

**HOME**

**BACK IN THE WORLD**

<b>Volume 29• Issue 11-12</b>	<b>VVA Chapter 12 ♦ Newsletter</b>	<b>November/December 2019</b>
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**Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 12**  
**PO Box 276, Allenhurst, NJ 07711**

## OFFICERS AND E-BOARD

Dennis Beauregard	President	908-902-8789	<a href="mailto:vva12p@verizon.net">vva12p@verizon.net</a>
Ernie Diorio	1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	732-245-5552	<a href="mailto:litetrop67@aol.com">litetrop67@aol.com</a>
Don Davison	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	732-988-4056	<a href="mailto:soulpony@aol.com">soulpony@aol.com</a>
Tony Corbella	Secretary	732-272-8770	<a href="mailto:paddybella@optonline.net">paddybella@optonline.net</a>
Richard Brandon	Treasurer	518-966-8347	<a href="mailto:richbrandon1952@yahoo.com">richbrandon1952@yahoo.com</a>

## COMMITTEES

Bob Lopez	Minority Affairs	732-988-9241	<a href="mailto:seabees7@verizon.net">seabees7@verizon.net</a>
Don Davison	School Speakers Program	732-988-4056	<a href="mailto:soulpony@aol.com">soulpony@aol.com</a>
Dennis Champ	Agent Orange	732-8239-6288	<a href="mailto:dscinc1953@gmail.com">dscinc1953@gmail.com</a>
Ernie Diorio	School Speaker Program	732-245-5552	<a href="mailto:litetrop67@aol.com">litetrop67@aol.com</a>
Bob Hopkins	Membership,Grievence	732-531-2574	<a href="mailto:herc3000@aol.com">herc3000@aol.com</a>
Bucky Grimm	POW/MIA	732-222-9376	<a href="mailto:wheat1111@comcast.net">wheat1111@comcast.net</a>
Rich Gough	Product Sales,Cremains	732-539-0206	<a href="mailto:rpg3706@aol.com">rpg3706@aol.com</a>
Rich Magovern	Public Affairs Cremains,Community Affairs	732-842-2950	<a href="mailto:richandnema@verizon.net">richandnema@verizon.net</a>
Michael Quilty	Homeless Vets,Car Show	732-939-8938	<a href="mailto:quiltym@gmail.com">quiltym@gmail.com</a>
Ernie Diorio	Finance,Fund Raising	732-245-5552	<a href="mailto:litetrop67@aol.com">litetrop67@aol.com</a>
Erwin Coons,	Veterans' Health Care	shove <a href="mailto:03@aol.com">03@aol.com</a>	<a href="tel:732-539-1383">732-539-1383</a>
Dan Higgins	Cremains, Product Sales	732-581-9715	<a href="mailto:danielhiggins123@coccast.net">danielhiggins123@coccast.net</a>
Greg Kucharewski	E-mail, Play Hook-e, PTSD	732-840-9197	<a href="mailto:gkuchaerews@aol.com">gkuchaerews@aol.com</a>
Joe Leone	PTSD	609-577-7848	<a href="mailto:anamvet1969@gmail.com">anamvet1969@gmail.com</a>
Alan Saltzman	Fund raising,	646-261-2615	<a href="mailto:alstimers@aol.com">alstimers@aol.com</a>

## STATE COUNCIL DELEGATES

Michael Berman, Delegate	Phil Pesano, Alternate Delegate
Carmelo Burgaretta, Delegate	Tony Corbella, Alternate Delegate
Dan Higgins, Delegate	

## OTHER CONTACTS

Margaret Wojciechowicz	VVA National Service Officer	973-297-3227	<a href="mailto:margaret.wojciechowicz@va.gov">margaret.wojciechowicz@va.gov</a>
Bob Parrella	AVVA Liaison	732-303-1689	<a href="mailto:bobpark4@aol.com">bobpark4@aol.com</a>
Rob Ford	Web Master	732-687-3846	<a href="mailto:nlvva12@gmail.com">nlvva12@gmail.com</a>
Carol Force	BITW editor	908-601-3132	<a href="mailto:caf7881@gmail.com">caf7881@gmail.com</a>



