submit items of interest, including poems, short stories, photographs, etc., to the Editors at the Chapter address or call for other arrangements. Materials submitted will not be returned unless otherwise requested.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

VVA National has decided to make the \$100.00 life membership permanent; so if you are still paying \$20.00 a year now is your chance to receive a life membership for \$100.00.

As of today we have 283 members and 224 of those are life members. I think it would be great if Chapter 49 became the first Chapter with 100% life members.

We need a few more members to volunteer to be cashiers at the NYS veterans Nursing Home Gift Shop. I know that a lot of members are now retiring and have some time to volunteer. It would only be four hours, one day a week. Or more if you like. It is pretty easy; just ring up the sales and talk with the residents. It feels good to help out our older brother and sister veterans.

Elsewhere in this newsletter is a flyer about our upcoming Chapter picnic in September. I hope to see you there.

Take care of yourself and each other

Dan Griffin

Welcome to our newest members

Robert Thate life member from Hawthorne

Arthur Ralph life member from Somers

Veterans Groups Sue VA for Withholding Information Demanded by Veterans Poisoned by Camp Lejeune's Toxic Water

VA's Controversial "Subject Matter Expert" Program Keeps Public in the Dark

(Wash., D.C.)---Today Vietnam Veterans of America, along with The Few, The Proud, The Forgotten, filed suit under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to compel the Department of Veterans Affairs to produce records on the Camp Lejeune Subject Matter Expert (SME) program. The VA created the SME program in 2012 to evaluate disability compensation claims. Since that time, the public has filed numerous requests for information on the SME program, but VA has largely ignored such requests.

"It is high time the federal government and all of its entities stop lying and withholding evidence on the toxic substances to which veterans and their families have been exposed. To have anonymous subject experts is not the American way, and in a democracy, this lack of transparency is not acceptable," said John Rowan, National President of Vietnam Veterans of America.

Between 1953 and 1987, nearly one million veterans, their families, and civilian employees at Camp Lejeune, a Marine training base in North Carolina, were exposed to toxic drinking water in one of the worst contaminations in U.S. history. Many have since developed illnesses like kidney, bladder, and breast cancer, and many have lost their lives as a result. Thousands of veterans have applied for disability compensation for diseases related to their exposure to toxic water aboard Camp Lejeune. The VA has denied the vast majority of these claims.

Initiated in 2012, the SME program tasks an anonymous group of clinicians with issuing medical opinions on the disability compensation claims of Camp Lejeune veterans. Since the VA created the SME program, the grant rate for these claims plummeted from approximately 25 percent to 8 percent.

From the limited information publically available, veterans groups and medical professionals have identified concerns about the clinicians' credentials, methods, and expertise. SME program clinicians have repeatedly cited scientific reports that VA officials have admitted are outdated. In at least one case, the VA relied on a report by an SME program clinician who cut and pasted a Wikipedia entry to provide a medical opinion on a rare type of cancer.

Veterans groups submitted a FOIA request to the VA in December 2015, seeking comprehensive records on the Camp Lejeune SME program, including policies, procedures, and objectives; fiscal impact; data and statistical information; and training records. The VA has not responded to this request.

Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), ranking member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, said, "the SME program has been using incorrect and outdated information. The alarming drop in the grant rate of Camp Lejeune claims deserves real, penetrating scrutiny."

"The VA claims it created the Camp Lejeune SME program to assist veterans, but it is adversarial and unjust. Everything we know about the program indicates it should be scrapped," said retired Marine Master Sergeant Jerry Ensminger, founder of The Few, The Proud, The Forgotten, who lost his daughter at age nine to childhood leukemia linked to exposure to Camp Lejeune's toxic water.

"The VA's lack of transparency is alarming. The qualifications and methodology of the SME clinicians are concerning. Given that the VA has called this program a model for toxic exposure compensation claims in the future, veterans need to understand how this program works." said Rory Minnis, a former Marine and law student intern at the Veterans Legal Services Clinic at Yale Law School.



PICNIC



CHAPTER PICNIC

SEPTEMBER 18th 12:00 UNTIL?

