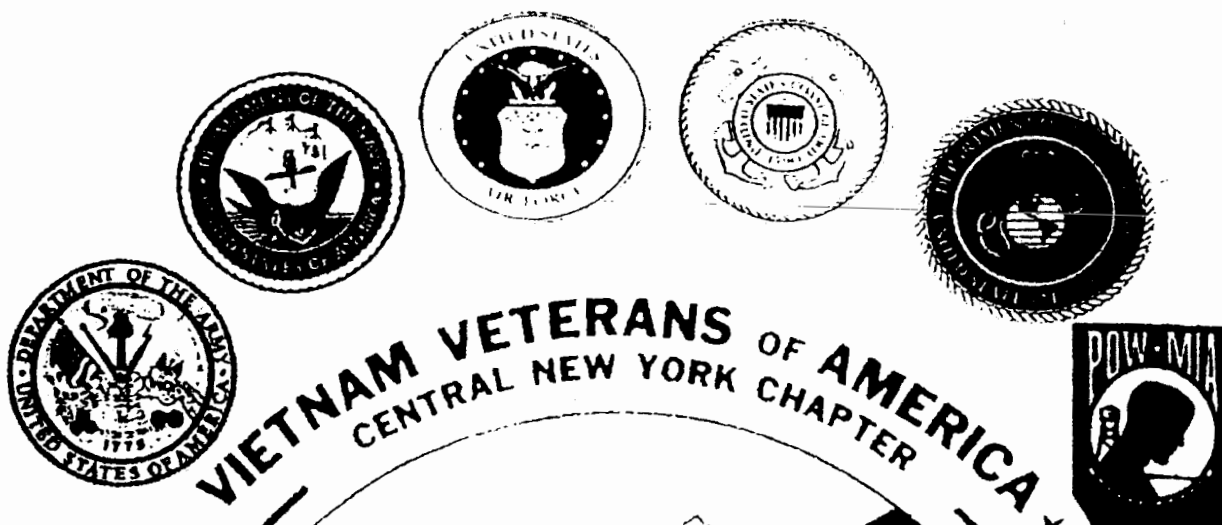


AT EASE



VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA CENTRAL NEW YORK CHAPTER



JUNE 2007

**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
CNY CHAPTER #103**

P.O. Box 675, Liverpool, NY 13088

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

WWW.VVAVETERANS.ORG

2007

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SYRACUSE VET CENTER 478-7127
BUFFALO REGIONAL OFFICE 1-800-827-1000

Presidents Message

The Hot Dog cart lives on. Sometime ago, there was a movie—no doubt a Walt Disney creation about a car named Christine which eventually took on a life of its own and overwhelmed the family that owned it. Well it appears the hot dog cart has also done the same thing. Gordy and I have nurtured it and we now have some volunteers helping out 2 or 3 days a week. We must have a few more of you guys to donate one day a week perhaps a day every other week if we can get several guys. We have a free parking spot just across the street for you to park and you get a free lunch on us. Mike Haven is keeping the books for us and gave a report at our last meeting that made everyone happy. Mike by the way also donates Friday's at the cart—and he has but one leg—think about your own two legs and maybe sign up for a day once a week or once every other week.

I plan on returning to my volunteer position at the Syracuse V.A. Medical Center Wednesday 27 June. I have been on L.O.A. status since we opened the hot dog cart so I could do my part to keep it open. I will be glad to return to V.A. as I feel I am more valuable to the Chapter up there helping Veterans and their families as your Chapter representative. Until we get at least a couple more guys to volunteer I will still be working the cart on Tuesdays and filling in when Gordy or Mike Haven can't be there. I'd sure appreciate some of you stepping up.

Our first V.P. and Newsletter Editor Dick Madden recently underwent surgery and is recovering at home. He is coming back slowly but still has significant discomfort from time to time—but as you can see the Newsletter goes on—and like they say behind every good guy there is a woman who is doing double duty to keep him going—in this case her name is Donna and she is the glue that keeps our Newsletter together. I'm sure Dick would appreciate a card to let him know you're thinking about him and a "thanks" to Donna would be nice also. Dick's address is 3683 Doyle Road, Baldwinsville, NY 13027.