## NOTES FROM CHAPTER 12

- ⇒ Please remember our fellow Chapter members, and their families in your prayers, as they continue to face very serious medical conditions
- ⇒ Please visit and “like” our Facebook page, “Vietnam Veterans NJ Shore Area Chapter 12” for info on what we are doing.
- ⇒ Please visit our CHAPTER WEBSITE—[www.vvchapter12.net](http://www.vvchapter12.net) for photo albums, news letter archives, Chapter history.
- ⇒ Anyone needing a ride to the VA, please contact Ernie Diorio for assistance. If you are able to provide transportation, please let Ernie know so the same people aren’t doing it all the time.
- ⇒ If you are looking for a fellow vet that you lost track of, or someone that you served with that might have information you need, please send it to us and we’ll put it in the monthly newsletter.
- ⇒ Check this link out if you need help with an appeal, or know a Vet that does. Keep it moving, pass it on to other Vets you know: <http://www.vetsprobono.org/index.htm>
- ⇒ Anyone wanting to submit an article, picture , or story, please send it to [VVA12p@verizon.net](mailto:VVA12p@verizon.net) or [nivva12@gmail.com](mailto:nivva12@gmail.com) by the 25th of each month. Anything received after that will be placed in the following month’s newsletter. (Make sure your article can be verified.
- ⇒ We have been informed that in lieu of specific items to send to troops on deployment, gift cards to the PX would be appreciated. The troops can get almost anything in the PX, but could use help via gift card. This is also a money and effort saver on our part. Donations to the PX gift care fund are being accepted. **We are also switching from actual food to gift cards for our food bank as this will better serve our veterans in need.**

## President's Message



**Happy New Year's 2020 , It seems like yesterday, in 1982, Chapter 12 was founded as the first VVA Chapter in New Jersey. We all should be very proud of what we have all accomplished as veterans' advocates to enhance the life of Veterans.**

**Today we are still the largest Chapter in Jersey with 345 VVA life members and 40 AVVA members, we are 18th in national ranking and we continue to grow.**

**We have set the date of April 4,2020 to hold our annual Chapter dinner dance, keep in mind that this is the Chapters only fundraiser. Your support is needed to keep us financially sound for 2020, our profit from the dance comes from Chapters Ad journal. If you can't make a meeting to pick up a form or two for Ad Journal, email me at [vva12p@verizon.net](mailto:vva12p@verizon.net), we all know someone that would love to support us and our programs.**

**In Brotherhood**

**The Colonel**

## ELECTION NOTICE

As required by the Constitution and By Laws of Vietnam Veterans of America, the New Jersey State Council, and VVA Chapter 12, this is notice that the Annual Election of Officers, Board of Directors, Nominations Committee, and State Council Delegates will take place at the Annual Meeting of Chapter 12 on Wednesday, April 1, 2020, which meeting will commence at 7:30 P.M.

The Offices of President, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer are for a term of one (1) year. The open positions for Board of Directors, five (5), are for a term of two (2) years. Positions for the Nominations Committee are three (3) in number and are for a term of one (1) year. There are three (3) positions open for two (2) year terms as Delegates to the State Council and two (2) positions open for two (2) year terms as Alternate Delegates to the State Council.

Any regular member, in good standing, is eligible to nominate another member for any position, run for a position, and vote on April 3. Good standing is defined as a paid up membership and a copy of a DD214, or other proof of service, during the Vietnam War. Proof of service must be on file with the Chapter or National Office. To run for an office, or nominate someone in good standing for a position, contact one of the members of the Nominations Committee.

Rich Gough – [rpg3706@aol.com](mailto:rpg3706@aol.com)

Bob Hopkins – [herc3000@aol.com](mailto:herc3000@aol.com)

Jay Vaughn – [jv4910@gmail.com](mailto:jv4910@gmail.com)

*VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA  
NEW JERSEY SHORE AREA - CHAPTER 12*



**26th ANNUAL INSTALLATION & DINNER DANCE**  
**CELEBRATING 38 YEARS OF SERVICE TO**  
**VETERANS AND COMMUNITY**

**Our Annual Dinner Dance will be held on Saturday,**  
April 4, 2020 - 6:00 pm at VFW 2179, One Veterans Lane, Port Monmouth, NJ 07758. Tickets are  
\$45.00 per person. To reserve tickets, please contact, Ernie Diorio at 732-245-5552

We hope to see some more familiar faces there this year.  
**Featuring entertainment by ROCK N RHYTHM**



# VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA



VVA Chapter 12 requests your support for our primary fundraising activity, THE 25th ANNUAL OFFICERS INSTALLATION & DINNER DANCE to be held on Saturday, April 4, 2020 at 6 PM at VFW Post 2179 located at 1 Veterans Lane, Port Monmouth, NJ.