ARMONK AMERICAN LEGION PAVILION

OUR CHAPTER WILL FURNISH HOT DOGS,
HAMBURGERS, CORN, CLAMS, SODA AND
CONDIMENTS

MARSHALL CLAVEL DONATES THE OUTSTANDING
RIBS AND HE DOES MOST OF THE COOKING.

PLEASE BRING SALADS AND DESERTS

THIS PICNIC IS FOR US AND OUR FAMILIES

WE NEED TO KNOW HOW MANY ARE ATTENDING

SO CALL OR EMAIL TO LET US KNOW

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO DONATE

TO OFFSET THE COSTS

HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL THERE

National POW/MIA Remembrance Act of 2015 signed into law

Vietnam Veterans of America -Legislative Update

May 3, 2016

On April 29, 2016, The President of the United States signed into law the National POW/MIA Remembrance Act of 2015. This new law was introduced in the house (H.R. 1760) by Congressman Stephen Lynch (MA-8) and companion bill in the Senate (S.885) by Senator Elizabeth Warren (MA). The new law reads as follows:

One Hundred Fourteenth Congress of the United States of America

AT THE SECOND SESSION

Begun and held at the City of Washington on Monday, the fourth day of January, two thousand and sixteen
An Act

To direct the Architect of the Capitol to place in the United States Capitol a chair honoring American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "National POW/MIA Remembrance Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) In recent years, commemorative chairs honoring American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action have been placed in prominent locations across the United States.

(2) The United States Capitol is an appropriate location to place a commemorative chair honoring American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action.

SEC. 3. PLACEMENT OF A CHAIR IN UNITED STATES CAPITOL HONORING AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR/MISSING IN ACTION.

(a) Obtaining Chair.--The Architect of the Capitol shall enter into an agreement to obtain a chair featuring the logo of the National League of POW/MIA Families under such terms and conditions as the Architect considers appropriate and consistent with applicable law.

(b) Placement.--Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Architect shall place the chair obtained under subsection (a) in a suitable permanent location in the United States Capitol.

SEC. 4. FUNDING.

(a) Donations.--The Architect of the Capitol may--

(1) enter into an agreement with any organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of that Code to solicit private donations to carry out the purposes of this Act; and

(2) accept donations of funds, property, and services to carry out the purposes of this Act.

(b) Costs.--All costs incurred in carrying out the purposes of this Act shall be paid for with private donations received under subsection (a).

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Vice President of the United States and President of the Senate.

News Flash



Institute on Medicine (IOM) releases 2014 Agent Orange Update

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

March 10, 2016

No. 16-9

Mokie Porter
301-585-4000, #146

IOM Releases Veterans and Agent Orange, Update 2014: Bladder Cancer, Hypothyroidism, Parkinson-like Symptoms, Hypertension, and Stroke Upgraded; Spina Bifida in offspring Downgraded

(Washington, D.C.)---Today, the Institute of Medicine released Veterans and Agent Orange Update 2014, the tenth biennial evaluation of relevant scientific studies--published between October 1, 2012, and September 30, 2014--on Agent Orange and other herbicides used during military operations in Vietnam.

"Vietnam Veterans of America thanks the IOM's Veterans and Agent Orange Committee for upgrading the status of Bladder cancer and hypothyroidism to the Limited/Suggestive Category of Association; for clarifying that individuals with Parkinson-like symptoms without other known etiology should be included in the presumption for Parkinson's disease; and for firmly supporting the VAO's prior decisions--but not yet recognized by VA as presumptive conditions: hypertension and stroke," said VVA National President John Rowan.

"VVA calls on President Obama and Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert McDonald to immediately initiate the process for adding all of these conditions to the service-connected, presumptive list for those who served in Vietnam and elsewhere in the Southeast Asia theater of operations," said Rowan.