Our annual Golf Tournament is on the horizon. See the information and sponsorship pages in this Newsletter. In case you are not aware of it, the Golf Tournament is one of the "premier" tournaments around. Already we have checks from many of the usual forty teams that sign up, and fact is—Donnie Benack the Chairman ends up turning down 20-30 more teams simply because we can't get enough volunteers to staff the event. The more serious and discouraging side of the story involves Sponsors—this is where we make our money. If we could get you chapter members to sign up just one sponsor each we could make 10's of thousands of dollars in this one event. Look at the sponsor page—the costs are not that much, and their Business Name will be out in front of every golfer plus Pompey Club member. THIS year please ask someone in business you deal with to sign up as a sponsor—your auto mechanic, your doctor, the guy who plows your driveway, does your landscaping, your dentist, lawyer etc. Just ask—all they can say is no, and they really won't be insulted. Anyone can sell a sponsorship—all you need do is JUST ASK. The Foundation supports our chapter financially in big ways—we all need to try helping the Foundation...

Those who have a computer please look at our chapter webpage at

<http://www.vawp.org>—It is something we should all be proud of. Each of our Newsletters is there, the Watchfire is featured with still photos of 2006 as well as a superb video interview about our 2007 Watchfire done by Post Standard, featuring our 1st. V.P. Dick Madden as spokesperson.

Lastly, we need to recruit some guys for our honor guard—I will donate a relatively new pair of BDU's to anyone who signs up and can wear them. Call Cliff Canfield—his number is this Newsletter

Ron Fairbank

JUNE NOTES

Here's a small item from the Moneywise insert in the June 25th issue of the Post Standard. The column is the Health Care Notebook authored by James T. Mulder and the item is in response to a reader's question: Q – I get my health care through the VA. I also have Medicare. If I'm hospitalized at the VA, does the VA bill Medicare? A – No. By law, the VA and other federal agencies can't bill Medicare or Medicaid for prescriptions or services provided at their facilities. The VA is obligated to bill private health insurance carriers, including Medicare supplemental health insurance policies, for services provided to treat non-service connected conditions.

Some food for thought on a subject near and dear to my heart – prostate health. In-country Vietnam vets are considered to have been exposed to Agent Orange. There is a whole laundry list of afflictions and ailments linked with this exposure, considering that 15-20 million gallons of this chemical were dumped in Vietnam. Some areas were so heavily inundated with this stuff that the ground was soaked to a depth of almost two feet! Prostate problems are a common occurrence with men over 50, but Agent Orange only exacerbates this problem. Many of my fellow 'Nam vets already have this checked annually, but for those of you who haven't – don't wait for something to happen. This isn't something to be put off – have those prostate levels checked and checked often – and have the digital exam done as a part of that check. If something turns up, there are various treatment options available. Keep an eye on those levels, but if you have any questions on those procedures, ask a fellow vet – many of us have been through that mill. Keep an eye on that condition and don't put it off. You'll be glad you had it checked out. In addition, see the enclosed article "Agent Orange Update" from Nassau County Chapter #82.

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

PTSD watch: Last year, 216,000 veterans received compensation for PTSD. This figure excludes the 63,767 Afghanistan and Iraqi vets who sought psychological help from the VA and 29,041 with a preliminary PTSD diagnosis. The VA spends around \$10 billion annually on mental health benefits and services. (20% of front line troops in Iraq suffer concussions during combat tours.) That amount will expand significantly in the near term. Future articles will appear on the status of our Iraqi/Afghanistan vets – you won't believe what they're doing to these people.

Editor's note: the second Thursday of each month is the cutoff for articles/information to be submitted for inclusion in the newsletter. My phone number is 635-2019; my email address is rmadden002@twcny.rr.com. Comments, suggestions and criticisms are welcome.



