



Apr–Jun 2024

# LI 202 AFA NEWS

## Chapter Officers

Fred Di Fabio	President
Steven Latus	Vice President
Ray Donnelly	VP Corporate Development
Kenneth J. Nevor	VP Veterans Affairs
Andrea Nordquist	VP Media Relations
Cathy Ward	Secretary
Bill Stratemeier	Treasurer

Visit us on the WEB:

[LIAFA.ORG](http://LIAFA.ORG)

Visit us on FACEBOOK:

[Long Island Air Force Association–LIAFA](https://www.facebook.com/LongIslandAirForceAssociation-LIAFA)

Email us at: [LIAFA202@gmail.com](mailto:LIAFA202@gmail.com)

Newsletter editor: Steven Latus

## CALENDAR OF LIAFA EVENTS 2024

### Vietnam Medal Ceremonies

#### Fri, Jul 12, 2024

During Shootout for Soldiers  
John J. Burns Park  
4990 Merrick Rd.  
Massapequa Park  
11:00 AM

#### Sat, Nov 2, 2024

Museum of American Armor  
1303 Round Swamp Rd.  
Old Bethpage  
11:30 AM

### Women's Military Service Medal Ceremonies

#### Sat, Sep 14, 2024

Cradle of Aviation  
Charles Lindbergh Blvd.  
Garden City  
11:30 AM

### 83<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Annual Pearl Harbor Memorial Ceremony— Dropping of the Roses

#### Sat, Dec 7, 2024

American Airpower Museum  
1230 New Highway  
Farmingdale  
10:30 AM

## President's Message

We are still accepting applications for both the Vietnam 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Medal Ceremony as well as the Women's Military Service Medal Ceremony. The requirements for each are:

### Applies to both medals:

- Currently living in Nassau, Suffolk, Brooklyn, Queens, or Staten Island
- Can attend the ceremony (awards are presented **only** at the ceremony; they are not mailed)

### Applies only to Vietnam 50th Anniversary Commemorative Medal:

- Served in the Vietnam theater of operations in any branch of the military as per DD Form 214

### Applies only to Women's Military Service Medal:

- Female veteran **or** currently serving in any branch of the military as per DD Form 214 for veterans, or ID or other documentation for those currently serving.

You will find both applications at the end of this newsletter. You can also apply online from our website (DD214 and other required documentation must still be mailed; black out Social Security number) at [LIAFA.org](http://LIAFA.org).

**Please look to the LIAFA Facebook page and/or our website at [LIAFA.org](http://LIAFA.org) for future notices regarding any upcoming events.**

## Recent Events

### 43<sup>rd</sup> Vietnam 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Medal Ceremony

**Twenty-one Vietnam veterans** were presented with Vietnam 50th Anniversary Commemorative Medals and Certificates of Appreciation on Saturday, May 11, at the American Airpower Museum in Farmingdale. Distinguished guests included Suffolk County Executive **Ed Romaine**, American Airpower Museum Operations Manager **Larry Starr**, Maintenance Operations Flight Senior Leader **CMSgt Eric Carver**, Director of Nassau County Veterans Service Agency **Ralph Esposito** and Director of Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency **Marcelle Leis**. Thank you to our sponsors—Shootout for Soldiers, Long Island State Veterans Home and American Airpower Museum as well as special thanks to the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Band, American Legion Riders from Greenlawn Post 1244, Patriot Guard Riders, Rolling Thunder Chapter 6, Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) Chapter 82 Color Guard and Civil Air Patrol Lt. Quentin Roosevelt Cadet Squadron #288.



*Some of the medal recipients.*



*Andrea Nordquist, LIAFA's VP for Media Relations, receiving the LIAFA Exceptional Service Award from LIAFA president Fred DiFabio.*



*Ken Nevor, LIAFA's VP for Veterans Affairs, receiving the LIAFA Exceptional Service Award from LIAFA president Fred DiFabio.*





*Christopher De Luca holding the "Welcome Home" sign.*

## **Vet Fest**

A free resource-sharing event to benefit veterans, service members and their families was held on Saturday, May 18, at the Farmingdale Village Green, 361 Main St. in Farmingdale. It was sponsored by the Veteran Suicide Prevention Coalition and supported by various veteran service providers. Complimentary services and resources offered included help for food security, mental health, health screening, equine therapy, substance abuse, Naloxone training, education, peer-to-peer, problem gambling, housing, employment, legal help and financial advisory services.

## **Veterans Summer Stand Down**

The annual Summer Stand Down hosted by the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency was held at the Freeport Armory on Tuesday, May 21, from 9 AM to 1 PM. This was again a drive-through-only event due to space constraints at the Armory. Clothes, sneakers, nonperishable food, toiletries, housing assistance and peer counseling were all made available thanks to the sponsors—General Needs, Covanta Energy, Long Island Cares, Island Harvest, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, Vietnam War Veterans Association of Nassau County, Beacon House, New York Islanders, PSE&G and the Village of Freeport. Thanks are also due to the volunteers who prepared the packages the day before the event and who handed them out during the event. Per Ralph Esposito, Director of the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency, the event was a great success, with many veterans getting the help they needed.

## **Long Island National Cemetery Memorial Day Flag Placement**

Volunteers flocked to the Farmingdale cemetery on Saturday, May 25, to honor the veterans interred there by planting American flags at their graves in this annual event. Thanks to their hard work, the flagging of the entire cemetery was completed in about four hours. All participants received a patch from LINCMO, the nonprofit Long Island National Cemetery Memorial Organization.

