



VIETNAM VETERANS ADVANCE



<http://www.vva11.org>

Official Publication of Chapter #11, Vietnam Veterans of America, Farmingville, New York

EVENTS

January, February, March 2026

Jan 23 rd	General Meeting	8:00 pm	New Village Recreation Center 20 Wireless Road, Centereach, NY
Jan 24 th	Meet and Greet	2:00 pm	Long Island State Veterans Home
Jan 28 th	PFC Garfield M. Langhorn Documentary Film	8:30 am	Riverhead Theater
Feb 1 st	Four Chaplains Award	1:00 pm	VVA Hospital, Bldg. #5 Northport, NY
Feb 14 th	Meet and Greet	2:00 pm	Long Island State Veterans Home
Feb 27 th	General Meeting	8:00 pm	New Village Recreation Center 20 Wireless Road, Centereach, NY
Mar 1 st	St Patrick Day Parade	1:00 pm Line-up	East Islip Library
Mar 27 th	General Meeting	8:00 pm	New Village Recreation Center 20 Wireless Road, Centereach, NY

*2nd Wednesday of every month at Calverton National Cemetery 9:45 am NOA Service.



Welcome Home!

2024 - 2026 OFFICERS

Rich Kitson **President**
Cell: 631-942-0105

Clarence Simpson **Vice President**
Home: 631-447-1271

Tom Wharton **Treasurer**
Home: 631-698-8014

Dave Higgins **Secretary**
Home: 631-736-0737

James O'Donnell **Assistant Secretary**
Home: 516-752-2915

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From the President's Desk . . .



Dear Chapter Members,

It has been a while since our last newsletter and much has happened in the interim. Our membership is growing while other VSOs are losing members. This is due to the efforts of Frank D'Aversa who is our membership chair and also our Veterans Court Coordinator. Thanks to Frank for all his efforts and those who assist him. Our Christmas gathering at the VA for the tree lighting was very festive and attended by green jackets. VA had purchased the original tree and now supports all activities behind building 8 where veterans reside in our Community Living Center

There are some dates on the cover of this publication that should be highlighted. On January 24th we will host a "Meet and Greet" at the Long Island State Veterans Nursing Home at Stony Brook. We will be assembling at 2:00 pm in the old purpose room. For those who have never attended, it's a festive occasion with music and doughnuts and coffee for our veterans who are less fortunate than us. You'll have a good feeling after you leave. On January 28th we are going to assemble at the Riverhead Theater to view the PFC Garfield M. Langhorne documentary film that was supported financially by our Chapter. We will be there with the students from the Pulaski Street Riverhead Middle School. This will take place at 8:30 in the morning and I thank Clarence Simpson for all his efforts when it comes to this endeavor.

There are two additional dates that are worth mentioning. The first is an award that will be given to one of our members at the VA hospital, building 5 on February the 1st at 1:00 PM. We will be honoring Pete Jepson as a recipient of the Chapel of Four Chaplains Award. Pete is a long-time veteran advocate, and he has made a big difference in the lives of all veterans. He's a Chapter member any former police officer in Suffolk County and a member of the Patriot Guard. Refreshments will be served after the ceremony, please attend if possible. On March 1st we will line up at 1:30 PM at the East Islip library where we will be leading the Saint Patrick's Day parade as we have done for several decades. This is an occasion that you don't want to miss, and we are looking forward to as many green jackets as possible to march.

There are many other events planned for this year, and we will keep you posted by e-mail and by phone. If you don't receive messages from either e-mail or phone, please contact Tom Wharton and/or Dave Higgins to be put on a list for notifications. We have had a very successful year when it comes to "Veterans helping Veterans". I hope that we all find a way to help a veteran in need. A great vehicle to do that is through our chapter whose motto has always been "Veterans helping Veterans". Come out get involved, we could use all the help we can get!!

I look forward to seeing you all at the next meeting which will be on January the 23rd at the Brookhaven Town and Parks Recreation Center add 20 wireless Rd. Centereach At 8:00 PM.