Four veterans of the Vietnam War recently shared their war experiences with 10th-graders at Baker High School in Baldwinsville. The veterans are (from left) Ron Fairbank, Don Benack, Dave Holihan and Peter Bronstad.

To Have Been There....

Veterans Share War Experiences with Baldwinsville Students
Submitted by Kelly Cary, BCSD

On April 5th, four veterans from the Central New York Chapter of the Vietnam Veterans of America visited Katie Vecchiarelli's 10th grade English classes at Baker High School in Baldwinsville.

The visit, arranged by student teacher, Robyn Willis, was in conjunction with the students' study of Walter Dean Myers' award winning novel, "Fallen Angels," which depicts the experiences of several young men in the Vietnam War.

Veterans Ron Fairbank, Don Benack, Dave Holihan and Pete Bronstad shared many tragic and humorous stories related to their personal experiences in war, with the students. Additionally, they discussed the validity of several of the thematic topics developed in the novel such as the "meaning of war" and "unity in adversity."

The veterans provided students with a rich eye witness account of a period of history during which the 10th graders were not yet born.

Our Chapter television Program is on Wednesday nights at 6pm on Time/Warner Channel 98. The month of July will feature the city Parks and Recreation Director Pat Driscoll discussing the various Veteran Monuments around the city neighborhoods and the KVN Memorial. He'll conclude by discussing the upcoming free concert by the USMC band coming to Syracuse in the fall. The band is known as the 'President's Own.'



8TH ANNUAL
VIETNAM VETERANS
REUNION
JULY 26-30, 2007



"Welcome Home"

Vietnam Veterans!

We invite ALL Veterans and Active Duty Military Personnel,
and your families and friends to join The Vietnam Vets at
Our 8th Annual Reunion

And to

Welcome The Traveling Wall

Join Color Guards, Guest Speakers, Firing Squads and Bands at

OPENING CEREMONIES FRIDAY JULY 27 @ 7 PM

as we proudly welcome

"THE VIETNAM MEMORY TRAVELING WALL"

AT THE FREEHOLD VOLUNTEER FIRE CO. GROUNDS ON RT. 32

AND

ON SATURDAY, JULY 28 AT 12 NOON FOR

OUR 8th ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE

AT THE REUNION GROUNDS ON DOMAN ROAD IN FREEHOLD

The public is invited to join us at "The Wall" and at our Memorial Service honoring our missing and deceased comrades who did not return from Vietnam. We will present a heartfelt salute to those now serving in our Nation's Military, to all Veterans who have defended this great land in the past

Visit our website at www.nevietvets.us

Email Our "Wall Chairman" Tom Heald at retnguard@yahoo.com

Or Contact Dave McGrath at 607-652-7423 or John Kellegher at 518-634-7748 - jjjk2897@glal.com

If you are e-mailing, please put "Reunion" in the subject line

****Contact Dave Leeson at 315-638-1190****



**VIETNAM VETERANS of CENTRAL NEW YORK
FOUNDATION**

PO BOX 609
East Syracuse, New York 13057

President Don Benack
Vice-President Peter Broostead
Secretary Kelly Benack
Treasurer Charles Tipton
Chief Financial Charles Kurtz

May 27, 2007

Dear Veterans Supporter,

The Vietnam Veterans of Central New York Foundation will be holding its 10th Annual Benefit Golf Tournament on September 17th, 2007 at the Exclusive Pompey Golf and Country Club. Once again we are very excited about this year's fund raising event.

Your past support of our event is very much appreciated. All proceeds raised will be utilized to support veteran and community organization programs such as the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter #103, Onondaga and Oswego County Vet Centers, Veterans Hospital, Vietnam Veterans Leadership Scholarship Program (VVLP), Special Olympics and Holiday Food Baskets.

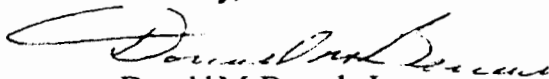
The Vietnam Veterans of Central New York Foundation is a **Not for Profit Organization** (501-C-3) Corporation and all contributions are 100% Tax Deductible. The Foundations primary goals are to serve the veterans and their families and support Community Services.

