

Vietnam Veterans of America Central New York Chapter #103
P.O. Box 675, Liverpool, NY 13088
www.cnyvva103.org

DECEMBER 2007

Happy Holidays!

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
CHAPTER #103
P.O. BOX 675. LIVERPOOL, NY 13088
(315) 458-1323
WWW.CNYVVA103.ORG

2007

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SYRACUSE VET CENTER
478-7127

**BUFFALO REGIONAL
OFFICE**
1-800-827-1000

The website of the New York State Council of Vietnam Veterans of America is www.nyvietnavets.org.

Sue Doan, our State Veterans Counselor, has the following address:

Sue Doan
State Veteran Counselor
State Office Bldg. 4th Floor
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

If any veteran has a question or problem that needs to be addressed, give Sue a call at 428-4046 at the State Office Building. She helped many veterans last year, especially through referrals from members of this chapter. The Iraqi/Afghan vets we've helped send to her are very thankful to Sue for watching out for them.

President's Message

Don't forget we're having a Christmas Party at our December 20th meeting compliments of the chapter. Please get there promptly at 1900 hrs so we can get a head count ,place the order and get the meeting started.

The January 17th meeting will feature a short update on Agent Orange followed by a question and answer period. Our speaker will be Dr. Sven Ljaamo who is new to the staff at our VAMC. He is an expert on Occupational and Environmental Medicine. Dr. Ljaamo conducts clinics here, Watertown, Fort Drum and Carthage. In addition the doctor is involved in compensation and pension clinics for environmental and occupational related problems. We will open our meeting at 1900 and recess at 1930 for Dr. Ljaamo's appearance.

We'd want a full house that night to make his visit worthwhile and maximize the spread of new information and answers to your individual questions. Please mark down the questions you want answers to and get them to me by January 5th so Dr. Ljaamo can bring with him specific manuals and documentation to provide the up-to-date "reg's and rulings for you to use as references in the future. You can call me with your questions, e-mail them to me at ronfairbank@msn.com or use the regular mailman.

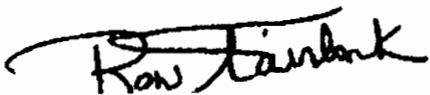
At the November Director's meeting at the VAMC Jim Cody's staff was made aware of the on-going problem some of us had, concerning lab work not being done and available when we had our scheduled appointment with our primary care physician. I had e-mailed this complaint to the staff earlier and I believe the problem will be corrected by the first of the year. The Directors responsible were instructed to report back their corrective actions at the next meeting.

Until we are certain this problem has been corrected, when you receive a letter telling you to call and make an appointment to see you primary care physician or a particular clinic—I urge you to ask the receptionist or whoever answers the phone to check and see if you need lab work done ahead of time. If yes, then go in a couple of days before your appointment and get it done—I am told requests for lab work are on the computer one week ahead of your scheduled appointments. When this problem is corrected the original letter you receive will tell you up front you need lab work done and what labs they are and when you can have them done to guarantee the results are available when you come in for your clinical appointment.

In closing the Chapter sent flowers December 4th in honor of William E. Kimball, a Navy Veteran of Vietnam and member of Chapter 103 since about 1994.

I wish each of you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year.

For the good of the order,



Ron Fairbank

A Christmas Poem

'Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone,
in a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone.
I had come- down the chimney with presents to give,
and to see just who in this home did live.
I looked all about, a strange sight I did see,
no tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.
No stocking by mantle, just boots filled with sand,
on the wall hung pictures of far distant lands.
With medals and badges, awards of all kinds,
a sober thought came through my mind.
For this house was different, it was dark and dreary,
I found the home of a soldier, once I could see clearly.
The soldier lay sleeping, silent, alone,
curled up on the floor in this one bedroom home.
The face was so gentle, the room in such disorder,
not how I pictured a United States soldier.
Was this fine hero of whom I'd just read?
Curled up on a poncho, the floor for a bed?
I realized the families that I saw this night,
owed their lives to these soldiers who were willing to fight.
Soon round the world, the children would play,
and grownups would celebrate a bright Christmas day
They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year,
because of the soldiers, like the one lying here.
I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone,
on a cold Christmas Eve in a land far from home.
The very thought brought a tear to my eye,
I dropped to my knees and started to cry.
The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice,
"Santa don't cry, this life is my choice;
I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more,
my life is my God, my Country, my Corps."
The soldier rolled over and drifted to sleep,
I couldn't control it, I continued to weep.
I kept watch for hours, so silent and still
and we both shivered from the cold night's chill.
I didn't want to leave on that cold, dark, night,
this guardian of honor so willing to fight.
Then the soldier rolled over, with a voice soft and pure,
whispered, "Carry on Santa, ifs Christmas day, all is secure."
One look at my watch, and I knew he was right.
"Merry Christmas my friend, and to all a good night.

