

November 2006



NORTHLAND VIETNAM VETERANS' ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 16975
Duluth Mn. 55816
WWW.NVVA.US



"Dignity Thru Unity"

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Meetings 4th. Monday of month at the Depot 6:00 PM 4th. Floor

Notice Meeting Time Change to 6:00

Attention
December meeting
date change Wednesday
27,2006
6:00 PM

the scholarship applications will be
mailed next month to the High
Schools
we will have one ready for the web-

Attention to Orders

Details for Tomorrow

By
Durbin M. Keeney

I once asked a young reporter for a local TV station if she knew the difference between Veterans Day and Memorial Day? She didn't. I pointed to Joe Venier the then Captain of the Duluth Honor Guard and related the following story. Joe and I were at the funeral of a fellow veteran, and while we were waiting for the funeral procession to arrive I asked Joe how he was doing? This wonderfully dedicated WWII veteran pushed some flower around with his cane and said, "I'm still looking at them from the top down." I looked at the reported she still seemed a bit puzzled. I went on to explain that on Veterans Day we are still looking at the flowers from the top down, and Memorial Day we remember those who responded to the Great Commanders call and are looking up at the flowers. That night my wife and I were watching the news that wonderful reporter related the same story to the news anchor.

The sad truth like this young reporter many people today have not been taught the history of Veterans Day. This special day 11-11-11 is cast in the stone of our history as the 11th month, the 11th day, and the 11th hour that the Armistice was signed to end WWI the "war to end all wars." There was even a time in our country when at the 11th hour all traffic stopped to honor those who have fallen. Through the years it's popularity rose and fell with the times. With WWII and Korean veterans far outnumbering the WWI veterans, Armistice Day seemed to have lost much of the support in our nation. On May 24, 1954 President Eisenhower signed a law that renamed Armistice Day to Veterans Day. He called on "all citizens to observe the day by remembering the sacrifices of all those who fought so gallantly, and through rededication to the task of promoting an enduring peace."

There are many events throughout the community and here is your opportunity to be part of this very important day. If I left any one out I am sorry. These are the ones that I am aware of:

- Lowell Mac Arthur School on Friday Nov 10th at 2:30 pm in the school auditorium will be having a Veterans Day program. All the children write letters to veterans including the Silver Bay Veterans home and others.
- Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV-Duluth) will be putting out it's homeless veterans flag at Bayfront Park as a reminder that 700 veterans that are currently experiencing homeless and the 3,500 that will be homeless annually in Minnesota this year.

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To add an article to this newsletter contact

Mike Hanson 624 4474
Noisyguy@chartermi.net

NWA Memberships
178 Members
131 Associates

Don't Forget Party **Barkers Island**

March 10, 2007

To be announced

Happy Hour 6:00 P.M.
Dinner @ 7:00 P.M.
Prizes and Fun for all

- Veterans Day Parade will be the first one since prior to WWII. We will form up at 9:00 am At the old Armory. Then at 9:30 am we will proceed down London Road to Superior Street to west 6th to Michigan Street and end up at the Depot. We will form up by branches. For more information please call me at 722-8763 or 590-3156.
- Troop Train. Can't march but want to be part of the morning events? There will be a Troop Train leaving the Depot at 9:30 am and return by 10:30 am in order to welcome the marchers.
- The 11-11-11 Veterans Day Ceremony sponsored by the city of Duluth will be held at the Depot.
- Following the Veterans Day Ceremony, Veterans Service Organizations will have a veteran's fair. All of the local veterans organization have been invited to set up tables to have information about their organizations.
- Veterans Dance begins at 4:00 pm with two for sure and possibly three bands planned to play. Donations of \$10.00 for individuals, and \$15.00 proceed to help local veterans in need. Public is welcome tickets will be at the door.
- Veterans Pizza Train that evening for veterans and their families. Contact the Lake Superior Rail Road for details.
- Benefit for Brian Saaristo at the Cloquet Armory from 4:00 to 8:00 pm. Brian lost both legs due to a roadside bomb. He is recovering, with his wife and children at his side, in a military hospital in D.C.
- East High School is doing it's fifth Veteran's Day concert at the DECC at 7:00 pm. This is wonderful evening for everyone.

I understand Veterans Day is on a Saturday, and there are one hundred or more thing to take your time, but this is a day to give thanks to those who have served out nation. Let them know that the freedoms that we enjoy are in many ways due in great part to their service and thank them.

Hope to see you at the parade.