We strive to enrich the lives of veterans and their families through a variety of activities such as lobbying for favorable veteran legislation on both the state and federal levels. This legislation is critical to assist veterans in need of hospital or clinic care for PTSD ( Post Traumatic Stress Disorder ) and substance abuse as well as providing assistance in the proper filing of service connected disability claims. We are active in locating abandoned veteran cremains in funeral homes and arranging for their proper military burial.

We sponsor public awareness programs connected with the POW/MIA issue. We are active in the community by providing speakers and exhibits for elementary, high school and other interested groups. We regularly march as a unit in various parades, attend veteran services and provide Honor Guards for special occasion events. We help maintain the NJ Vietnam Memorial on the Garden State Parkway at Exit 116. We are the largest VVA Chapter in New Jersey and rank in the top 20 nationwide with over 365 members.

Let veterans know that you care and support our activities by advertising in our journal. Business and personal ads are appreciated. We also welcome monetary donations and products or gift certificates to be used as prizes. Please complete this ad form and return it to us with your tax deductible check made payable to VVA Chapter 12. The deadline for all ads is March 25, 2020.

P. O. Box 276 Allenhurst, NJ 07711

**FULL PAGE \$100.00**

**HALF PAGE \$50.00**

For further information, please call Dennis Beauregard at 908-902-8789 or Ernie Diorio at 732-245-5552.

Please attach your business card or print out your ad the way you wish it to appear in the journal. You can also provide a photo ready custom ad as well.

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## Cremins Project Report



1/15 - Dan Higgins and I visited 4 funeral homes. Layton and Lacey Funeral Homes had no cremains. Riggs and Mastapeter Funeral Homes agreed to work with us with their cremains. Future appointments to be made.

11/18 - Met with Ryan Dougherty from Congressman Pallone's office to ask for help to officially correct Sgt Leslie H Fleming's military record to reflect his receipt of the Bronze Star in 1944. He died in 1978 and we buried him on 4/11/2019. Copies of everything we had were given to him.

11/20 - Call from Congressman Pallone's office. They gave me the same information that I received before I went to them. Advised that I had to submit a request and a check for \$25 to find out what is on his record.

12/2 - Dan Higgins, Ernie Diorio, Anthony Fleres, and I inventoried three funeral homes of Bugbee Riggs. As a result we found 45 cremains which now have to be re-searched for veterans or spouses.

12/4 - Ernie Diorio, Dave Drummond, Dennis Beauregard, and I conducted a 2 hour training program on our cremains procedures and changes in the laws to approximately 40 funeral home directors at the Monmouth County Sheriff's situation room in Freehold. It was well received.

12/10 - Irv Coons, Dan Higgins and I inventoried the Mastapeter Memorial Funeral Home in Bayville resulting in 44 cremains to investigate.

12/31- Russ Stevenson, Dan Higgins and I inventoried the Wood Funeral Home in Tuckerton resulting in 60 cremains to investigate.

1/4/20 Ernie Diorio and I met with directors from 5 funeral homes resulting in promises of inventories from 2 and an actual inventory from Laurel Funeral Home of 31 cremains.

Preliminary results of investigations thus far have resulted in 35 probable veterans and spouses.

For the committee

Rich Gough



## Cremaains Project Report



Thanks to Sheriff's department we were able to give a power point presentation to 48 home directors .





TRENTON, NJ - State Sen. Kip Bateman's legislation to expand property tax benefits to all veterans who were honorably discharged and to those with a service-connected disability has unanimously passed the New Jersey Senate.

"Everyone who has served our nation and worn our country's uniform should be respected and recognized as such," said Bateman (R-16). "Our brave veterans who sacrificed life and limb to defend our freedoms we hold dear deserve to receive a tax break. Expanding New Jersey's property tax deduction to our Garden State veterans who honorably served is our small way of saying 'thank you for your service.'"

Currently, these property tax benefits are given only to honorably discharged military veterans who served during time of war or other emergency.