## **United Veterans Organization (UVO) Memorial Day Ceremony**

This annual event took place on Sunday morning, May 26, at Veterans Plaza in Eisenhower Park in East Meadow. Long-time MC and former UVO president **Morris Miller** conducted the ceremony. Honored guest speakers were Nassau County Executive **Bruce Blakeman** and Director of Nassau County Veterans Service Agency **Ralph Esposito**. UVO chaplain **Eric Spinner** read the invocation and benediction while his wife **Rosanne Spinner** sang *The Star-Spangled Banner* and *God Bless America*. **Frank Colon** played Taps. Sergeant-at-Arms **Paul Masi** of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 82 led the advancement of the colors.

## **Long Island National Cemetery Memorial Day Ceremony**

This annual event took place on Sunday afternoon, May 26, at Long Island National Cemetery in Farmingdale. Long-time MC and former LINC MO president **Morris Miller** conducted the ceremony. Honored guest speakers were Suffolk County Executive **Ed Romaine** and Long Island National Cemetery Director **Jeffrey Taveras**. LINC MO chaplain **Eric Spinner** read the invocation and benediction; **COL Lou DiLeo** of the 11<sup>th</sup> New York Regiment United States Volunteers–America played Taps and sang *The Star-Spangled Banner* and *God Bless America*. Sergeant-at-Arms **Richard Toth** of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 11 led the advancement of the colors. The 11<sup>th</sup> New York Regiment United States Volunteers–America provided the firing detail.

## **80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary D-Day Ceremony at Museum of American Armor**

This event took place on June 6, at the museum in Old Bethpage to honor the World War II veterans who took part in the largest sea-borne invasion ever attempted—Operation Overlord, the landings at Normandy, France on June 6, 1944—D-Day. The invasion opened another front against Nazi Germany, hastening the downfall of the Nazi regime in May 1945. Roughly 150,000 Allied troops took part in the operation, 4400 of whom perished in the assault against Hitler’s Atlantic Wall, a formidable array of fortifications, artillery and machine gun positions, mines, landing obstacles and barbed wire. The ceremony opened with the Gordon Highlanders Pipers and the Levittown VFW Post 9592 Honor Guard, who marched in to post the colors. A bell was rung five times to mark each of the five Normandy invasion beaches, codenamed Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword. The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Band provided the music.

## **Annual Patchogue-Medford AFJROTC Awards Banquet**

The banquet was held this year on Friday, May 10 at the Holbrook Country Club in Holbrook.

The JROTC program at Patchogue-Medford High School has been around since 1974. A military commitment is NOT a requirement, although those who do wish to enlist in the military after high school can receive a higher rank. The classes are an elective and are offered for all four years of high school. Joining the program provides a credit towards graduation, provides credit towards college-level ROTC programs and allows students to compete for scholarships. The Cadets learn self-discipline, citizenship, a sense of responsibility, as well as the curriculum that includes Aerospace Studies, Leadership and Management, and Health and Wellness.

The winner of the AFA Outstanding Cadet of the Year Award for the Patchogue-Medford AFJROTC unit was **Shannon Nash**, who received a medal, ribbon and certificate.



*L to R: Bill Stratemeier, LIAFA treasurer; Shannon Nash, AFA Outstanding Cadet of the Year for Patchogue-Medford AFJROTC; Cathy Ward, LIAFA secretary*

## Upcoming Non-LIAFA Events

### TD Bank Fireworks Show and Concert

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 3, GATES OPEN AT 5 PM**, Eisenhower Park in East Meadow (Harry Chapin Theater). Attendance is free. *Rain date is Friday, July 5.* Call Cindy Gillen at (516) 572-0396 for more information.



**THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, JULY 11 AND 12, 9 AM-9 PM EACH DAY**, John J. Burns Park, 4990 Merrick Road in Massapequa Park.

As the front-page calendar shows, LIAFA will hold its 44th Vietnam 50th Anniversary Commemorative Medal Ceremony during the second day of the tournament, **FRIDAY, JULY 12 AT 11:00 AM**.

Long Island Chapter 202 of the Air & Space Forces Association is proud and grateful to be one of the three local charity beneficiaries that share in a portion of the net proceeds raised from this event.

### **Nassau County Salute to Veterans Ceremony and Concert**

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 3, STARTING AT 6:30 PM** at Eisenhower Park, Harry Chapin Lakeside Theater (Parking Fields 6 and 6A), East Meadow. Salute to Veterans will honor five people in the veteran community who have devoted their time and lives to helping Long Island veterans. After the honorees receive their recognition and awards, the concert will start at 7:30 PM, featuring The American Bombshells and Face to Face LI. Call Ralph Esposito at (516) 572-6565 for more information.

### **Veterans BBQ Picnic and Resource Fair**

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 11:30 AM–2 PM** at Eisenhower Park, Parking Field 6, East Meadow. Call Ralph Esposito at (516) 572-6565 for more information.

### **POW/MIA Night Vigil Ceremony**

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 6:30 PM** at Eisenhower Park, Veterans Memorial Plaza, Parking Field 6, East Meadow. Call Ralph Esposito at (516) 572-6565 for more information.