Greeting from Silver Bay

By Ward C. Wallin

MINNESOTA VETERANS HOME - FALL 2006

Changes, changes, and more changes. The Veterans Home has gone through many changes of late. In the last few months we have had key management staff changes. Pat Smedstad was recently promoted to the Director of Nursing. Chad Burginger was promoted to Nursing Supervisor. Gina Thompson was promoted to HR Director. Julia Alveraz was promoted Staff Development Director, and Laura von Goertz was hired as our new Dietician. The current Management Team is very dynamic and has lots of energy and new ideas!

Also, we recently installed a blacktop path around the rear of the facility. We are just finishing our construction in the kitchen which includes a new freezer and a dish room, and we are currently working on installing new resident room flooring. As in most construction and renovation, this has caused some minor disturbances. With our Annual Pheasant Dinner right around the corner (November 9) we are not sure if our dish room will be completed. The only downside of this is the fact that we might be eating from the "white china" – paper plates!

Veterans Day 06. Again this year will be participating in the Veterans Day program at William Kelley High School. This year's program will be held on Friday, November 10th. If the weather is nice enough, we might even drive our club car to the event!

If you haven't been to the Vets Home lately, please give us a call and we would be glad to give you a tour of this great facility. On behalf of our residents and staff, I would like to thank the NVVA for the ongoing support.

Respectfully submitted,

Ward C. Wallin
Volunteer Program Administrator

I would like to thank the NVVA scholarship Association for the scholarship I received this fall. It helped out a ton. With the cost of college tuition on the rise, it was a great help. I also learned a lot from the research that went into writing the essay. I think that was a great idea to have applicants write an essay because they now know what this organization stands for and will work extra hard to represent it. School is going great. There was a little confusion at the beginning of the semester because the school I had planned on attending (Hibbing Community College) canceled their Paramedic program at the last minute and I had to scramble to find another school. I am now attending Mesabi Range College in Eveleth which is a little bit closer, so that worked to my advantage. So far the curriculum has been a lot of review from my EMT class but we have been starting to touch on some new material. I started my first IV on a fellow classmate which was pretty intense but it was successful. Next semester we start learning about cardiology and pharmacology. I am guessing that those classes will require a lot of studying so better have my head on straight for those. I have been getting a lot of good marks on my assignments and tests even though we cover a lot of material in a short amount of time. I still work full time at Chris Jensen Health and Rehabilitation Center here in Duluth. I am probably going to cut back on hours at work because my schedule is taking its toll on me and school is only going to get more time consuming. I would again like to thank the NVVA for the scholarship and I will continue to do the best I can to represent the organization.

Corwin Pederson

August 3, 2006

**Brad Bennett, President
Northland Vietnam Veterans Memorial Foundation
2423 Chambersburg Avenue
Duluth, MN 55811**

Dear Brad and Committee/Foundation Members of NVVA:

Please forgive my tardiness in sending my thank you. The summer is sure flying by and it has been a busy one for me.

I wanted to extend once again my sincere thank you to you all for selecting my essay as one of the three NVVA scholarship winners. I was pleasantly surprised when Brad called me at home to tell me that my essay had been selected.

Also, I was most humbled by the events that surrounded my family and I that beautiful evening on May 30th, two days before my graduation from high school. It was a great honor for me, personally, to receive the scholarship and be made even more aware of the personal sacrifice so many have made. I was glad to meet so many of the foundation members who continue to do an awesome job at all you do; i.e. building the Memorial, helping the Northland Veterans, building schools, presenting scholarships year after year, etc. It was a great reception also.

Continue your good works in the Northland area. You are all a great bunch of people who I am very proud now to be associated with. Thanks once again.

Sincerely,


William Bacon

William (Billy) Bacon

6/2/06

Dear Minnesota Vietnam Veterans Association,
Thank you so very much for honoring me with the 2006 Vietnam Scholarship. Also, thanks for putting on such a wonderful banquet at Grandma's Restaurant. I will be using my scholarship to finish my Masters of Education at the University of Minnesota. Thank you again and I am forever grateful.

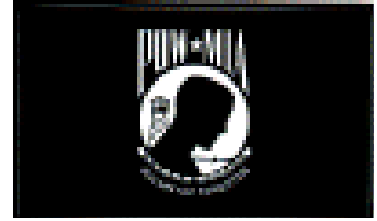
Always,

Trina M. Kolojeski 
University of Minnesota

POW MIA News

By

Howard Peterson



SEA Airman Finally Home

Airman MIA Since Vietnam Comes Home To Rest In Peace

Washington, D.C. (AHN) - The U.S. Department of Defense says it has identified an airman who has been missing in action (MIA) since the Vietnam War.

Air Force Maj. Burke H. Morgan, U.S. Air Force, of Manitou Springs, Colo., was buried Sept. 7 beside his wife, Mary, at the U.S. Air Force Academy, as part of his U.S. Air Force Academy graduating class' 45th reunion.
MIA is Home

Korean War MIA's remains returned

Harold R. Shreve, The Fairfield, Ill., native's remains will be buried Sunday with military honors. He had been declared missing in action on Dec. 2, 1950.