Anonymous



Vietnam Veterans of America Inc.
Central New York Chapter #103
P.O. Box 675
Liverpool, New York 13088
Phone: 315-458-1323

Onondaga County Veteran's
Referral and Treatment
Services

Committee
Gordie Lane
Peter Bronstad
Patricia Chase
Dr. Larry Lantinga
Lauren Love
Sue Doan

December 7, 2007

The OCCJOV is sending to you and/or your organization an opportunity to become involved in a project to organize and coordinate government and community based services that will provide assistance to combat veterans who have entered the Criminal Justice system. This project based on a successful similar project in the City of Buffalo, New York which like our community is seeing in greater numbers veterans running afoul of the law. It is this frequency which is disturbing and its root causes in Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI) need to be explored and explained to the key members of the various disciplines within the Criminal Justice System. OCVRTS has already contacted some of the key members in the local Criminal Justice System and they feel that it is important enough to hold a symposium to discuss what can and should be done for these combat veterans. It is important to get them the help they need from the proper agency as soon as possible to make a marked difference in outcome.

Today with the lengthening periods of combat tours our soldiers, Marines, Airmen and sailors fighting daily for their existence and the fact that it is no longer solely a male problem but 16% of returning veterans are female it presents hosts of challenges adjusting back to civilian life. In a neighboring county we have a large contingent of soldiers both male and female who come from Fort Drum and live and find entertainment amongst us. Many of these people as well as the National Guard, Reserves and the normal returnees from their military service are facing problems based on that service. It is incumbent upon us as members of the various disciplines to forge a way to get these people the proper services to help them back to productive lives through intervention.

On December 21, 2007 there will be a symposium held at UAW Hall 624, 714 W. Manlius Street East Syracuse to present to you and/or your organization an explanation of OCVRTS. Please see the attached information on the agenda. The symposium will have experts in the area of PTSD and TBI as well as what the Veteran's Administration, the Vet Center can do in conjunction with Onondaga County's other community based services. Also presenters will address what has been done in Buffalo and how far it has come in a short period of time. There is no charge for this symposium.

Please make every attempt to come to this Symposium yourself or have someone from your staff attend it is important for your organization and ours to unite to give what help we can offer to those who have sacrificed so much for all of us.

Fraternally,

Gordon Lane

TOGETHER THEN, TOGETHER AGAIN

Onondaga County Veteran's Referral and Treatment Services (OCVRTS)

Symposium for the Criminal Justice System on PTSD, TBI and the Returning Veteran

Presented on December 21, 2007 through the support of the United Auto Workers 624 and the gracious use of their facility for this valuable presentation.

Agenda

Commences promptly at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 12:45 p.m.

- | | | |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| 8:00 a.m.-8:30 a.m. | Registration | |
| 8:30 a.m.-8:45 a.m. | Greetings and Introductions | Mr. James Cody, Director, Syracuse VAMC
Gordie Lane, VVA Chapter 103, SPD ret.
Peter Bronstad, VVA Chapter 103, OCSO ret. |
| 8:45 a.m.-10:00 a.m. | PTSD and TBI | Dr. Terri Julian, VAMC Team Leader |
| 10:45 a.m.-11:00 a.m. | Western New York Veteran's
Project Overview | Mr. Davis Mann, Coordinator
Mr. Jack O'Connor, WNY VA Advisory Board |
| 11:00 a.m.-11:25 a.m. | Vet Center | Ms. Pat Chase, Syracuse Vet Center |
| 11:25 a.m.-11:55 a.m. | Social Services | Ms. Lori Love-Dubeau, VAMC OEF/OIF
Social Services |
| 12:00 p.m.-12:30 p.m. | N.Y.S. Division of Veteran
Affairs | Ms. Sue Doan, New York State Division of
Veteran Affairs Counselor |
| 12:30 p.m.-12:45 p.m. | Closing Remarks | Mr. Gordie Lane |

At the close of the formal Agenda there will be a question and answer segment with the presenters for those wishing to stay.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 6, 2007

VA Announces \$4.7 Million to Help Caregivers
Department Enhancing Education, Training and Resources

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) today announced it will provide nearly \$4.7 million for “caregiver assistance pilot programs” to expand and improve health care education and provide needed training and resources for caregivers who assist disabled and aging veterans in their homes.

“This funding will enhance support and training for the family members and other caregivers who sacrifice to care for disabled and aging veterans,” said Acting VA Secretary Gordon H. Mansfield. “At VA, we’re committed to looking after caregivers who dedicate their own time and well-being to take care of loved ones who are veterans.”

The pilot programs will support eight caregiver projects across the country. In addition, VA provides support and assistance through a variety of programs such as care management, social work service, care coordination, geriatrics and extended care, and through its nationwide volunteer programs.