**Please support the Foundation by becoming a Tournament Board Sponsor.
Flag Sponsor \$300.00 (A flag will be placed on a hole with your company name).
Corporate Sponsor \$200.00, Non Corporate \$100.00 and Individual \$75.00.**

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Don Benack @ (315) 463-6249, Cell # 884-9504.

You can learn more about the Vietnam Veterans Organization by visiting our web site @
WWW.CNYVVA103.ORG

Sincerely,


Donald M. Benack, Jr.
President/CEO

**VIETNAM VETERANS of CENTRAL NEW YORK
FOUNDATION**

**BENEFIT GOLF TOURNAMENT
SPONSORSHIP APPLICATION**

COMPANY NAME: _____

COMPANY ADDRESS: _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____

TELEPHONE #: _____

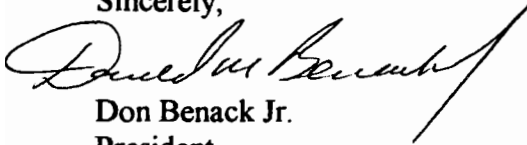
FLAG SPONSOR:	\$300.00	_____
CORPORATE SPONSOR:	\$200.00	_____
NON-CORPORATE SPONSOR:	\$100.00	_____
INDIVIDUAL SPONSOR:	\$75.00	_____

Please make all checks payable to the Vietnam Veterans of C.N.Y. Foundation.
P.O. Box 609, East Syracuse, New York 13057

For further information contact Don Benack @ (315) 463-6249 or (315) 884-9504

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,


Don Benack Jr.
President

New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs and SONYMA Announce A Mortgage Program for US Military Veterans

The Homes for Veterans Program offers a mortgage product that will enable more JS military veterans to buy their first home or move to a different home. Any veteran who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable, will be eligible.

In December 2006, a new Federal law was enacted that allows the State of New York Mortgage Agency ("SONYMA") to waive its first-time homebuyer requirement for military veterans, their spouse or co-borrower. As such, veterans need not be a 3rst-time homebuyer to qualify. To promote this exemption, the New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs and SONYMA have joined forces to create the Homes for Veterans Program.

The Homes for Veterans Program features:

- Fixed interest rate that is 0.50% below the standard below-market SONYMA interest rate;
- Closing cost assistance up to the greater of (a) \$5,000 or (b) 5% of the requested loan amount;
- No borrower points; and
- Requires only 1% of the home purchase price from borrower's own funds, the remaining 2% can come from a gift or other acceptable sources.

To qualify for the Homes for Veterans Program, veterans will be required to submit DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty. If the veteran is not a first-time homebuyer, they will also be required to sign the Military Veteran's Eligibility Affidavit (SONYMA Form 243).

Qualified applicants may apply for any currently available SONYMA program and receive the above mentioned program features.

SONYMA's Homeownership Programs

Closing Cost Assistance

SONYMA will provide qualified borrowers with closing cost assistance in connection with all of its mortgage programs. The Closing Cost Assistance loan of up to the greater of \$5,000 or 5% of the loan amount, requires no monthly payment, is interest free, and is forgiven after 10 years.

The Low Interest Rate Mortgage Program

The Low Interest Rate Mortgage Program is SONYMA's most popular homeownership program. The program offers a below-market fixed interest rate with up to 97% financing. One- to four-family homes are eligible, including co-ops, condos, and manufactured homes (permanently affixed to real property)

The Construction Incentive Program

The Construction Incentive Program provides a two-step, low interest rate mortgage to qualified buyers who purchase newly constructed one-and two-family homes. (Two-family homes must be located in a Federally-designated target area.) The program offers up to 100% financing and a low interest rate that steps up slightly after the first 48 payments. Borrowers are qualified at the initial low interest rate.