### **Walls of Honor Ceremony**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 AT 10 AM**, Veterans Memorial Plaza at Eisenhower Park (near Parking Field 6) in East Meadow (rain date is Sunday, September 29 at 11 AM). 400 names are scheduled to be added. Call Bob Lane at (631) 782-0341 for more information.

## **Announcements and Programs**

### **Nominations Needed for Distinguished Service to Veterans Award**

The Nassau County Veterans Service Agency is seeking nominations to recognize Nassau County individuals who have been instrumental in volunteering and serving veterans in the county. The award will be presented at the Salute to Veterans event to be held on August 3 (see *Upcoming Non-LIAFA Events* earlier in this newsletter). Nominations may be handwritten or typed and should stress the nominee's volunteer service to veterans in the community. *The nominee may be a veteran or a non-veteran.* Multiple nominations may be submitted, but please list only one individual per application form. Individuals or organizations may submit applications. Please call the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency at (516) 572-6565 for more information.

A copy of the two-page application is at the back of this newsletter, right after the Vietnam Commemorative Medal Application.

**Nominations must be postmarked no later than July 10** and mailed to: Nassau County Veterans Service Agency, 2201 Hempstead Tpke., Bldg. Q, East Meadow, NY 11554.

### **Lifetime Liberty Pass for New York State Residents**

Since April 1 of this year, eligibility for the Lifetime Liberty Pass has expanded to encompass the following (**for New York State residents only**):

1. All veterans, regardless of whether they have a VA disability compensation rating and who were discharged or released from service under conditions other than dishonorable.
2. Gold Star parents, Gold Star spouses and Gold Star children.

This pass provides free admission to all New York State parks. Additionally, pass holders are also entitled to free admission to the two Town of Hempstead golf courses in Merrick (9 holes) and Lido Beach (18 holes).

To apply for the Lifetime Liberty Pass, please go to the following website:

<https://www.parks.ny.gov/admission/lifetime-liberty-pass.aspx>.

Also, since April 1, a veteran who has the veteran distinguishing mark on their New York State driver's license or nondriver's ID card will be able to use that license to gain free admission at New York State parks that have a *staffed* admission gate. Parks that have only an *unstaffed* admission kiosk, however, will require the use of the Lifetime Liberty Pass.

### **DD214s and Other Military Service Records Are Available Online**

The following VA website is for veterans to gain access to their DD214 and other military service records online: <https://vetrecs.archives.gov/VeteranRequest/home.html#BasicInformation>.

### **PACT Act and Camp Lejeune Justice Act (CLJA) Deadlines**

The information below is from an article by Elizabeth Hartman of the law firm Bergmann & Moore LLC in the October 2023 issue of *The American Legion Magazine*:

- **There is no deadline to file a PACT Act claim** through the VA. You can always contact an accredited American Legion service officer to file a claim. The “deadline” that is shown on several law firms’ websites references filing an *Intent to File* (ITF). If you had filed an ITF by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on August 14, 2023, that ensured that your benefits (if ultimately approved) would have dated back to the implementation date of the PACT Act—August 10, 2022—in essence, giving you a bonus year of benefits and a year from the date of the ITF to finalize your claim. There is no deadline for filing the PACT Act claim itself. Your claim will simply be considered from the date you filed rather than from the implementation date.
- The CLJA, included as a provision under the PACT Act, separately allows individuals exposed to toxic water at Camp Lejeune between August 1, 1953, and December 31, 1987, to sue the U.S. government for damages/benefits. There is a sunset provision in the CLJA, which means that **a CLJA claim must be filed no later than August 9, 2024.**



If you have any questions before filing either claim, Elizabeth Hartman can be contacted at (252) 497-7255. She is the Bergmann & Moore CLJA liaison with The American Legion.

### **More PACT Act Information**

Just recently, the VA announced that all veterans who were exposed to toxins and other hazards while serving are eligible to enroll in VA Healthcare. This means that all Vietnam War, Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, the Global War on Terror or any other combat zones after 9/11 are eligible to enroll directly in VA Healthcare without first having to apply for benefits. For more information on the PACT Act, presumptive conditions and locations, visit [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) and search on *PACT Act*, or call the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency at (516) 572-6565 or the Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency at (631) 853-8387.

### **Nassau County Firefighters Operation Wounded Warrior (NCFE-OWW)**

A nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization **not** affiliated with the Wounded Warrior Project or any other Operation Wounded Warrior organization, the NCFE-OWW is committed to helping those who put their lives in harm's way to protect the rights granted to us, the citizens of the United States of America. Their mission is to boost the morale of service members wounded in the line of duty. The NCFE-OWW works closely with military representatives of the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Washington DC, the Womack Army Medical Center in Fort Liberty, NC and the Naval Hospital in Camp Lejeune, NC. Together, they ensure that useful clothing, personal entertainment electronics, and get-well cards are properly channeled to recovering service personnel. Donations are brought down to Bethesda Naval Hospital and other Wounded Warrior centers via Fire Truck Caravan. Firefighters from throughout the Greater New York area join their 'parade' from New York to military hospitals in the south. Volunteers are also welcome to join their ranks, even if you are not a firefighter! The NCFE-OWW is comprised of firefighter and EMS volunteers throughout Nassau County who conduct numerous fundraising events throughout the year to help meet their goal of providing material and moral support to the wounded men and women of our Armed Forces. Each year's efforts culminate with a personal visit of NCFE-OWW representatives to each of the military hospitals in the area to meet with our brave wounded warriors and express their gratitude for the sacrifices that they have endured for our country. In addition to collecting items and visiting our wounded service personnel, the NCFE-OWW organizes, on behalf of the Nassau County fire service, welcome-home receptions for local service members who have recovered from serious injuries. Donations are accepted and greatly appreciated. Please visit their website at [www.ncff-oww.org](http://www.ncff-oww.org) for more information.