Among the key services provided to caregivers are transportation, respite care, case management and service coordination, assistance with personal care (bathing and grooming), social and emotional support, and home safety evaluations.

Education programs teach caregivers how to obtain community resources such as legal assistance, financial support, housing assistance, home delivered meals and spiritual support. In addition, caregivers are taught skills such as time management techniques, medication management, communication skills with the medical staff and the veteran, and ways to take better care of themselves.

Many of the projects use technology, including computers, Web-based training, video conferencing and teleconferencing to support the needs of caregivers who often cannot leave their homes to participate in support activities.

The VA pilot programs announced today include:

- At the Memphis (Tenn.) and Palo Alto (Calif.) VA medical centers, a project will provide education, support and skills-building to help caregivers manage both patient behaviors and their own stress. This intervention will be provided in 14 Home-Based Primary Care (HBPC) programs across the country and also to caregivers in non-HBPC settings at the Palo Alto VAMC.
- At the VA medical center in Gainesville, Fla., caregivers will take part in a Transition Assistance Program to provide skills training, education and supportive problem solving using videophone technology.

- At the VA Healthcare System of Ohio, headquartered in Cincinnati, caregiver advocates will be available around the clock to coordinate between VA and community services.
- At the VA Desert Pacific Network and the VA Sierra Nevada Healthcare System, VA will work with a community coalition to provide education, skills training and resources for caregivers of veterans with traumatic brain injury using computer-based telehealth, including Web, telephone and videoconferencing.
- At the VA medical center in Albany, N.Y., a pilot project will convert a three-hour workshop developed by the National Family Caregivers Association called “Communicating Effectively with Health Care Professionals” into a cost-effective multimedia format.
- At the Atlanta VA Medical Center, use of computer-based technology will provide instrumental help and emotional support to caregivers who live in remote areas or to those who cannot leave a patient alone.
- The Tampa VA Medical Center and the Miami VA Healthcare System are working on a collaborative project. In the Tampa area, the current program will be expanded to provide 24-hour in-home respite care to temporarily relieve caregivers up to 14 days a year. In Miami, the program will coordinate comprehensive community-based care services, including respite, home companions, adult day care and use of emergency response system.
- The VA Pacific Islands Health Care System will use the “medical foster home” model of care, in which caregivers in the community take veterans into their homes and provide 24-hour supervision. This program will take place on the islands of Kauai, Hawaii, Maui and rural areas of Oahu.

WARM THEIR HEARTS

Warm Their Hearts is a program designed to help Veterans with gently used, handmade, and donated items such as:

Lap Blankets

Walker Totes

Wheelchair Totes

Stoma (Trach) Bibs

Colostomy Bag Covers

Winter Hats

Baseball Caps

New Tee Shirts

12-18" Throw Pillows

Our goal is to gain the support of volunteers in helping to make or donate these items for Veterans. We are appealing to schools, knitting/crocheting groups, senior citizen groups, public service organizations and anyone who would like to lend a hand. This is a great project for Family & Consumer Sciences classes to be involved in. Any of these items can be gently used, crocheted, knitted or sewn. All items will be donated to the Vets currently in the VA Medical Center, families of Veterans as well as homeless Vets located throughout the area.

For more information, patterns, or to have donations picked up, please call Barbara Maestri at (315) 484-9948, 558-2915 or email me at: Warmtheirhearts@yahoo.com.

Keller Williams Realty

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VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
CENTRAL NEW YORK CHAPTER #103

P.O. BOX 675
LIVERPOOL, NY 13088

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Veterans must provide evidence of service (DD214 or Equivalent)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (H) _____ (W) _____

Veteran (Y) ___ (N) ___

Are you a Vietnam-Era Vet? (Y) ___ (N) ___

In-Country Vet? (Y) ___ (N) ___

ANNUAL DUES for Veterans is \$20.00/year. We accept checks, credit cards or money orders. Please do not send cash.

Type of Membership: () New () Renewal Amount Enclosed \$ _____

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Telecare, a service of the
Syracuse VA Medical Center**

"Putting Veterans First"

**To purchase hats, T-shirts,
stickers, pins, ect. Go to:**

**Westvale Gardens
2400 West Genesee St.
Syracuse, New York 13209**

And say "HI" to Bill Martin!



**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
CENTRAL NEW YORK CHAPTER #103
P.O. Box 675
LIVERPOOL, NY 13088**

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★ AT EASE ★

**VVA Chapter #103 holds its meetings at American Legion Post 188,
205 Cypress St., Liverpool, NY on the 3rd Thursday of each month
at 7:00 p.m.**

**Directions: From Heid's Corners, follow signs to Rt. 370 (2nd Street).
Take first left past Washington Park. The Post is on your right side,
across from the park.**