The Remodel New York Program

The Remodel New York Program provides financing for the purchase and renovation of a home in one, low interest, fixed-rate loan. Almost all non-luxury renovations are eligible. The program offers a below-market interest rate, and up to 97% financing. Existing one-family homes, two-family homes that are at least 5 years old, and condominiums are eligible.

The Achieving The Dream Program

The Achieving the Dream Program is offered periodically, on a first-come, first-served basis, to assist qualified low-income first-time homebuyers. The program offers a very low fixed interest rate and up to 97% financing. One- and two-family homes are eligible, including co-ops, condos, and permanently affixed manufactured housing

Visit our web sites at www.nyhomes.org and www.veterans.state.ny.us or call us at 1-800-382-HOME (4663)

It is time to change from REDNECK humor to *TRUE AMERICAN* Humor!

Only it isn't seen as HUMOR, but the correct way to LIVE YOUR LIFE! If you feel the same, pass this on to your *TRUE AMERICAN* friends. Y'all know who they are...

You might be a *TRUE AMERICAN* if: It never occurred to you to be offended by the phrase, "One nation, under God."

You might be a *TRUE AMERICAN* if: You've never protested about seeing the 10 Commandments posted in public places.

You might be a *TRUE AMERICAN* if: You still say "Christmas" instead of "Winter Festival."

You might be a *TRUE AMERICAN* if: You bow your head when someone prays.

You might be a *TRUE AMERICAN* if: You stand and place your hand over your heart when they play the National Anthem.

You might be a *TRUE AMERICAN* if: You treat Viet Nam vets with great respect, and always have.

You might be a *TRUE AMERICAN* if: You've never burned an American flag.

You might be a *TRUE AMERICAN* if: You know what you believe and you aren't afraid to say so, no matter who is listening.

You might be a *TRUE AMERICAN* if: You respect your elders and expect your kids to do the same.

You might be a *TRUE AMERICAN* if: You'd give your last dollar to a friend.

If you got this email from me, it is because I believe that you, like me, have just enough

TRUE AMERICAN in you to have the same beliefs as those talked about in this email.

GOD Bless the U S A! Amen

Life is like being in the ocean - you are either floating along on the currents or making waves

Bumper sticker of the year:

"If you can read this, thank a teacher -and, since it's in English,
thank a soldier"

Selected House VA Committee Bills Sent To The House

H.R. 67, the Veterans Outreach Improvement Act of 2007, would improve the outreach activities of the VA by making grants to state veterans' agencies to conduct outreach and assistance in the development and submittal of benefit claims. The bill authorizes the appropriation of \$25 million for each of the fiscal years 2007, 2008 and 2009 to implement this program. The bill, introduced by Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Chairman John Hall (NY) would authorize VA to train state and local government employees who provide veterans outreach services. In an amendment originated by Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee Ranking Member Doug Lamborn (CO), the bill would require VA to establish performance measures for the use of these funds.

H.R. 612, introduced by Committee Chairman Bob Filner (CA), would extend from two years to five years the period of eligibility for veterans returning from combat to receive VA health care for conditions that might be related to that service, despite the absence of proof of service connection. A proposal by Committee Ranking Member Steve Buyer (IN.) that authorized an additional three years of free VA care to veterans who had previously used up their two years of care was incorporated into the bill.

H.R. 1470, would require VA to provide chiropractic care and services through its medical centers and clinics, to be implemented at not fewer than 75 medical centers not later than December 31, 2009, and at all VA medical centers not later than December 31, 2011. Currently, chiropractic care is included in VA's benefits and available in some 30 medical centers, or 20 percent of VA's total centers. Veterans may also get chiropractic care on a fee-for-service basis in coordination with VA if they live too far from a medical center offering chiropractic care.