### **CN Guidance and Counseling Services**

All services by this nonprofit organization are free for veterans or loved ones of veterans. Services are available in the community or via telehealth and include outreach and engagement, peer support and linkages to community resources. They also provide referrals and warm hand-offs to programs within CN Guidance based on eligibility, including therapy, medication management, medication-assisted treatment for substance abuse, case management and primary care physician. For more information, please call (516) 246-0614 or (516) 246-0621 or send an email to [vetservices@centralnassau.org](mailto:vetservices@centralnassau.org).

## **Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) Donation Programs**

If you're looking to donate clothing, books, small appliances or pretty much anything else, and also want to help veterans, go to [clothingdonations.org](https://clothingdonations.org) or call (631) 582-0242 to schedule a pick-up. Please put the donation outside before 7 AM on the scheduled pickup date, clearly marked *Vietnam Veterans of America*, so that the driver can see it from the street. VVA has found that the most profitable way to sell household discards is through bulk-purchase agreements with private retailers on a bid basis. A portion of the proceeds goes to the local Nassau County VVA Chapter 82.

VVA also has a separate program for car donations. Go to [vietnamveteranscardonation.org](https://vietnamveteranscardonation.org) or call (800) 435-7838 to schedule a donation—FREE towing is provided!

## **Veteran Functions at Eisenhower Park**

All veterans organizations that wish to hold an event, ceremony or other function at the park must contact the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency to get a permit. This requirement protects the organization as well as the park since the NCVSA holds an insurance policy covering any accidents or injuries that may occur during such events. Please call Ralph Esposito at (516) 572-6512 or Paul Vista at (516) 572-6521.

## **Veterans Traffic Court (Nassau County)**

The Nassau County Traffic and Parking Violations Agency (NCTPVA) holds monthly traffic court sessions on the third Thursday afternoon of each month, dedicated to assisting veterans and active-duty military members with resolving violations. NCTPVA will work with the District Court to bundle all traffic violations together. This program is a one-time-only opportunity so don't waste it on minor violations. For more information, please call the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency at (516) 572-6565. Also see the following link: [www.nassaucountyny.gov/4917/Veterans-Traffic-Court](https://www.nassaucountyny.gov/4917/Veterans-Traffic-Court).

## **Veterans Treatment Court (Nassau County)**

U.S. military veterans charged with minor nonviolent offenses may qualify for reduced charges or penalties by participating in a court-supervised treatment program. To apply, a pre-screening questionnaire must be completed and forwarded to the district attorney's office. You must then contact the Veterans Treatment Court Project Director to set a clinical evaluation for the purpose of determining treatment needs. If you are found to be eligible, you will be contacted by the D.A.'s office and a plea offer will be proposed. For more information, please visit their website at [www.nassaucountyny.gov/4919/Veterans-Treatment-Court](https://www.nassaucountyny.gov/4919/Veterans-Treatment-Court). ***Volunteers are also being sought to be mentors; training will be provided. Please call Rosemary Walker at (516) 493-4145.***

## **Volunteer Drivers Wanted for Veterans**

The Nassau County Veterans Service Agency is looking for volunteers to transport veterans to and from the Northport VA, East Meadow VA Clinic, Valley Stream VA Clinic and Hicksville Vet Center. Please donate any time you have to give on Monday–Friday from 7 AM to 5 PM You pick whatever times and dates work for you. Nassau County will provide the vehicles; a valid New York State driver's license is required. ***To volunteer, please call Jessica DeLisa at (516) 572-6526. The need is urgent so please help if you can!***

## **Food Donations Requested**

The Vet Mart food pantry at the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency needs your food donations. Please bring your canned and other nonperishable goods to them at 2201 Hempstead Tpke., Building Q, East Meadow. Please call Linda Zorn at (516) 572-5187 for more information and to find out which kinds of food are most needed on any given day. No amount is too small!

The Vet Mart hours of operation are Monday–Friday, 9 AM–12 noon.

**Veterans News UVO Long Island is looking for volunteers** to act as crew members for its weekly show on public access TV (training will be provided.) The show airs on Cablevision channel 115 on Mondays at 6:30 PM and Cablevision channel 20 on Fridays at 6:30 PM It is also on at various times on North Hempstead's North Shore TV on Verizon, on Lynbrook and Malverne public access channels, on public access MNN TV Network in Manhattan or any time on YouTube by entering *Veterans News UVO*. The crew meets at the North Shore TV Studio at 1111 Marcus Ave., Suite LL27 in Lake Success on the last Tuesday of the month to tape the program. For more information, please email Ed Aulman at [mardiv1@optonline.net](mailto:mardiv1@optonline.net), or call him at (516) 921-0595.

## **Veterans Legal Assistance Program**

Receive a FREE consultation with attorneys who specialize in elder law, taxes, wills and estates, family law, VA benefits and claims, disability, discharge upgrades, employment, housing, bankruptcy, debtor/creditor matters, Medicare/Medicaid, landlord/tenant disputes, immigration, and criminal law. For more information, email the Hofstra Legal Assistance Project at [VLAP@hofstra.edu](mailto:VLAP@hofstra.edu) or call (516) 463-7302.