SEMPER FI.....Rich



PRESS RELEASE

PUBLIC STATEMENT

January 14, 2026

No. 26-2
Contact: Mokie Porter
301-996-0901

VVA Commends Congress on Passage of *Disabled Veterans Housing Support Act (H.R. 224/S.52)*

“Vietnam Veterans of America commends Congress on the final passage by the Senate of the *Disabled Veterans Housing Support Act* on January 6, 2026,” said Tom Burke, VVA National President. “VVA’s long support of this bipartisan, bicameral legislation is a testament to our unwavering commitment to addressing the significant issue of veteran homelessness. It is our duty to ensure that no veteran is left behind, and the passage of this act is a crucial step toward fulfilling that promise.”

The act, introduced by Representatives Monica De La Cruz (R-Texas) and Brad Sherman (D-California) and Senators Mike Crapo (R-Idaho) and Jack Reed (D-Rhode Island), exempts veteran disability benefits from being included as income when determining eligibility for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) housing. It now heads to President Trump's desk for signature.

Currently, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) income guidelines include disability compensation received by veterans as part of the calculation to determine eligibility for federal housing assistance funded through the CDBG program. This practice has disproportionately impacted those who rely on disability benefits as their primary source of income, often making it more difficult for them to access affordable housing and further contributing to veteran homelessness.

"Too many homeless and disabled veterans are forced to face barriers that have nothing to do with need and everything to do with bureaucracy. We sincerely appreciate Senators Crapo and Reed and Representatives De La Cruz and Sherman for advancing this important legislation. Removing red tape and supporting a veteran's opportunity for stable housing is a meaningful step toward ensuring every veteran has a place to call home," said Bill Paton, Chair, VVA Homeless Veterans Committee.

“We are proud to see the hard work of our many members who participated in an ongoing and ultimately highly effective grassroots campaign come to a successful conclusion with this bill’s passage,” said VVA President Burke. “The sacrifices that disabled and wounded veterans have made in service to our nation should never be a stumbling block to their ability to find a safe and affordable place to call home. Rather, the nation has a duty to keep its promise to veterans and provide them with the benefits and support they earned.”

Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) is the nation's only congressionally chartered veterans service organization dedicated to the needs of Vietnam-era veterans and their families. VVA's founding principle is "Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another."



PRESS RELEASE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

No. 26-1

January 6, 2026

Contact: Mokie Porter

[301-996-0901](tel:301-996-0901)

The Forgotten Majority: Why Pre-9/11 Veterans Deserve Equal Advocacy

Statement by James L. McCormick, Executive Director Government Affairs Vietnam Veterans of America, Captain O3E US Army Retired Silver Star, Bronze Star V, Purple Heart recipient and a Cold War, Gulf War, and Operation Iraqi Freedom Veteran

When lawmakers step in front of microphones to discuss veterans' issues, the script has become painfully predictable. The focus is almost always on Iraq and Afghanistan—Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, traumatic brain injury, and improvised explosive devices. These challenges are real and deserve attention. But they are not new. They have existed since modern warfare evolved, despite being repeatedly portrayed as unique to post-9/11 service.

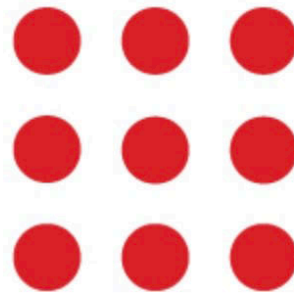
Let me be clear: I am a Cold War, Gulf War, and Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran. My service spans multiple eras. I am not speaking from the perspective of one generation over another, but from lived experience—and from a growing concern that generational lines are dividing an already shrinking veteran population. These are difficult conversations, but they are necessary.

What is just as necessary—and far too often ignored—is the reality that by elevating one generation exclusively, Congress has created an unintended hierarchy of veterans. In that hierarchy, millions of Americans who wore the uniform before September 11, 2001, have been pushed quietly to the margins.

The numbers do not lie. Of the approximately 18 million veterans living in the United States today, nearly 12 million served before 9/11. Vietnam. The Cold War. The Gulf War. Decades of deterrence missions, forward deployments, and quiet service that kept this nation secure. Yet when congressional hearings are convened or legislation is drafted, these veterans are routinely absent from the conversation—overshadowed by more recent conflicts that dominate media narratives and political attention.

