

Vietnam Veterans of America CHAPTER 49 • Westchester County



VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL, LASDON PARK, SOMERS, NEW YORK



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

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Carmel: 845-808-1620

Vet Center: 682-6250

White Plains Clinic 718-741-4300
FDR Montrose Hospital 737-4400

Westchester County Veterans Service Agency:

Dan Griffin 813-5049

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Scholarship	Bob Miller 391-8723

WESTCHESTER COUNTY VETERANS MUSEUM

HOURS:

11:00-3:30

SUMMER DAYS WEDNESDAY-SUNDAY

WINTER DAYS SATURDAY & SUNDAY

AND HOLIDAYS

864-7263

Chapter 49
Telephone / Fax Number
(914) 682-4949

Website:

www.vietnamvets49.org

E-Mail:

Mail to: Chapter49@aol.com

Meetings: 1st Thursday of the month
7:30

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

Our Monthly meeting dinners are now FREE!!!!

In this newsletter is the application and instructions for our Chapter Scholarship, this is for High School seniors We send the Scholarship kits out to all of the High Schools in Westchester County, but if your children or grandchildren live outside of the area, they are eligible also.

Elsewhere in this newsletter is an article written about our Chapter member Pat Selleck who survived the huge battle at the I Drang valley.

Also there is a great article about our memorial at Lasdon Park, written by Chapter member Bob Kennedy's wife Cindy.

We would love to have all of you attend our meetings; held once a Month on the first Thursday of the Month; if we need to change the date, I will inform you. If you have trouble seeing at night, you may consider asking your wife to drive you. Then she could visit and eat dinner with my wife Sharon and the other wives. Our FREE Dinner is at 6:30 and the meeting starts at 7:30. Our meetings are also on Zoom, to connect by computer go to: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84554514740>. Or you can call in by phone at 1-929-436-2866, use meeting ID: 845 5451 4740.

If you have an Email address, please email me so that I can send you updates as to our activities. And to update you on new VA benefits.

**Live simply
Love Generously
Care Deeply
Speak Kindly**

Take care of yourself and each other.

Dan Griffin

Welcome to our newest members.

Gerard Kelly from NYC

William Goodenough from Cortlandt Manor

Charles Herman from Montrose

Raymond Mosser from Woodbury, CT

A Vietnam Veteran's Day Story: The First Major Battle of the War

By Michael Gold

Pat Selleck's battalion, 450 men, was surrounded by more than 2,000 North Vietnamese soldiers in the central Highlands of South Vietnam, mid-November 1965. This was Ia Drang, the first major battle of the Vietnam War.

Selleck, a Cortlandt Manor resident, was a P4 Specialist, a senior scout observer in his platoon, part of the First Battalion, Seventh Cavalry Division. They had been dropped off by helicopter, for a search and destroy mission. The battalion came under fire as soon as they landed.

"You hear the rounds hit bushes around you, behind you," Selleck, now 83, told me. "You're nervous, a little jerky. You go into survival mode. You keep your head down and don't panic."

Selleck fired his M-16 rifle at the enemy.

"You see these guys coming at you. You shoot," he said. "You make sure the guys on your left and right are okay."

The battle went on for three days. Selleck was in what was called the inner perimeter, the center of the landing zone.

"We were held in reserve to back up the front lines, so no one could penetrate through. The NVA (North Vietnamese Army) could cause a massacre," Selleck said.

The men on the front lines were in grave danger.

"They were running out of ammo," Selleck said.

Selleck and other soldiers took it upon themselves to run ammunition to the front. He also picked up wounded men and carried them back to the medical station. Some of the soldiers had been hit in the arms or stomach.

"I grabbed a wounded guy, and we hauled back to the inner circle. I put men on my shoulder." Or, with other soldiers, he carried the wounded in teams.

As night fell, it was hard to find the medical station. But U.S. artillery units accidentally helped him. They were "dropping white phosphorus and it lit up the area, so you could see."

"We dropped them off, then went back," he said, with the North Vietnamese continuing to shoot at everybody.

"The second run I made, an Air Force officer told me he wanted my name, rank and serial number to put me in for a medal. I heard a ping (of bullets), a round came in around us. I told the officer, 'Get out of my way – I'm getting shot at!'" (Selleck's language was somewhat stronger than what we can print here.)

During the battle, American planes dropped napalm on the North Vietnamese, but it also hit some of its own forces.

"I felt heat on my face," when the napalm hit, Selleck said. He got on the radio and shouted at the pilot, "You dumb —! You're dropping napalm on us!"

When the battle was over, 79 members of Selleck's battalion

were killed and 121 wounded.

Other units were ambushed in a different part of the operation. Total American losses at Ia Drang were 305, according to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund website.

"After the battle was over, we went back to the landing zone, where the artillery was. I was told to take a headcount of everybody alive. Colonel Moore said we will leave no man on the battlefield," Selleck recalled.