## **General Needs Ltd.**

Located in East Northport, this is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that distributes NEW clothing as well as personal items such as toiletries to homeless veterans. If you would like to donate, volunteer, sponsor a distribution or if your business or organization would like to assist General Needs (or if you would just like more information), please call them at (631) 266-1672 or email them at [Info@GeneralNeeds.org](mailto:Info@GeneralNeeds.org). You can also visit their website at [www.GeneralNeeds.org](http://www.GeneralNeeds.org) or go to their Facebook page to see any upcoming events.

## **Veterans Project by Long Island Cares**

This project encompasses several veterans' service programs such as a mobile pantry, job search assistance and Military Appreciation Tuesdays hosted at pantries located in Huntington Station, Bethpage, Hampton Bays, Lindenhurst, and Freeport. For more information, please call Michael Haynes at (631) 582-3663, extension 202 or email him at [mhaynes@licares.org](mailto:mhaynes@licares.org).

Their website is [www.licares.org/what-we-do/feed-long-island/veterans-project](http://www.licares.org/what-we-do/feed-long-island/veterans-project).

## **Joseph P. Dwyer Veterans Peer Support Project (Suffolk County)**

A joint initiative of the Suffolk County United Veterans and the Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency, it serves veterans, service members and their families with post-service transitional issues such as PTSD and TBI (traumatic brain injury); a diagnosis is NOT required for attendance. All groups are

confidential and anonymous. They also provide services to student veterans at numerous Long Island college campuses and monthly community outreach in various locations. For more information, please call (631) 853-8345 or send an email to [vetspeertopeer@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:vetspeertopeer@suffolkcountyny.gov). They also have a Facebook page.

### **Nassau County Joseph P. Dwyer Vet2Vet Peer Networking Groups**

Vet2Vet consists of small groups of veterans who meet weekly to share knowledge, provide mutual support and share resources. Confidential and open to all veterans regardless of discharge status. Free to attend; no pre-registration is required. Meetings are at: Mental Health Association, 16 Main Street in Hempstead at 5:15 PM on Mondays and 6:30 PM on Wednesdays; Levittown Public Library, 1 Bluegrass Lane in Levittown at 2 PM on Thursdays (biweekly). There are also spouse/partner meetings at 6:30 PM on Tuesdays and women-only meetings at 6:30 PM on Wednesdays, both at Mental Health Association, 16 Main Street in Hempstead. (Park in the municipal lot across the street. Use the side parking lot and side entrance closest to the gated area.) No pre-registration is necessary. For more information, please contact Marisol Mateo at (516) 489-2322, ext. 1260 or send her an email at [mmateo@mhanc.org](mailto:mmateo@mhanc.org). Also check out their website: [veteranshealthalliance.org](http://veteranshealthalliance.org).

### **Veterans Rights Project**

The Veterans Rights Project is able to assist any person who has previous military experience regardless of discharge status. All services are free. Services include housing, family law, public benefits, re-entry services and discharge upgrades. Their website is [www.nslawservices.org](http://www.nslawservices.org).

Contact information:

Hempstead Office: 1 Helen Keller Way, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, phone (516) 292-8100

Islandia Office: 1757 Veterans Hwy., Suite 50, phone (631) 232-2400

Riverhead Office: 400 West Main St., Suite 200, phone (631) 369-1112

### **Veterans Defense Program**

Justice-involved veterans often do not have the funds to hire an attorney and are represented by public defenders. Public defense attorneys are rarely trained to adequately represent veterans who suffer from the invisible wounds of war or to translate the combat experience of their clients to explain resulting criminal behavior. This program provides training, support, and legal assistance to promote trauma-informed effective representation of veterans and service members. The Veteran Defense Program (VDP) is a project of the New York State Defenders Association (NYSDA), a statewide nonprofit organization working to improve the quality and scope of publicly-supported legal representation for people who cannot afford a lawyer. For information and assistance, please call Director Gary A. Horton at (585) 219-4862 or email him at [ghorton@nysda.org](mailto:ghorton@nysda.org). Their website is [nysda.org/page/AboutVDP](http://nysda.org/page/AboutVDP).

### **Donate a Bicycle to Beacon House to Help a Veteran**

Beacon House provides housing in forty-two locations throughout Nassau and Suffolk counties. On any given day, over 255 men, women, and children from the tri-state area benefit from programs that address homelessness, physical disabilities, PTSD, TBI, mental health issues and addiction.



Non-veterans, too, have access to housing, drug/alcohol addiction services and job skills/readiness development programs. Email Ed Aulman at [mardiv1@optonline.net](mailto:mardiv1@optonline.net) or call him at (516) 921-0595. A charitable donation receipt will be provided by Beacon House.

### **Long Island Vets Help**

The Economic Opportunity Council of Suffolk, Inc. and the Long Island Coalition for the Homeless have partnered to produce a resource directory devoted specifically to the needs of veterans navigating civilian life on Long Island. For more information, go to their website at [longislandvetshelp.org](http://longislandvetshelp.org).