H.R. 2199, would require VA to screen veterans for traumatic brain injury (TBI). It would also require VA to establish a comprehensive program for long-term care of post-acute traumatic brain injury rehabilitation at four geographically dispersed polytrauma network sites designated by the VA secretary. VA would further be required to establish TBI transition offices at each polytrauma network site to coordinate health care and services for veterans with moderate to severe TBI, and would provide VA the authority to coordinate services through cooperative agreements with other entities with established long-term neurobehavioral rehabilitation and recovery programs for services not immediately offered by VA. The bill would require VA to establish a TBI registry to track and notify veterans on developments in the research of TBI, and establish no more than five centers for research, education, and clinical activities to improve health care to eligible veterans suffering from TBI. The bill, introduced by Health Subcommittee Chairman Michael Michaud (ME), would also establish a pilot program of mobile Vet centers that would provide readjustment counseling and mental health services to veterans. An amendment offered by Doug Lamborn (CO), would include in these mobile centers counselors trained to help veterans file disability claims.

H.R. 2219, the Veterans Suicide Prevention Hotline Act of 2007, would direct VA to award a grant to a private, nonprofit entity to establish, publicize and operate a national toll-free suicide prevention telephone hotline targeted to and staffed by veterans. The bill duplicates many of the provisions of H.R. 327, the Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act, passed earlier this year. H.R. 2219, introduced by James Moran (VA), was returned to the Subcommittee on Health for further consideration.

H.R. 2239, introduced by John Boozman (AR), would enable injured servicemembers to get vocational rehabilitation and employment benefits (VR&E) before their discharge from active duty. Current law does not allow VA to provide VR&E benefits until the servicemember is discharged from active duty. This restriction needlessly imposes significant waiting times for those undergoing extended convalescence. Allowing these injured servicemembers to begin receiving the education and training portion of VR&E benefits would help them successfully enter the job market when discharged.

Agent Orange Update

Joe Ingino Agent Orange Chair & Walt Schmidt Silver Rose Director

Important Please Read

Veterans Exposed To Agent Orange Have Higher Rates of Prostate Cancer Recurrence

Veterans exposed to Agent Orange have a **48 percent increased risk** of prostate cancer recurrence following surgery than their unexposed peers, and when the disease comes back, it seems more aggressive, researchers say.

"We need to be screening these patients earlier, treating their cancer aggressively and following them closely afterward because they are at higher risk for recurrence," says Dr. Martha Terris, chief of the Urology Department at the Augusta Veterans Affairs Medical Center and professor of urology at the Medical College of Georgia.

"We looked at all patients, whether they were exposed or not, to see which were more likely to develop a recurrence and patients with a history of Agent Orange exposure were more likely," says Dr. Sagar R. Shah, MCG urology resident who is presenting the data May 20 during the American Urological Association Annual Meeting in Anaheim, Calif.

The study looked at 1,653 veterans who had prostate cancer surgery at Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Centers in five cities between 1990 and 2006; 199 had been exposed to Agent Orange, a herbicide and defoliant sprayed on the dense

forests of Vietnam during the war.

Agent Orange contains the carcinogen, dioxin, which can be stored in body fat and is believed to make its way into the cell nucleus and work as a tumor promoter. In the past, relatively higher mortality rates have been found in chemical plant workers and farmers with prostate cancer who were exposed to dioxin, the researchers write in their abstract.

Dioxin's impact is dose-related, and while the researchers did not measure levels of dioxin or Agent Orange, they suspect that blacks, who were more likely to be ground troops, also were more likely to have had more Agent Orange exposure.

Researchers found veterans with Agent Orange exposure more likely to be black and younger at the time of surgery to remove their prostate gland. The disease appeared to be caught earlier in exposed veterans. Most had their disease staged as T1 by pathologists, which means it appeared confined to the prostate gland, and had lower pre-operative prostate specific antigen scores, an indicator of disease aggressiveness.

However, when the disease recurred, exposed veterans experienced a more rapid biochemical progression of their disease, which PSA measures. In blacks, the PSA doubled in almost half

the time of their unexposed peers.

A blood PSA level screens for prostate cancer for most men beginning at age 50 and at age 40 for blacks and men with a family history. Black men have been shown by Dr. Terris and others to have more aggressive disease earlier in life.