This imbalance is not merely symbolic. It has real and lasting

Veterans Crisis Line



DIAL 988 then
PRESS 1



TAKE ACTION NOW!

VISIT VVA'S LEGISLATIVE ACTION CENTER

How to Age Blissfully

On life's journey into my 80s plenty of ups and downs occurred

I used to believe my bliss depends on circumstances –

Tenure decision negative Marriage proposal accepted

That's not how I think today. In the past two decades I've seen the golden light,
It's not what happens to melt how I respond to it – Washington, DC's coolness helped me find
magical Sedona. Cancer awakened me to holistic rejuvenation

I've realized my wisdom comes from the hard knocks the world has given me

It's my choice to be fulfilled, influencing my total health. Old age decline is the default from
repeating the same tiring life becoming receptive to disease thinking too much of dying, death

We can't regain our youth, Ah, but we can become youthful in attitude,

thinking, vitality, behavior Here's how I've done it: Regarding life as an

adventure – daring, risk taking, creativity, novelty

active, listening, sharing, learning singing, dancing, traveling, growing

Obtaining guidance from – spiritual teachings, religious traditions

self-awakening, self-development. Connecting with uplifting people

hanging out with them. Enjoying Nature's renewing power –

forests, mountains, lakes, beaches, Ocean Tapping into creativity, expressing it

Eating healthily exercising well Regular check-ups

I've realized the value of combining aspects of aging and youthfulness –

Aging for maturity, sensitivity, grace self-care, contribution, inspiration

Youthfulness for energy, newness, adventure, optimism, exploration, fun

May you discover and pursue the right aging blend for you May the Life Force be within you

Each day alive with blessings

Chaplain Paul Swerdlow

79 Middleville Road

Northport, NY 11768

631-261-4400 x7204

Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter #11

Celebrate 3rd Inauguration with Sheriff Errol Toulon



Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter #11

Donation to Long Island State Veterans Home

For New Garden for Veteran Residents



Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter #11

Fall Garden Cleanup



Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter #11

Thanksgiving Turkeys for Veterans



Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter #11

July 4th Southampton Parade





**Volunteer drivers are needed
to help America's veterans get to
VA medical appointments!**

**Join the Disabled American Veterans (DAV)
Volunteer Transportation Network today.**

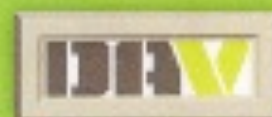
If you have a valid NYS driver's license and a little time,
you can make a positive difference in the lives of local veterans.

To learn about becoming a volunteer driver, please contact:

Robert.Erdody@va.gov / 631-235-8220

For a Volunteer Application contact:

Jennifer.Pohl2@VA.gov / 631-261-4400, ext. 7182





NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

- Yes**, I want to support the Wall of Wars Project and honor our veterans with a contribution of \$_____.
- I do not wish to be recognized with a donor category.
- I am pleased to select the following donor category/naming opportunity:

Friends of the Wall of Wars

(Five Star and Four Star donors will be recognized on Commemorative Monument)

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|--|----------|---|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Five Star ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ | \$10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Granite Benches* (6 available) | \$ 5,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Four Star ★ ★ ★ ★ | \$ 5,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Metal Benches* | \$ 3,500 |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Decorative Lamps* (9 available) | \$ 2,500 |
- *Engraved

Engraved Bricks

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 23" x 23" | 4 lines, 15 characters per line | \$ 1,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 23" x 17" | 4 lines, 15 characters per line | \$ 750 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 23" x 11" | 4 lines, 15 characters per line | \$ 500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 17" x 17" | 4 lines, 15 characters per line | \$ 500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 17" x 11" | 4 lines, 15 characters per line | \$ 250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11" x 11" | 3 lines, 15 characters per line | \$ 150 |

Engraved Brick Memorial Acknowledgment

Please print inscription clearly. It will be inscribed exactly as entered. One character per box (spaces count as one character).

LINE 1:

LINE 2:

LINE 3:

LINE 4:

(LINE 4 NOT INCLUDED FOR 11" x 11" BRICK)

Donated By

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ADDRESS _____

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PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

Please make checks payable to Vietnam Veterans/Wall of Wars and mail to:
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To donate online, visit: www.WallofWars.com

100% of all donations are going to the Wall of Wars Memorial

For more information, please contact: (631) 651-8006 • www.WallofWars.com

ATTENTION MEMBERS

Have you forgotten to renew your membership?