This bill will not go into effect until voters approve its authorizing resolution, SCR-187, as a constitutional amendment on the ballot.

NJ has more than 400,000 veterans, roughly five percent of NJ's population. According to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, 180,000 veterans and their widows currently receive the annual \$250 tax break, and about 10,000 disabled veterans receive the property tax exemption.



## **Blue Water Navy Veterans' disability claims to be decided beginning Jan.1, 2020**

Did you serve in the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam between Jan. 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975? If so, then you're considered a Blue Water Navy (BWN) Veteran.

On Jan. 1, 2020, the [Blue Water Navy Act of 2019](#) goes into effect. This Act was signed into law on Jun. 25, and extends the presumption of herbicide exposure, such as Agent Orange, to BWN Veterans who served as far as 12 nautical miles from the shore of Vietnam and have since developed [one of 14 conditions](#) related to exposure. Some of these conditions include Type 2 diabetes, Parkinson's disease, many forms of cancer and others. You may now be eligible for disability compensation and other benefits. In addition, if you're a Veteran who served in the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) between Sept. 1, 1967, and Aug. 31, 1971, you may also qualify for compensation and benefits for yourself and your family members.

### **How do I know if I'm eligible?**

The best way to find out if you're eligible is to work with an accredited claims representative or Veterans Affairs (VA) regional office to understand eligibility requirements before filing a claim. You don't need to prove contact with herbicides to be eligible.

### **How do I file a claim for compensation benefits?**

You can file an initial claim (that has not been previously decided by VA), by submitting Form [21-526EZ](#), Application for Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits. You can also contact an accredited Veterans Service Organization (VSO) to assist you with your application. You may also contact your [state's Veterans agency](#) should you need additional assistance with the application process.

### **What if I've previously filed a claim that was denied?**

VA will be using the new law to automatically review claims that are currently with the VA review process or under appeal. However, if you had an herbicide exposure claim with one or more presumptive conditions denied in the past, you are urged to file a new claim.

When you begin the claims process, be sure to provide or identify any new and relevant information regarding your claim, such as the dates the vessel you were serving on traveled through the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam or updated medical information.

Submit a [VA Form 20-0995](#), Decision Review Request: Supplemental Claim.



## Blue Water Navy Veterans' disability claims to be decided beginning Jan.1, 2020 (continued)

How should survivors and dependents apply for initial Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) Claim for a Veteran who died of presumptive condition?

Eligible survivors and dependents must meet certain conditions to receive DIC. To learn more about this process, [CLICK HERE](#). If found to be eligible, there are several ways to file a claim, including:

By mail, using [VA Form 21P-534EZ](#).

- In person at a VA regional office.

An accredited claims representative or VSO.

What benefits will I receive if my claim is approved?

If you are deemed eligible, you may receive a monthly disability compensation payment and free healthcare related to your disability. The amount of compensation you may receive is determined by your diagnosed condition and level of disability.

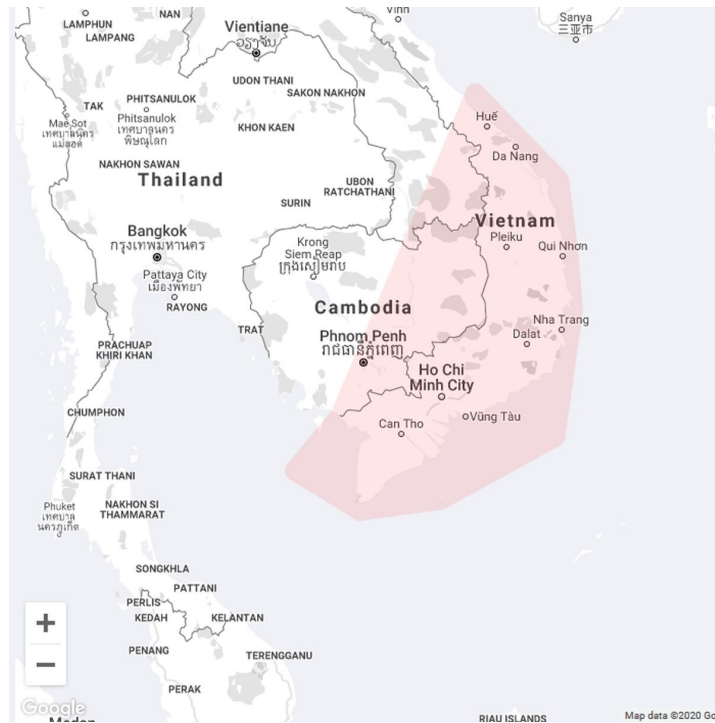
Another important component of the Blue Water Navy Act includes changes to the VA Home Loan program. VA now allows the no-down payment option on guaranteed home loans, regardless of mortgage amount for ALL Veterans. In addition, there is a reduction in the funding fee required for Reservists and National Guard borrowers and other changes.