War is Identified

Washington D.C. - The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced Sept. 20 that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing in action from the Vietnam War, have been identified and returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

He is Lt. Cmdr. James E. Plowman, U.S. Navy, of Pebble Beach, Calif. He was buried Sept. 20 at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C.

KIA 1918 - MIA is ID'd in 2006

Cincinnati Soldier Killed In WWI Buried Soldier One Of Two Finally Identified With DNA

WASHINGTON -- A Cincinnati man long listed as missing in action in World War I has finally returned home.

Pvt. Francis Lupo, of Cincinnati, Ohio, was killed on July 21, 1918, during an attack on German forces near Soissons, France.

His remains were discovered by a French archaeologist in 2003 and identified by scientists from the Pentagon's Joint POW-MIA Accounting Command and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory.

DNA IDs Korean War MIA

DNA helps identify soldier killed in Korean War
Associated Press

AKRON, Ohio - DNA testing has helped identify the remains of an Ohio soldier killed during the Korean War 56 years ago.

Finally Found, and Laid to Rest

POW/MIA Found and Laid to Rest

by Kevin Gribble

Alan Mettler fought and died for our country over half a century ago. The soldier from Mandan died in a Korean War POW camp, but it took decades for his body to be returned. The after effects are war are always present, but today, the Mettler family and friends

was finally able to close a painful chapter in their lives.

Airman Reburied at Arlington

40 years after death, Vietnam War airman and Stamford resident reburied at Arlington

ARLINGTON, Va. (AP) - Air Force Maj. John F. Conlon III's remains lay for 40 years in a shallow grave in Vietnam, placed there by villagers. On Tuesday, they were brought to Arlington National Cemetery.

POW Who Inspired Great Escape Passes at 102

POW pilot who inspired the Great Escape dies at the age of 102

By Richard Savill

A Second World War pilot who escaped seven times from prisoner of war camps has died aged 102.

Friends said Sqn Ldr Eric Foster, who died peacefully at his home in Bishop's Cleeve, Glos, on Sunday, was part of the inspiration behind Steve McQueen's character in the film *The Great Escape*.

As a flight lieutenant with 38 Bomber Squadron, Mr Foster was shot down over Paris while flying a Wellington bomber in 1940 and captured by German troops.

Over the next four years he escaped seven times from prisoner of war camps, sometimes dressed as a German officer.

He was taken to a German prisoner of war camp at Homark, near the Polish border, and tried to break out by shinning down a fire escape.

At Spangenberg Castle, which was surrounded by a moat, he sneaked out disguised as a member of the Hitler Youth.

He took a train to Switzerland but was caught during a chase.

He was taken to the Polish camp of Schubin, where he spent eight months digging escape tunnels, which guards discovered.

He was then taken to Stalag Luft III camp on which *The Great Escape* was based. He convinced his captors he was insane and was sent home. He was promoted to squadron leader in 1945.

He later wrote about his exploits in his autobiography *Life Hangs by a Silken Thread*, which was published in 1992. Michael Beresford, 74, a friend, said some of Mr. Foster's wartime activities were depicted by McQueen, who played Captain Virgil Hilts in the popular 1963 film.

Hilts, nicknamed "The Cooler King", was a fictional character but was believed to have been based on several real escapees.

Mr. Beresford said: "Eric lived an extremely active life. After he was shot down he escaped seven times, but was recaptured. Eric had some good tales from the war, which he told in his autobiography."

The RAF said: "We are deeply saddened by the loss of one of the many great RAF heroes who fought bravely against Nazi tyranny. "His service was exemplary and his heroics legendary."

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House Veterans' Committee Report Concludes VA Counseling Center Services At-Risk

Survey shows growing demand, understaffing, curtailed or deferred services

Washington, D.C. - Over the past year, many Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Readjustment Counseling Service Centers (Vet Centers) have been forced to ration services, create waiting lists and limit individual counseling sessions due to significant increases in demand for services from returning Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans, according to a House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Democratic staff report released today.

House Veterans' Affairs Health Subcommittee Ranking Member, Rep. Michael H. Michaud (D-ME) requested Democratic committee staff prepare the report on whether Vet Centers have experienced an increase in workload and have the capacity to meet any increases in demand for readjustment counseling and mental health services. Staff reviewed VA data and interviewed supervisors at 60 Vet Centers nationwide to assess capacity.

The report found that in nine months, from October 2005 through June 2006, the number of returning veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan who have turned to Vet Centers for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) services and readjustment concerns has doubled from 4,467 to 9,103 veterans.