If so, below is a sample of the letter that you will receive requesting your renewal.



VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

Suffolk Chapter #11
Vietnam Memorial Lane
Post Office Box 518
Farmingville, New York 11738-0518
www.vva11.org



Date

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN TO RENEW YOUR VVA CHAPTER 11 MEMBERSHIP

Dear

A review of our records indicates that you have not renewed your VVA Chapter 11 membership.

Usually, membership renewal notices are sent from the VVA National Headquarters in Silver Springs, Maryland. This has been confusing to some of our members because they think it is the usual "Please send us a donation" request. Many people do not even open the envelope when they see the return address.

We do not want to lose you as a member. The more members we have the stronger VVA becomes. I have enclosed a renewal form for your convenience.

Our meetings are still held the fourth Friday of the month at our new location the Brookhaven Town Recreation Building, 286 Hawkins Road, Centereach, NY 11720. Please note: there are No General Meetings in July and December unless otherwise notified.

Remember ... We are Vets Helping Vets !

Sincerely,

Frank D'Aversa

Frank D'Aversa
Membership Chairperson
VVA Chapter 11



Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc

Application for Membership

Welcome to all Veterans who served during the Vietnam Era

Membership is open to U.S. armed forces veterans who served on active duty (for other than training purposes) in the Republic of Vietnam between *February 28, 1961, and May 7, 1975*, or in any duty location between *August 5, 1964, and May 7, 1975*.

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____ Gender: _____

(OPTIONAL) Chapter Number: _____ Sponsor: _____

VVA has only one category of membership:

Life Membership: \$50

ATTENTION New members:

You must submit a copy of your DD-214 form along with this application and dues payment.

Please make your check or money order payable to: Vietnam Veterans of America

Mail to: VVA Chapter 11, PO Box 518, Farmingville, NY 11738-0518

Questions Call: Frank D'Aversa

(631) 265-7525 or (631) 972-5708 (cell phone)

MEMBERSHIP

All Are Welcome

Membership is open to both men and women.
Friends, supporters, and families.
We encourage associate membership.

If you served in the U.S. Armed Forces anytime from February 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975, you are eligible for membership in Vietnam Veterans of America.

Dues are \$ 20.00 per year.



VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA CHAPTER 11 SERVICES & PROGRAMS

TIMOTHY DUFFY MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Annual scholarship for dependents of Vietnam veterans.

SSGT. ALAN F. SCHAEFER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Annual scholarship for Vietnam era veterans.

POW/MIA REMEMBRANCE SCHOLARSHIP

Annual scholarship for Vietnam era veterans, their dependents
and Chapter 11 members.

AGENT ORANGE INFORMATION

POW/MIA INFORMATION

SOCIAL & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

QUARTERLY "Interchange" NYS PUBLICATION

MONTHLY "Veteran" NATIONAL PUBLICATION

QUARTERLY "Vietnam Veterans Advance"

NEWSLETTER



Web Site Addresses

Veterans Employment & Training Services

www.dol.gov/vets

Governor's Program to Hire Disabled Vets

www.cs.state.ny.us

N.Y.S. Dept. of Labor Workforce NY

www.labor.state.ny.us

Helping Young Vets In Employment (Senator Craig)