That meant the battalion would recover the dead and get them home.

He was discharged shortly after the battle and returned to the U.S., first to his father's Manhattan apartment.

"Dad knew I was in battle, but he didn't know I was alive," Selleck said.

When Selleck knocked on his father's door, his dad thought it might be soldiers telling him Pat was dead.

"He was in a state of shock."

From there, he reunited with Trudy, his wife, and resumed his job fixing telephones. The couple had two daughters – Ann Marie and Patricia.

In March 1966, Selleck got an envelope in the mail. The Army had awarded him the Bronze Star.

"Under intense enemy small arms and automatic weapons fire, Specialist Four Selleck voluntarily moved from his position, in battalion reserve, to the front lines in order to evacuate seriously wounded personnel. Specialist Four Selleck contributed to saving American lives," his commendation states.

Colonel Moore, promoted to lieutenant general, wrote a book recording the battle, titled "We Were Soldiers Once... And Young," published in 1992. Hollywood made a movie of the battle. Selleck asked me to watch the final segment of the film on his computer. I saw actors pretending to fight and die. Even though this was just a movie, it was extremely disturbing. Selleck said, "This is the way it was."

He told me, "I'm not a hero. I'm a survivor. The heroes are the 58,000 names on that wall in Washington. Two or three guys I was close to are on the wall, that didn't make it. The second group of heroes are the wives and families that took care of us."

Michael Gold has had articles published in the New York Daily News, the Albany Times Union and other newspapers, and The Hardy Society Journal, a British literary publication.



Michael Gold



NURSES MEMORIAL AT LASDON PARK

Text and photo by Cindy Kennedy

Lasdon Park, the verdant arboretum on Route 35 in Katonah, is the site of Westchester County's "Trail of Honor," dedicated to Westchester veterans. Along the winding path are bronze busts representing American servicemembers who fought in various conflicts.

The hill-top Vietnam Veterans Memorial is at the end of the "Trail of Honor." There stands the first Vietnam War monument to feature a woman, a sculpture crafted by Julia Cohen in 1987. The carving's three 7-foot bronze statues depict a soldier carrying his wounded comrade to a nurse reaching out to assist them. Next to the statuary is a black granite monument inscribed with the names of the eight women nurses who were killed during their service in Vietnam.

Each Memorial Day and Veterans Day, Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) Westchester Chapter 49 conducts a ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial at Lasdon Park. As part of their observance, veterans read the names, etched on an obelisk, of the 217 Westchester County servicemen who lost their lives in Vietnam. The names of the eight fallen nurses are then read by the wife or daughter of a Vietnam veteran attending the service. At the ceremony's conclusion, the bugle call "Taps" is played, honoring the servicemembers and nurses. The public is welcome to attend VVA Chapter 49's biannual observances.

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
WESTCHESTER COUNTY CHAPTER #49 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS
PROGRAM

Vietnam Veterans of America - Chapter# 49, awards six scholarships of \$1 ,000 each year to high school or vocational school graduates in Westchester County. These scholarships honor six outstanding individuals from our area. The scholarships are named, the Pete Lambert Memorial Scholarship, the Congressman Hamilton Fish Jr. Memorial Scholarship, the Peter T. McCauley Memorial Scholarship, the Anthony Shine Memorial Scholarship, the Jonathan Shine Memorial Scholarship, and the William Suddereth Memorial Scholarship.

ELIGIBILITY: Students who will complete high school in Westchester County this year, are the child or a grandchild of an active-duty service veteran, and plan to attend an accredited college/university or vocational/technical school are eligible to compete for th scholarships. **Please note** that service in the Reserves or National Guard does not make up veteran status unless they were activated for more than 90 days for purposes other than training. **Also note** that the child/grandchild of any veteran is eligible; service does not have to be during the Vietnam era.

HOW TO APPLY: There are five selection criteria that the student must submit to be considered for a scholarship:

1. 00-214 or honorable discharge of parent/grandparent
2. SAT/ACT scores; **Note:** for those who will be attending a vocational/technical school this requirement will be waived. If your School does not offer ACT/SAT tests, then we request that high School staff provide a record of the student's academic or vocational achievements such as report cards or other grade transcripts .
3. A resume of extracurricular activities to include school clubs, sports and student government, work experience, volunteer experience and other interests. Relevant references, with addresses and phone numbers, should be provided.
4. A written statement, not to exceed two typed pages, on the topic "The effect (if any) of my parent's/grandparent's military service on my attitudes toward life and country."
5. Student, parent/guardian, and School staff must sign application.