### **Walls of Honor**

The Walls of Honor is a place of remembrance within Veterans Memorial Plaza at Eisenhower Park in East Meadow. Please note—these are honor walls, not memorial walls, and are open to all currently serving and to all veterans with an honorable discharge, living or deceased. There is a \$100 application fee for each name to be engraved. For more information and for application forms, please call Allison Ridam Krivosheiw at (516) 236-3245 or email her at [alliridam@gmail.com](mailto:alliridam@gmail.com). If you just want to download an application form, go to [www.nassaucountyny.gov/DocumentCenter/View/30304/Wall-of-Honor-Application-2020](http://www.nassaucountyny.gov/DocumentCenter/View/30304/Wall-of-Honor-Application-2020).

*NOTE: A new requirement has been put in place that applicants must be current or former Nassau County residents.*

### **Local Website for Veterans**

We-Are-Vets.us is a local Long Island website presenting a mix of information, history and memories for active-duty troops, veterans and interested civilians. Eric Spinner is the webmaster while Gary Glick, Marvin Gold, Pat Yngstrom and Bernard Fradkin make up the rest of the team. Their website is [www.we-are-vets.us](http://www.we-are-vets.us).

### **Honor Flight Long Island**

Honor Flight recognizes American World War II, Korean War and Vietnam veterans by flying them to Washington, D.C. to see their memorials **at no cost**. Flights depart from MacArthur Airport in Islip. You must submit an application to get on their wait list, where you will be assigned to a flight on a first-come first-served basis by order of application date. It will be approximately four to five months after applying before you are assigned to a flight. You can download and print an application to mail or you can fill out an online application. Go to <http://www.honorflightlongisland.org/general-9> to do either one. You can find out more information on this same website or you can call Jamie Bowden at (631) 702-2423 or email him at [jbowden@southamptontownny.gov](mailto:jbowden@southamptontownny.gov).

### **RISE Study Regarding Veterans and Stress**

The ReACH (Relationships, Aging, Coping & Health) Lab at Adelphi University has launched the RISE (Relational Influences on Sleep & Emotion) Study to learn more about how veterans cope with stress in their daily lives and how it affects their sleep and well-being. They are looking for veterans who are at least 65 years old and are married (or living with a partner). Participants will be compensated for their time and effort with a maximum of \$150 worth of gift cards. Participation includes an initial survey and seven brief daily surveys that will be emailed to you, along with the **option** to wear a watch-like device (after visiting their lab) to help them measure your sleep. If you wish to learn more, please contact the

lead researcher, Dr. Christina Marini, by emailing her at [cmarini@adelphi.edu](mailto:cmarini@adelphi.edu) or calling her at (516) 877-4812.

## **D**id you know . . .

**Everyone knows that the United States and the Soviet Union were allies during World War II, but there was an incident on November 7, 1944, where both sides actually came to blows.** The details are sketchy to this day since both sides have classified the records of the event, but this much is known—American P-38 Lightnings from the 82<sup>nd</sup> Operations Group attacked a column of ground troops near Niš (pronounced *Neesh*) in Yugoslavia (it's the third-largest city in present-day Serbia). The planes had been on their way to assist Soviet troops in the region, but what they didn't know was that the supposed German convoy they had just fired upon was actually a Red Army column from the Soviet 6<sup>th</sup> Guards Rifle Corps on their way to Belgrade. In response, the Soviets launched their own Yak fighters, resulting in a 15-minute dogfight. The rest of the story is a bit murky, depending upon whom you believe.

Even though the command of the U.S. Mediterranean Air Force already knew that there were no known German forces near Niš, the P-38s opened fire on the convoy. They apparently were unaware that the Soviets had advanced 100 kilometers further than expected. The Soviets retaliated, believing that the attacking planes were Luftwaffe Focke-Wulf Fw-189s, a German recon aircraft that had twin engines and twin booms like the P-38. Eventually, the Red Army pilots realized that the planes were American and ceased firing. One or more of the Yaks then wagged their wings to show the red star on their aircraft and the P-38s broke off the engagement and withdrew.

Reported casualties differed, with the Soviets suffering between 31 to 34 KIA, 37 to 39 wounded and 20 cargo trucks burned. Among the Soviet dead was Lieutenant General Grigory Kotov, commander of the 6<sup>th</sup> Guards Rifle Corps. The U.S. contends that four Soviet aircraft and two P-38 Lightnings (with their pilots) were lost that day, while the USSR claimed the total was actually two Yaks and five P-38s. A little over two months later, American ambassador to the Soviet Union W. Averell Harriman apologized on behalf of Franklin D. Roosevelt and George C. Marshall and offered to send liaison officers to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ukrainian Front to prevent further incidents; Stalin rejected it, because a line of demarcation had already been drawn indicating the boundaries of Allied air actions.



*Lockheed P-38J Lightning  
Photo credit: U.S. Air Force*



*Focke Wulf Fw-189 Uhu  
Photo credit: WorldWarPhotos.info*

# ★★★ Supporters' Corner ★★★

## Shootout for Soldiers

As we prepare for yet another Shootout for Soldiers lacrosse team tournament in July, it's difficult to believe that this annual Shootout event was started 12 years ago by several high school students. In early 2012, Tyler Steinhardt and some fellow students attending Boys' Latin School in Baltimore watched a *60 Minutes* TV special about the rise of veteran homelessness, suicide and unemployment. They were so inspired to make a difference that they came up with the idea of using the game of lacrosse to highlight the issues and to raise money to help support veterans. Their idea was to break the world record for the longest lacrosse game and so they landed on a 24-hour event as a marketing stunt to gain attention. It would involve holding twenty-four one-hour games in a row and the participants would donate money to play in the event. Word spread and community leaders in Baltimore and throughout the lacrosse world came to help.