<http://veterans.senate.gov>

Public Law 107-288 – Jobs for Veterans Act

www.hirevetsfirst.org

Helmets to Hard Hats

www.helmetstohardhats.org

Center for Minority Affairs

www.va.gov/centerforminorityveterans

Gravesite Locator

<http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov>

New York State Council Web Site

www.NYVietnamVets.org

Vietnam Vets Donation Pickup

www.WePickUp.com

Community Directory

VA Regional Office	(212) 620-6901
VA Medical Center-Northport	(631) 261-4400
Suffolk County Dept. of Labor	
Hauppauge	(631) 853-6775
Babylon	(631) 661-8600
Riverhead	(631) 284-6100
NYS Dept. of Labor – OVOPs	
Hicksville	(516) 934-8516
Hauppauge	(631) 952-6630
Patchogue	(631) 758-7712
Riverhead	(631) 727-4870
Small Business Administration	(631) 454-8080
Woman's Coalition – 24 Hrs.	(631) 566-8833
Suffolk Cty. Veterans Service Agency	
Hauppauge	(631) 853-8387
Riverhead	(631) 852-1410
NYS Dept. of Veteran Services	(631) 952-6432
Northport VA Medical Center	(631) 261-4400
Response (24 Hours)	(631) 751-7500
Alcoholics Anonymous	(631) 654-1124
Al-Anon / Al-Ateen	(631) 6542827
Gamblers Anonymous	(631) 586-7171
Parents Anonymous	(800) 462-6406
Narcotics Anonymous	(718) 805-9835
Pot / Pills Anonymous	(631) 422-6245
Child Abuse	(800) 342-3720
Domestic Violence	(800) 942-6906
Newsletter Fax	(631) 395-3319
	(631) 244-7423
Vietnam Vets Donation Pick Up	(631) 582-0242

V A TOLL FREE NUMBERS

V A Benefits	1-800-827-1000
Education (GI Bill)	1-888-442-4551
Health Care Benefits	1-877-222-8387
Income Verification & Means Test	1-800-929-8387
Life Insurance	1-800-669-8477
Mammography Helpline	1-888-492-7844
Special Issues	1-800-749-8387
Status of Headstones & Markers	1-800-697-6947
TDD for the Deaf	1-800-829-4833



HAVE A FEW ITEMS

YOU'D LIKE TO DONATE?

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

Would greatly appreciate your tax deductible donation of used items. This is our primary source of support for helping veterans. Your support makes it possible for us to continue funding V.A. service offices, providing services to homeless veterans and other necessary programs.

Kitchenware	Lamps	Toys
Bric-A-Brac	Jewelry	Furniture
Dishes	Area Rugs	T.V.'s
Radios	Books	Housewares
Small Appliances		Other Items

CLOTHING ESPECIALLY NEEDED

FREE PICK UP

(631) 582-0242

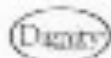
O.B. Davis Funeral Homes
 Port Jefferson Station, Miller Place, Centereach
 (631) 473-0360

Gregory C. Müller
 NYS Licensed Funeral Director
 Advanced Planning Counselor

Services & Information Available:

- Price Guaranteed Prearranged Funerals
- VVA Chapter 11 Affinity Relationship 10% Discount
- Planning Need Workshops
- Veterans Burial Benefits

- Irrevocable Medicaid Trusts
- Grief Management Library
- Homeless Veterans Burial Program



Dignity National has ten locations in Suffolk County and seven locations in Nassau County.

Greg is a Lifetime Associate Member of Chapter 11
 Call him today at **631.664.4625**

*New York State law requires that all contracts for prearranged funeral agreements executed by applicants for or recipients of such funeral arrangements specify nature of funeral services to be provided.



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INSPECTION CENTER LLANTAS NUEVAS Y USADAS



Mecánica General - Sistema Eléctrico - Pintura - Frenos
 Cambio de aceite - Alineamiento - Alternadores - Collision
 Suspensión - Encendido - Escape - Mantenimiento



If you were in Vietnam or served during the Vietnam years, you know what it was like. You also know what it's been like since you got home, right? The problems, the hassles, trying to explain to people who didn't understand or care. We know. That's why the **Vet Center** was set up.

**116 W. Main Street
 Babylon, NY 11702
 (631) 661-3930**

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The Next General Meeting
 will be held on the**

4th Friday

Meeting Place

Brookhaven Town Parks
 &
 Recreation Bldg.

New Village
 Recreation Center
 20 Wireless Road
 Centereach, NY

Day & Time
 4th Friday of each Month
 8:00 PM

VVA Meetings are open to the public: Spouse, friends and supporters of Vietnam and Vietnam-Era Veterans. We urge all to attend.



VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
Chapter # 11
 POST OFFICE BOX 518
 VIETNAM MEMORIAL LANE
 FARMINGVILLE, NY 11738-0518

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 Farmingville, NY 11738
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“We Served Our Country when it was Popular To Say No”