Students should complete the attached application and return it, along with the other requested items, by **April 1, 2025**, to' Vietnam Veterans of America #49
Scholarship Committee
P.O. Box224
Pleasantville, NY 10570

SELECTION OF AWARDEES AND PRESENTATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS: WA#49 Scholarship Committee is solely responsible for the selection process. In late April, the Committee will notify those selected for scholarships and their high schools. The acceptance and enrollment of those selected in an accredited college or technical school will be verified. Scholarship awards will be presented at our May meeting or mailed to the awardees.

THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE WILL NOT CONSIDER APPLICATIONS THAT DO NOT CONTAIN ALL OF THE REQUESTED INFORMATION IN ITS REQUIRED FORM OR ARE RECEIVED AFTER THE SUBMITTAL DATE.

NOTE TO CHAPTER MEMBERS OUTSIDE OF WESTCHESTER COUNTY: YOU DO NOT HAVE TO RESIDE IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY TO APPLY FOR OUR SCHOLARSHIP. PLEASE CALL THE CHAPTER AND WE WILL SEND YOU AN APPLICATION package.

APPLICATION
VVA CHAPTER 49 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS PROGRAM

TYPE OR PRINT ALL INFORMATION, EXCEPT FOR SIGNATURES

LAST NAME – STUDENT:	FIRST NAME:	INITIAL
ADDRESS: STREET & NUMBER	CITY / VILLAGE / TOWN / STATE	ZIP

AREA CODE / PHONE NUMBER:	DATE OF BIRTH
---------------------------	---------------

PARENT/GUARDIAN and MILITARY SERVICE INFORMATION: VETERAN

PARENT/GRANDPARENT MUST PROVIDE COPY OF DD214, MILITARY DISCHARGE PAPERS - REQUIRED

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	INITIAL
-----------	------------	---------

ADDRESS: STREET & NUMBER	CITY / VILLAGE / TOWN / STATE	ZIP
--------------------------	-------------------------------	-----

Military Service: Branch:	From:	To:
---------------------------	-------	-----

AREA CODE/PHONE NUMBER

AUTHORIZATION: I authorize my high school/ my child's high school to complete/provide the information requested below on this application:

X:

APPLICANTS/STUDENT SIGNATURE	DATE	PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE	DATE
------------------------------	------	---------------------------	------

SCHOOL INFORMATION TO BE COMPLETED BY GUIDANCE COUNSELOR OR PRINCIPAL:

NAME OF HIGH SCHOOL	CODE NUMBER
ADDRESS: STREET & NUMBER	CITY/VILLAGE/TOWN/STATE ZIP

AREA CODE / PHONE NUMBER	NAME AND POSITION OF SCHOOL STAFF PROVIDING THE FOLLOWING:
--------------------------	--

IS THIS STUDENT A SENIOR IN HIGH SCHOOL THIS YEAR?

___ YES ___ NO

WHAT IS THE LATEST SAT/ACT SCORES FOR THIS STUDENT? VERBAL:

MATH: _____ WRITTEN: _____ TOTAL: _____

- PLEASE PROVIDE COPIES OF SAT/ACT SCORES FOR THIS STUDENT REQUIRED.
- SAT/ACT SCORES AND YOUR SIGNATURE BELOW IS OUR VERIFICATION THAT SCHOOL INFORMATION IS CORRECT

X:

SIGNATURE OF SCHOOL STAFF

DATE

A young man went to war in Vietnam
when he had time, he wrote home and said,
“It sure rains here a lot”

But his mother, reading between the lines, wrote
“We’re quite concerned, tell us what it’s really like”

And the young man responded,
“Wow, you ought to see the funny monkeys”

To which his mother replied,
“Don’t hold back, how is it?”

And the young man wrote,
“The sunsets here are spectacular”

In her next letter his mother wrote,
“Son, we want you to tell us everything”

So, the next time he wrote,
“Today I killed a man”
“Yesterday I helped to drop napalm on a village”

And then his father wrote
“Please don’t write such depressing letters,
you’re upsetting your mother.”

So, after a while the young man wrote,
“Sure, rains here a lot”

Written by Larry Rothmann and Dan Griffin

January 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 New Years Day	2 meeting 6:00 Board 6:30 dinner 7:30 meeting	3	1
2	3	4	5	6	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25 Pizza Party PTSD Unit 12:00
26	27	28	29	30	31 Pray Achievement Center 1:00	

February 2025

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

MARCH 2025

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

APRIL 2025

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	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Easter	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

WE NEED YOU IN THE VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA



MEMBERSHIP TYPES and ELIGIBILITY

Life Membership is open to anyone who served in Vietnam between November 1, 1955 and May 7, 1975, or anywhere between August 5, 1964 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.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

check one

- _____ Vietnam-era Veteran Application: Life Membership - \$50.00
(must provide a copy of applicant's DD-214)
- _____ Non-Vietnam-era Veteran Application: 1 year -\$20.00, 3 years-\$50.00
 Associate Membership Life Membership
under 59-\$175.00, 60 and over-\$100.00
- _____ 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

DENNIS A. STARR

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