More information and resources on the Blue Water Navy Act, eligibility, how to file a claim, and changes to the VA Home Loan Program can be found online [HERE](#).

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*Renee Johnson is a public affairs specialist for the Veterans Benefits Administration.*

## New interactive map helps 'blue water' Vietnam veterans locate ship positions



A disability law firm has teamed with veterans advocates to host an interactive map of U.S. ship locations during the Vietnam War. The map could help support veterans' claims for Agent Orange-related benefits.

A [new interactive map](#) could help ill Vietnam veterans who served on U.S. ships during the war determine whether they could be eligible for Agent Orange-related benefits.

A retired Navy chief radioman has teamed with a Florida-based law firm to make the map available to “blue water” Vietnam veterans, their widows and anyone interested in seeing where Navy and Coast Guard vessels served offshore during the decade-long conflict.

The information, said Ed Ball, director of research for Military Veterans Advocacy Inc., could be useful for determining whether a ship served in the waters designated by the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019. The law, [signed June 25 by President Donald Trump](#), allows former service members who served on a ship that operated within 12 nautical miles of a line of demarcation established by law and have an illness presumed related to herbicide exposure apply for health benefits and disability compensation.

Ball told Military Times he has worked on the map for four years, poring over Navy ship logs and plotting the vessels' coordinates along with the dates the ships sailed within the designated zone.

## **New interactive map helps ‘blue water’ Vietnam veterans locate ship positions (continued)**

“Over 1,700 deck logs have been plotted to date, and we continue to add new information from the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Association master list of deck logs,” Ball said.

The map is hosted by the disability law firm Hill & Ponton. Numerous law firms vie to assist veterans in drafting and filing disability claims with the Department of Veterans Affairs; many veterans service organizations provide similar assistance free of charge.

Matthew Hill, managing partner at the firm said Hill & Ponton decided to support Ball’s efforts to assist veterans.

“Improving transparency and simplifying access to this data is essential as we support the Vietnam veterans ... now suffering the effects” of Agent Orange exposure, Hill said in a release.

As part of filing disability claims, veterans must show they served on a U.S. vessel when it traversed the congressionally drawn zone.

Data from the map is derived from the National Archives and ships logs as well as the Blue Water Navy law, according to Ball.

Hill said as veterans and family members send in additional data they have collected, the map will be updated.

Ball said service members who were on ships that aren’t yet mapped or those who served outside the zone, such as in the Gulf of Tonkin, should contact [Military Veterans Advocacy](#) and the [Blue Water Navy Association](#) if they have one of 14 diseases listed by the VA as linked to Agent Orange.

“We have other instances of exposure and they may still be able to file a claim,” he said.

Meanwhile, the Department of Veterans Affairs has started approving claims from the nearly 90,000 veterans who may be eligible for disability compensation. According to Ball and other members of the Blue Water Navy Association, some veterans and widows have been notified of their claims approvals while others are simply finding deposits from VA in their bank accounts.

Jim Caldwell, a Navy veteran who lives in Mission Valley California and has type 2 diabetes, checked his balance and found a deposit for \$6027.05.

“Glorious and happy day,” Caldwell wrote in a message on Facebook. “Please ... let the rest of the blue water navy know that it IS coming and on the way!”

# “Play HOOK-e” From PTSD

By Greg Kucharewski

“We have plenty of activities planned for 2020. Newark Bait and Fly Casting Club will host veteran boat trips, Jenna’s Reel Warriors is going to expand their free charter trips for combat veterans, LZ 64 will host special programs for PTSD veterans, Play HOOK-e fishing trips, Take a Veteran Fishing Day will include active military from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, and free VVA 12 outdoor trips to state parks.