From a public letter by Shootout for Soldiers founder Tyler Steinhardt:

“Jay Dyer helped connect us with Paul Rabil and Kyle Hartzell who appeared in a local TV PSA for us...Karen Bolewicki rallied a team to grill up food...RJ Kaminski tweeted at celebrities...Lacrosse Unlimited stepped in to make merch...Brendan Owens ran registration off of Google Forms...the list goes on and on – there were over 300 people who volunteered their time, energy and resources in our first year, helping us pull off the first Shootout for Soldiers and fundraise \$105,000.”

And that was only the first year. The Shootout's reach continued, year after year, spreading to other cities around the country. To date, Shootout for Soldiers has hosted 66 events across 16 cities, raising over \$5 million to support America's veterans. The amounts raised from the Long Island event alone total over \$1 million since 2014.

In February 2024, Shootout for Soldiers announced a shift in its operational framework, moving from a collaborative partnership under Team Red, White & Blue (Team RWB), and returning to an independent entity. Shootout for Soldiers is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Long Island Chapter #202 of the Air & Space Forces Association is one of several local nonprofit veterans organizations that are beneficiaries that share in a portion of the net proceeds (after expenses) raised from this event. Other beneficiaries are Team RWB, Strongpoint Theinert Ranch and The Warrior Ranch Foundation.

This year's format was changed from a 24-hour event to two 12-hour days, making it easier on the players and attendees.

Sponsors of this year's Long Island event include the Town of Oyster Bay, PSEG Long Island, National Grid, Curtiss-Wright, Greiner-Maltz Real Estate, Betatronix, Transaero, Cona Elder Law PLLC, Suffolk OTB/Jake's 58, M&T Bank, GSE Dynamics, Retlif Testing Laboratories and Oerlikon.





# Taps



**Albert O. Klipfel** of Freeport passed away in his sleep on April 28 at age 97 of natural causes, about a month shy of his 98<sup>th</sup> birthday on May 26. Al was a Seaman First Class who served with the 135<sup>th</sup> Naval Construction Battalion (of the famed Navy Seabees) on Okinawa and Tinian during World War II. He also served during the Korean War at the Battle of Inchon. Al was a member of American Legion Post #342 in Freeport and served as the post's chaplain until he went into the Long Island State Veterans Home in 2021. Before his retirement, Al made a living as a contractor. He is buried in Maple Grove Cemetery in Kew Gardens, Queens.

Al was a proud long-standing member of the Masons since 1957 and was a member and chaplain of Tadmor Lodge #923 (Astoria), Queensboro Lodge #892 (College Point) and Trinity Lodge #12 (Oyster Bay). He served as a Past Master from 1988 to 1990 and was appointed as Grand Sword Bearer of the New York State Grand Lodge from 1992 to 1994.

Al's wife Katharina, his son Robert and his brother Charles predeceased him; he is survived by his son Albert P. and his niece Patricia Wilaby.



*19-year-old **Albert Klipfel** on Tinian, 1945*

**(Continued on next page)**

## Taps (continued)



**Robert W. Jones** of Riverhead passed away on April 7 at age 101; no cause of death was given. A World War II veteran with the U.S. Army Air Forces, he served stateside from 1940 through 1945 in the Weights and Balances Department and attained the rank of Sergeant. This department was responsible for loading emergency supplies, life rafts and other equipment into airplanes bound for the war zones. Bob was a member of American Legion Arthur Ellis Hamm Post 834 in Westhampton.

Bob was scheduled to go on Honor Flight Long Island to Washington, D.C. on May 4. Although he did not live long enough to make the flight, the *Flags of Our Heroes* program made sure that a beautiful poster and flag were placed on that flight to Washington DC, where, to honor him, his bio was read and a photo taken of the poster and flag in front of a memorial monument. He is survived by his wife Catherine Elliott Jones and his children: Ronny Lynn, Carol Louise Gooding, Scott Elliott Jones (Terri Tucker Jones), Vannessa May Jones and Robert T Jones (Diane Heirhoffer Jones). He is also survived by eleven grandchildren, twenty-one great grandchildren and three great-great grandchildren.



*Robert Jones during World War II*  
Photo credit: American Legion Arthur Ellis Mann  
Post 834, Westhampton

**(Continued on next page)**

## Taps (continued)



**Vincent James DePalo** of Bethpage, a World War II veteran, passed away on May 27 at age 100 of natural causes. DePalo enlisted in the Army Air Forces at age 18 in 1941 and served until 1945, rising to the rank of technical sergeant. He flew 47 missions on a B-24 bomber as a flight engineer and was the only member of his flight crew to survive the war. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal with two stars, Good Conduct Medal, American Defense Service Medal and European-African-Middle Eastern Service Medal with four stars. In addition, his unit received three Presidential Unit Citations.

After the war, Jim worked as an electrical engineer at LILCO for seven years, moved on to Sperry Corp. for several years and finally worked for the Navy contracting company PRD Electronics (later Harris Corp.) for twenty years until he retired in 1989.

His wife of almost 76 years, Mary Florence DePalo, died in June 2023. He is survived by four children: sons Joe, Jim and Steve, and daughter Linda. He is also survived by four grandchildren and several great-grandchildren.