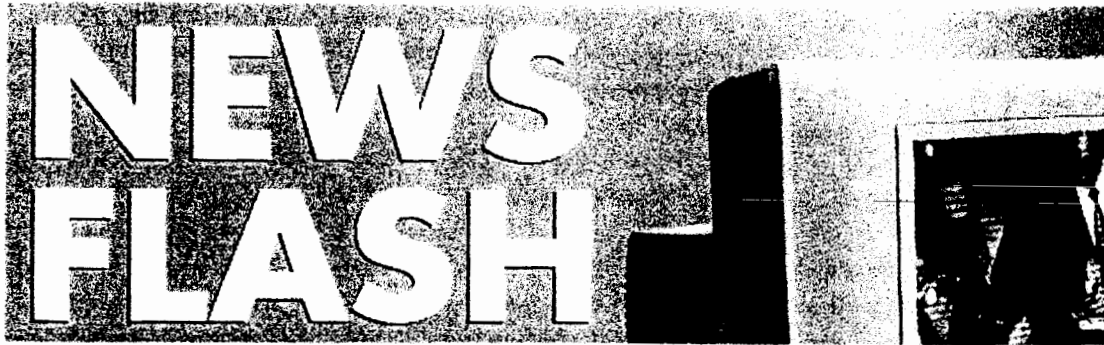
To account for known racial differences, researchers also compared recurrence rates in exposed and non-exposed blacks and whites and the results held up.

"As a population in general, if you were exposed to Agent Orange, you're more likely to have a recurrence," says Dr. Shah. "If you were black and exposed, you were more likely to recur than if you were black and unexposed."

If it sounds odd that men who had their prostate removed could have disease recurrence, Dr. Terris points out that microscopic cancer cells can migrate out of the area before surgery, becoming detectable later when they start pushing PSA levels back up.

In fact, following any type of prostate cancer treatment, men routinely get PSA levels checked for the rest of their lives. Without cancer recurrence, they should stay at zero.

[Source: Larry Scott - <http://www.vawatchdog.org/07/nf07/nfMAY07/nf052107-3.htm>]



Suicide Prevention Counselors to be placed at 153 Veterans Administration medical centers

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS Office of Public Affairs Media Relations
Washington, DC 20420 (202) 273-6000 www.va.gov Recent VA News Releases VA
Moves to Strengthen Suicide Prevention Nicholson: Move Bolsters Strong Mental
Health Program WASHINGTON (June 14, 2007) -- To strengthen one of the nation's
largest mental health programs and continue providing world-class health care to the
nation's veterans, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced plans to hire
suicide prevention counselors at each of its 153 medical centers. "Many veterans have
paid a high price for their service to our nation and have earned world-class mental
health care," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson. "Every suicide is a
tragedy that sends ripples of pain throughout families and communities. VA health care
professionals are committed to provide timely, compassionate intervention, which might
help prevent this needless suffering." The new suicide prevention counselors will join
the 9,000 mental health professionals already employed by VA. The Department spends
nearly \$3 billion a year for mental health services. About 1 million VA patients have a
mental health diagnosis. Nicholson previously announced a four-day meeting here in
July of mental health clinicians and researchers from across the country. This special
forum will review all of the Department's programs to care for the mental health needs
of veterans, especially those returning from combat in Iraq and Afghanistan.
"Preventing suicides requires timely access to high quality mental health services, along
with programs specifically devoted to suicide prevention," said Dr. Michael J. Kussman,
VA's Under Secretary for Health. "Treatment works, both to save lives and to make
lives better." Mental health services are provided at each of VA's 153 medical centers
and more than 700 community-based outpatient clinics. Last month, Nicholson
announced an initiative to hire 100 new employees to provide readjustment counseling
at each of the Department's 207 community-based Vets Centers.

Sheila Harrison wrote this letter to the StarGazette and Corning Newspaper. I have mailed it to 30 local VSOs. We have also decided to mail it to the editors of the VFW, Am Legion, and V V A magazines for inclusion. We are also encouraging the national magazines to do a story about Cholangiocarcinoma in order to educate vets and the public at large.