## **DISABLED VETERANS GET WHEELS ON THE BEACH**



It looks like disabled veterans will be exempt from paying beach buggy permit fees to ride on the beach in 2020. I received the following from Paul Harris, New Jersey Beach Buggy Association (NJBBA.) Paul informed me “Buck Tail Joe” NJBBA member was working hard to make this happen for disabled veterans. Senator Christopher J. Connors, Assemblyman Brian E. Rumpf, Assemblywoman DiAnne C. Gov of-ice. Please be advised that companion legislation, S-1703 and A-715, which would exempt disabled veterans from beach buggy permit fees, was passed by the full Assembly on January 13, 2020. The legislation has now passed both Houses of the Legislature and is on the Governor’s desk for his review and consideration.

Please contact your legislators and encourage the governor to sign the bills, phone 609-292-6000 and let them know you are in support of S-1703 and A-715. This is another great way for our veterans to “Play HOOK-e from PTSD.” Don’t forget to attend a NJBBA Beach Driving Course to learn about beach driving and required safety/equipment. <https://www.njbba.org/beach-driving.html>

## Play HOOK-e at Surf Day



### Surf Day 2020

Saturday, February 22nd

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Brookdale Community College

765 Newman Springs Road, Lincroft, New Jersey 07738



Want to shake the winter doldrums attend Surf Day and learn about everything you need to know about surf fishing. There are plenty of new and used tackle deals along with great surf fishing seminar speakers.

We appreciate the continued support of the Jersey Shore Surfcaster's for our veteran Play HOOK-e from PTSD and NJ HOFNOD youth fishing program. We look forward to working together during 2020. Don't forget to come out and support Surf Day on February 22, 2020 at Brookdale Community College, 765 Newman Springs Road, Lincroft, New Jersey 07738.

## 4<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL TAKE A VETERAN FISHING DAY



On Saturday, May 2, 2020, 9:00 a.m. till 2:00 p.m. Cardinale Enterprises will host the 4th Annual Play HOOK-e Take a Veteran Fishing Day at Ponderosa Estate Farms, Lake Julianna Millstone Township, NJ. This year Mr. Cardinale expanded the Veteran Fishing Day to include veterans and active military from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.

Members of the Vietnam Veterans of America, Shore Area Chapter 12 and Jersey Coast Anglers Association will support the event along with Project Healing Waters Jersey Shore Chapter and Boating Education and Rescue members. This is always a fun time for our veterans. Our host makes sure there is plenty of fish to catch, prizes, food, and fun. Event details will be in the Play HOOK-e news and our next VVA Chapter 12,

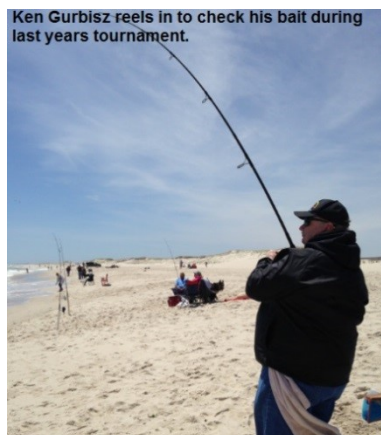


Back In The World (BITW) newsletter. Don't forget to view our Play HOOK-e webpage for more fun events. <https://www.vvachapter12.net/play-hook-e-1.html>

## **SURF FISHING TOURNAMENT DISABLED ACCESS**

Anglers that are not able to walk in the sand can now get to the water and try surf fishing. Get ready to enter the largest surf-fishing tournament along the Jersey Shore. This year, it will be bigger and better than ever. The 29th Annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament will be on Sunday, May 17, 2020. Don't miss a day of family fun! Pick up a brochure about the tournament at Island Beach State Park or at your favorite tackle dealer.

Remember admission to the park is FREE for the tournament. We would like to remind our physically challenged anglers that there is an area at OBA 1 with beach wheelchairs available. The JCAA Youth Education Committee is helping novice and physically challenged anglers at the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament. World Jeep – Chrysler – Dodge - Ram, Shrewsbury, NJ will assist physically challenged anglers with a NEW 4x4 VIP vehicle to transport anglers that will be fishing the reserved area in front of OBA 1.