"It's clear from the report that Vet Center capacity has not kept pace with demand for services, and the Administration has failed to properly plan and prepare for the mental health needs of returning veterans and their families," said Michaud. "The Vet Centers' staff are dedicated and deeply committed to meeting the needs of veterans and their families, but without additional resources, even dedicated staff has limits," said Michaud. "Contrary to the Administration rhetoric of supporting family counseling to help keep veterans' families strong and resilient, 20 percent of the Vet Centers reported that they have no, or limited, capacity to provide family counseling or therapy. Veterans don't live in a vacuum. They, and their families, need help in facing PTSD symptoms that can shatter all their lives," Michaud continued.

According to the report, the increase in Vet Center workload, without commensurate increase in counseling staffing, has affected access to quality readjustment counseling for veterans. Specifically, the report finds:

- 100 percent of Vet Centers surveyed have seen a significant increase in outreach and services to OIF/OEF veterans;
- For half of the Vet Centers, this increase has affected their ability to treat the existing client workload. Of these Vet Centers, 40 percent have directed veterans for whom individualized therapy would be appropriate to group therapy. Roughly, 27 percent have limited or plan to limit veterans' access to marriage or family therapy. Nearly 17 percent of the workload-affected Vet Centers have or plan to establish waiting lists;
- Of all the Vet Centers surveyed, one in four has taken or will take some action to manage their increasing workload, including limiting services and establishing waiting lists; and,
- Thirty percent of the Vet Centers explicitly commented that they need more staff.

In addition to this report, the Government Accountability Office recently reported (GAO-06-1119T) that the Administration failed to fund \$300 million in resources which the Administration previously touted for veterans' mental health services in 2005 and 2006.

Established in 1979, Vet Centers are unique community-based, veteran-focused storefronts that provide a host of readjustment counseling services to assist veterans in successfully transitioning from military service to civilian life. There are currently 207 Vet Centers located throughout the 50 states, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the District of Columbia, and Guam.

A copy of the Democratic staff report has been transmitted to VA Secretary R. James Nicholson for his review and comment.

The report can be viewed here: <http://veterans.house.gov/democratic/officialcorr/pdf/vetcenters.pdf>

Election 2006
By
Durbin M. Keeney

Many have tried to put veterans in a pro-war or antiwar, Republican, Demarcate, or Independent, or one of many other boxes. We all have very diverse opinions. That is a right that we fought for and one that we hold dear. I get a kick out of people that try to put me in one of those boxes. Personally I do have one goal when talking with and working with these elected and or soon to be elected officials and that is what is good for and what is needed to better serve our soldiers and veterans. That is why I am so proud of being part of NVVA that has its priorities straight.

We are within days of a major election. There are many issues important to Veterans, our military, and our community. Here are some questions that I often ask, and maybe you might want to ask?

- The VA is the only Cabinet level department of the Government that has to battle for every dollar that they can get. All other departments start with last year's budget except the VA. Will Congress change this and that would give VA leaders bases for long term planning and help in providing the best service for our veterans and returning soldiers?
- There will be 2,600 returning citizen soldiers in a three-month period next spring along with many that come and go throughout the year. The VA has been mandated to provide health care for those having need within the first two years after returning. Yet we know from experience that many health issues do not show up for years after that. Why is not there long-term access for these citizen soldiers?
- Will our Air Base survive the Air Force's long-term budget cuts? We have the oldest fighter aircraft in the Military today. What is being done on a long-term basis to provide for proper aircraft and a long term flying mission?
- Is there anything that we can do to retain our Naval Reserve unit that has been in Duluth for over 108 years and was cut by the BRACC commission?
- Why do we provide Federal funding for colleges that deny access and respect to our military recruiter?
- What can be done to make the VA more complete for Doctors, and other professionals to remain employees at the VA hospitals and clinics around the country?
- Why anyone who has effects of Atomic testing even be questioned as to their condition based on dosage, if in fact they now suffer from illnesses that are known to be shown as directly caused by exposure? Is it because the VA is hoping that people will die off first and no acknowledgement of exposure and therefore no benefits to be paid? Does this sound familiar to you? We Vietnam veterans forced the issue with "agent orange," these folks don't have the numbers or health to fight this battle alone any longer.

Remember that we pay these people to represent us and they must understand what is important to us. I had a Clinton Aid once tell me that the veteran's community could be the most powerful group in the nation if we would only unite under one banner similar to AARP, teacher, and other major unions. I told him that would be a wonderful thing, but it will not happen. We, the veterans in this country have very strong beliefs, and we are a very diverse group. For that reason will not be just a focus group to be counted in one column or another.

Finally, go
VOTE!