To All Veterans who served in South East Asia

I am writing to inform you of a potential health risk that you may have been exposed to while serving in Vietnam. In addition to Agent Orange there is a little known danger from parasites.

My husband who was otherwise healthy passed away January 20, 2006 from Cholangiocarcinoma, cancer of the bile duct of the liver. At this time it is very rare in the United States but very prevalent in Vietnam and surrounding countries. There are two known causes of this type of cancer. One cause is to contract Hepatitis C and the other is to have ingested a parasite from the water supply in Vietnam. My husband did not have Hepatitis C and therefore it was determined that his cancer derived from a parasite.

I have received official notification from the VA that his death was service related, which is not something the VA determines without an overwhelming amount of evidence. According to the research, this cancer does not manifest itself until later in life, when you are between 60 and 70 years old but once the symptoms occur, usually jaundice, it is very difficult to treat or beat. My husband was 58 years old when he passed away and many of his fellow veterans are approaching the age where this may be an issue. If he had been informed that there was a possibility that he could have ingested a parasite while serving in Vietnam, he would have taken every precaution to have his bile ducts examined, possibly extending his life. Of course the parasite is long gone but it left behind damaged cells, which developed into cancerous tumors in the bile ducts.

You can access volumes of information on the internet by entering "cholangiocarcinoma" as a search engine word. If you spent time in Southeast Asia and are having gastrointestinal issues, with no apparent reason, please suggest to your physician to check for damage within the bile ducts. It may save your life.

Mrs. Edward S. (Pete) Harrison
Horseheads, New York

Dayton pilot's trunk a real find

Florida treasure hunter spends \$20 and unearths local veteran's past.

By Rodney Thrash St.
Petersburg Times Wednesday,
May 30, 2007

ST. PETE BEACH, Fla. - Susan Zaffater has been to enough garage sales to know when something is junk. This trunk was special. It was Army green, rusted and made of particle board. What got her was the folded American flag, each corner neatly tucked, on top.

The seller wanted \$20. Susan's husband, Joe, reached into his pocket. The trunk is nearly 3 feet wide, 1 foot tall. On top, it says:

LT. R.B. WILDENHAUS U.S.A.A.F

Under the flag, she found his 8-by-10 military photograph. His pilot goggles rest atop his head. His smile is soft. Newspaper articles, medals and other awards prove he was a good pilot.

"His eyes say, 'Look at me. Look what I've accomplished,'" Susan said. "Can you see that?" Digging further, she found military enlistment papers, a driver's license and letters that tell the rest: The "R" on the trunk stands for Ralph, the "B" for Bernard. Home was Dayton, on a street named Clover. A commendation says that on April 18, 1943, he was killed in a mission near Florida City. He was 21.

On May 21, Joe Zaffater went online and typed: Wildenhaus, Dayton, Ohio.

Susan reached a Wildenhaus cousin, who connected her with Rosemary Brun, 80, who lives in Dayton with her husband, George.

Susan asked: Do you know Ralph Bernard Wildenhaus? Yes, Rosemary said. He was my brother.

"She was so happy she had found my brother's relatives.... It just got to me she appreciated what was in that case so much she didn't tear it apart," said Rosemary, who was 16 when Ralph — a 1939 graduate of Chaminade High School — died.

Also in the trunk are unopened Western Union telegrams and letters from the War Department that, presumably, Ralph's wife, Betty Jane, couldn't bear to open.

Betty Jane, pregnant when Ralph died, lost the baby after the funeral, Rosemary said. She eventually remarried and died about 10 years ago.

Rosemary can only guess how the trunk ended up at a garage sale in Floral City. Betty Jane had an adopted son, now dead, who lived in Florida.

Rosemary offered to pay to have the trunk shipped to Ohio.

Then she discovered Susan lives 45 minutes from her son in Palm Harbor. He hopes to pick up the trunk this week and mail it to Dayton.

"We have six children and so we're going to see each of these children have a remembrance of Ralph," Rosemary said.

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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.