"Most disturbing," noted Rowan, "is the rationale behind the Committee's recommendation to downgrade Spina Bifida to Inadequate or Insufficient Evidence. As stated on Page 10 of Update 2014, 'since Update 1996, no new analyses of birth defect data, finding increased rates of spina bifida among children of men exposed to the chemicals of interest have become available.' IOM, in previous updates, has repeatedly called for the VA to conduct research on this issue. The VA has not spent a dime on this vitally needed research."

Of the more than 7,600 abstracts of scientific and medical articles related to Agent Orange, Agent Blue, and Agent White, none of these studies were funded by VA," said Rowan. "It is time for Congress to demand that the VA do their job by passing the Toxic Exposures Act (S. 901/ HR 1769) before Memorial Day."

*The Pete Lambert Memorial Scholarship \$700—Wesley D. Cash attended Somers High School

*The Peter T. McCauley Memorial Scholarship \$700—Jordan Zarzour attended Tappan Zee High School

*The Hamilton Fish Memorial Scholarship \$700—Ryan Tupper attended New Rochelle High School

*The William Sudderth Memorial Scholarship \$700—Benjamin M. Tait attended New Rochelle High School

*The Anthony Shine Memorial Scholarship \$700—Annie Stockel attended Pleasantville High School

*The Jonathan Shine Memorial Scholarship \$700—Kailee Di Vico attended Lakeland High School

On behalf of the Officers, Board of Directors and Members of Chapter 49 we congratulate these young individuals and wish them all the luck in their educational endeavors.

Also we would like to offer a special thanks to the Scholarship Committee for all the work they have done. Thank you to Bob Miller, Al Zawiski, Barney Puleo and Jim LaManna.

AUGUST 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4 meeting 6:00 Board 6:30 dinner 7:30 meeting	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23 Pizza Party FDR Stress Unit 5:30 PM	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

SEPTEMBER 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 meeting 6:00 Board 6:30 dinner 7:30 meeting	2	3
4	5 Labor Day	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 Chapter Picnic 12:00 Armonk	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 Pizza Party FDR Stress Unit 5:30 PM	28	29	30	

OCTOBER 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5 Vietnam medal ceremony Kensico Dam 4:30	6 meeting Board 6:00 Dinner 6:30 Meeting 7:30	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 <hr/> 30	24 <hr/> 31 Halloween	25 pizza Party FDR Stress unit 5:30 PM	26	27	28	29

NOVEMBER 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 meeting 6:00 Board 6:30 dinner 7:30 meeting	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11 Veterans Day	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22 Pizza Party FDR Stress Unit 5:30 PM	23	24 Thanksgiving	25	26
27	28	29	30			



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
WE NEED YOU
IN THE VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA



MEMBERSHIP TYPES and ELIGIBILITY

Individual Membership is open to any Vietnam-era Veteran who served on active duty in the U.S. armed forces between January 1, 1959 and May 7, 1975.

Associate Membership in the VVA is open to all who share our concerns – both men and women, friends, supporters, and families – Veteran or not.

Life Membership / Associate Life Membership is available to all who wish to demonstrate a greater commitment to the ideals and work of the V.V.A. (Economically a great deal!)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

check one

circle dues amount if applicable

Vietnam-era Veteran Application: 1 year - \$20 3 years - \$50 Life Membership - \$100
Individual Membership
(must provide a copy of applicant's DD-214)

Non-Vietnam-era Veteran Application: 1 year - \$20 3 years - \$50 Life Membership - \$100
Associate Membership

Non-Member Financial Contribution: \$

Report of Address Change:

Name: Phone:

Address: Date of Birth:

City: State: Zip Code:

E-mail Address:

Please make checks payable to: V.V.A. Chapter #49

Send application and check to:

Membership Chair, V.V.A. Chapter #49 PO Box 224, Pleasantville, NY 10570

Questions? Call the Chapter: Phone/Fax (914) 682-4949

or e-mail: Chapter49@aol.com

www.VietnamVets49.org



Chapter #49 meetings are held the 1st Thursday of each month at:
The Armonk American Legion Hall • 35 Bedford Rd. Armonk, NY 10504
Dinner at 6:30 pm / Meeting at 7:30 pm

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**SAILORS - JOIN NOW
CONTACT**

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