*Vincent James DePalo at the American Airpower Museum on December 4, 2021.  
Photo credit: Debbie Egan-Chin via Newsday*

**(Continued on next page)**



## Taps (continued)



**Lou V. Tempera** of Westhampton, a World War II veteran, passed away on June 27 at age 97 of cancer. Lou was a Marine combat veteran who fought on Okinawa. He served as a former Suffolk County Labor Commissioner. Lou was the father of Dorilu Stratemeier (the wife of LIAFA treasurer William Stratemeier), James, Jeffrey and the late Thomas. He was the dear brother of Patrick, Annette Hogan and the late Irene Goteri. He is also survived by seven grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren.



*Lou V. Tempera*

*Photo credit: Tempera family via Fredrick J. Chapey & Sons Funeral Home, West Islip*

**The cremated remains of seven World War II veterans and of the spouse of one** have been rescued from a Freeport funeral home storage closet. All the remains were found inside a storage closet at the Hungerford & Clark Funeral Home in Freeport after new owners took over in late 2021. They had been there for decades after no relatives had shown up to claim them. After mostly unsuccessful attempts at finding surviving relatives, the funeral home contacted the Long Island National Cemetery in Farmingdale. On April 23, the urns of six of the veterans as well as an urn for the wife of one of the veterans, were interred at Long Island National Cemetery with a ceremony conducted by the 11<sup>th</sup> New York Regiment United States Volunteers—America and featuring the playing of Taps and a 21-gun salute. Also participating were the American Legion Riders and the Patriot Guard.

**(Continued on next page)**

## Taps (continued)



The veterans whose remains were interred at the cemetery were:

- Willard Thomas Burkett, Jr.—U.S. Army
- William J. Daube—U.S. Army
- William Kuttler—U.S. Army
- Thorwald Otto—U.S. Army, interred along with his wife, Florence Otto
- Jack Zvaleko—U.S. Army
- Otto Schilling—U.S. Navy

William Kuttler’s granddaughter was at the service; she was presented with an American flag in recognition of his service. A few other relatives had been found; they were unable to attend but gave their blessing for the cemetery to accept the remains.

The remains of Army Major William Beveridge were returned to his family.



*Urns containing the cremated remains of the World War II veterans.  
Photo credit: John Scalesi, via Newsday*



## THE LONG ISLAND AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION (LIAFA)

A Department of Defense (DOD) Vietnam 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Commemorative Sponsor

LIAFA proudly presents the Vietnam 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Commemorative Medal to thank and honor Vietnam War  
veterans and their families for their commitment and service.  
(Awarded to living Long Island Vietnam Vets of all services)



### COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Cell # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Branch of Service \_\_\_\_\_ Rank/Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Vietnam service dates \_\_\_\_\_

Units assigned and location during war \_\_\_\_\_

Please send a copy of your DD-214 (block out your Social Security Number) and  
this application to:

Fred Di Fabio, President  
67 Pacific Dunes Ct.  
Medford, NY 11763



For information call:  
631-754-6383

- Visit our web page at **LIAFA.ORG** to view a video of the ceremony.
- Also check out our Facebook page: **Long Island Air Force Association - LIAFA**
- Attendance is **FREE**. Bring your family, friends and neighbors.
- You will be contacted to schedule you for one of our upcoming ceremonies upon receipt of your application.



**NASSAU COUNTY DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO  
VETERAN'S AWARD APPLICATION 2024**

**Name of Nominating Organization or Individual:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name of Nominee to Receive the Award:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Check one for Nominee:**  Veteran  Non-Veteran

**Rank of Nominee While in Service:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Branch of Service for Nominee:**  Army  Navy  Air Force

Marines  Coast Guard  National Guard

**Military Era Served by Nominee:**  WWII  Korea  Vietnam

Persian Gulf  Iraq/Afghanistan  Cold War Era

**Other** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address of Nominee:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Phone Number of Nominee:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please Provide Essay Description of Nominee's Service to Veterans. **Please Do Not Include the Nominee's Name in the Essay Portion.** A Review Board will evaluate nominating essays. Please use the blank pages provided below or you may provide a typed copy of your nomination.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Blank lined paper with horizontal ruling lines.



# WOMAN'S RECOGNITION CEREMONY

**ARE YOU A WOMAN WHO IS A VETERAN OR  
IS CURRENTLY SERVING?**

The Long Island Air Force Association proudly presents and honors woman veterans and women currently serving and their families for their commitment and service.

**(Awarded to women of all Services and Eras)**

## APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Cell # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Branch of Service \_\_\_\_\_ Rank/Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Service dates \_\_\_\_\_

Please send a copy of your DD-214 **showing military service** (black out your Social Security Number) and this completed application to:

Fred Di Fabio, President  
67 Pacific Dunes Court  
Medford, NY 11763

For information,  
call: 631-754-6383

- Check out our web page at: **LIAFA.ORG** and visit us on Facebook: **The Long Island Air Force Association - LIAFA**
- Attendance is **FREE**. Bring your family, friends and neighbors.
- You will be contacted to be scheduled for an upcoming ceremony.

**THIS AWARD HONORS LONG ISLAND WOMAN VETERANS AND WOMEN WHO ARE  
CURRENTLY SERVING**

*(Not Awarded Posthumously)*