Ken Gurbisz reels in to check his bait during last years tournament.



Members of the Vietnam Veterans of America (Chapter 12) and volunteer anglers from various fishing clubs will assist physically challenged anglers. If you know a disabled veteran or angler that would like to fish the tournament please email Greg K at: [Gkucharews@jcaa.org](mailto:Gkucharews@jcaa.org)

## **LEARN ABOUT FLY FISHING**



This is a great opportunity for Play HOOK-e from PTSD veterans to learn more about fly fishing from the experts. Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing (PHWFF) will guide you through the process of tying flies and catching a fish on the fly you made. PHWFF

meetings are held at the Spring Lake Heights Community Center, 901 Ocean Road, Spring Lake Heights NJ.

The Jersey Shore Trout Unlimited (TU) has invited PHWFF members to join them on the third Tuesday of every month at 6PM for fly tying and casting instruction. The TU meeting location is: Fireman's Field House, 77 Larkin Place, Oakhurst, NJ. For more information please phone Raoul Cordeaux, PHWFF Jersey Shore Coordinator at 732 859 8130 or email [raoul.cordeaux@gmail.com](mailto:raoul.cordeaux@gmail.com)

Sunshine Foundation

All-Volunteer Southern Ocean Chapter

## Fishing Flea Market

Sunday February 9, 2020

Little Egg Harbor Community Center



8am—2pm

*Love to fish?*

Looking for new and used fishing and boating equipment?

Come out to the All Volunteer Southern Ocean Chapter's Fishing Flea Market for all things fishing!

Admission \$3

319 W Cala Breeze Way  
Tuckerton, NJ 08087

Contact Denise 732-895-2938  
Fishthesunshine2@gmail.com



Support the All-Volunteer Southern Ocean Chapter and help make Dreams Come True!



**Free Breakfast for veterans and active duty service members.**  
**Second Sunday of each month.**  
**Elks Lodge 3509 W. Bangs Ave.**  
**Neptune City, NJ**  
**8:30 am to 11:00 am**



**Welcome Home**





## Your Questions Answered: New Commissary Access for Vets and Caregivers

While some are making their New Year's resolutions, about four million veterans and caregivers will be making shopping lists as they gain access to commissaries and exchanges as of Jan. 1.

After months of planning, the [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) and the Defense Department have worked out several of the challenges involved in letting these newly eligible customers on base to shop in 2020.

Here are the latest answers to veterans' and caregivers' questions about access and the guest policy:

### Who is eligible? When and where can I shop?

Commissaries, exchanges and some morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) facilities will be open to [Purple Heart](#) recipients, former prisoners of war, veterans with any service-connected disability and caregivers registered with the VA's Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers program beginning Jan. 1. Reserve members who fit this description will also have access.

**Related:** [Everything You Need to Know About Vets' and Caregivers' New Base Access](#)

The DoD has been working with the VA, Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Treasury for the past year to integrate these new customers into the complex security systems of military installations so they can shop.

Retired service members, [Medal of Honor](#) recipients and veterans with a service-related disability rating of 100 percent will continue to have access to on-base facilities and can obtain a DoD identification card to get on base.

### As an eligible veteran, how will I shop?

The DoD and VA have approved two ways for newly eligible veterans to get on bases to use their benefits in person: the VA's Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC) or a [letter from the VA](#) along with an acceptable REAL ID-compliant identification, which includes passports and some state driver's licenses.

The VHIC must show the veteran's eligibility status -- Purple Heart, Former POW or Service Connected -- on the front, under the photo, to be accepted. More information about VHICs can be found on the VA's website [here](#).

Access to bases will not be granted to new customers who qualify for VA health care, but are not enrolled in it and thus do not have a VHIC, according to the latest Military OneSource news release.

"If they choose not to apply for enrollment to obtain a VHIC, they will not have access," a DoD spokeswoman said via email, adding that only the VA can verify the eligibility of veterans and



A [Veteran Identification Card](#) will not be accepted.

### **What if I don't have a VHIC?**

The "small group" of veterans who do not qualify for VHIC due to a non-compensable service-connected condition rated at 0% will need a REAL-ID compliant identification and their Health Eligibility Center Form H623A, which shows they are in Priority Group 8E. This is "temporary" until the DoD and VA can come up with a long-term alternative for these veterans, officials said.

Veterans who can't locate their HEC H623A letter can call the VA at 1-877-222-VETS (8387).

Beginning Jan. 1, these newly eligible veterans will have to pass an initial basic, on-the-spot background check to gain access and then an automated check each subsequent time. Veterans or caregivers with felony convictions, felony arrest warrants or derogatory information related to criminal history or terrorism will be prohibited from entering.

Depending on the type of installation, these VHIC-carrying veterans will be able to enroll in recurring access, which lets them bypass the visitor control center and enter through the gates. A [spouse](#) or anyone accompanying them might also be able to enroll in this recurring access if the guest has an identification that supports it, according to a recent Military OneSource news release.

The veteran's VHIC or letter will be used at the point of sale. The cashier will either scan the card or manually input a code when the VA HEC Form H623A is used.

Currently, all honorably discharged veterans can shop over the internet through the Veterans Online Shopping Benefit. They can set up an account for any of the military exchange websites: [Army and Air Force Exchange System](#), [Coast Guard Exchange](#), [Marine Corps Exchange](#), [Navy Exchange Command](#), and the [Veterans Canteen Service](#).

### **Can I bring a guest with me to go shopping?**

Yes, but the guest cannot buy anything and they must be with the sponsor at all times.

Some readers have reported that bases are not complying with this policy.

Asked about that, a DoD spokeswoman said in an email that the Office of the Secretary of Defense is providing "ongoing" information to military departments and "recently" distributed some to use in training installation security personnel and resale and MWR personnel.

"Training of installation-level security personnel is ongoing for all procedures due in part to routine employee turnover and any changes to security postures that may occur," the spokeswoman said. "Installation security processes will vary among the Services, and from installation to installation within a Service, depending on local security circumstances."

She directed further questions about the processes or timing of training to the particular installation's public affairs office.



## What is the process for a caregiver?

The process has not changed since the original policy guidance issued for caregivers registered in the VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers to access commissaries, exchanges and MWR facilities.

It is similar to that of VHIC-holding veterans, but caregivers will receive a letter issued by the VA Office of Community Care saying they qualify as a primary family caregiver of an eligible veteran.

To be admitted on base and to purchase items from the [commissary](#) or exchange, they will need to bring their VA letter plus one of the types of identification listed below. For a full list, refer to the [guidance](#) on page 9.

- DoD common access card
- REAL ID-compliant driver's license or other ID issued by a state, territory, possession or the District of Columbia
- U.S. passport or passport card
- Foreign passport bearing an unexpired immigrant or non-immigrant visa or entry stamp
- Federal personal identity verification card
- VHIC
- Transportation Worker Identification Card

Caregivers have been able to shop at the exchanges online since receiving their eligibility letter. When shopping on base, caregivers will use this letter at the point of sale; since it can't be scanned like the VHIC, the cashier will manually put it into the register.

Caregivers who are not part of the VA's official program do not qualify for shopping privileges. The DoD might expand access to non-registered caregivers in the future, the policy states.

## What type of MWR facilities will I be eligible for?

Newly eligible veterans and caregivers will be able to shop at commissaries and exchanges and use some MWR facilities: golf courses, bowling alleys, movie theaters, marinas and kennels.

Services that rely on appropriations to operate, such as military uniform stores, child development programs and fitness centers or gyms, will not be available.

The DoD official temporary duty and [permanent change-of-station](#) lodging facilities will be on a space-available basis. Meanwhile, each military department will decide whether the MWR ticket office, which sells discount attraction tickets, or the craft and hobby activities will be available.

Per the law, in addition to this surcharge, these newly eligible patrons will be charged a 1.9% fee to use a credit card and .5% fee for a debit card. To avoid these fees, which may change annually, caregivers and veterans can use cash or checks or apply for the Military Star card, which is managed by AAFES.



Customers using electronic benefit transfer cards, such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits, will also avoid the fee.

There will be no such charge at exchanges or for MWR purchases.

**Can I use my benefits if I live overseas?**

That depends on "applicable host nation laws" and international agreements, such as status of forces agreements.

*-- Dorothy Mills-Gregg can be reached at [dorothy.mills-gregg@military.com](mailto:dorothy.mills-gregg@military.com). Follow her on Twitter at [@DMillsGregg](https://twitter.com/DMillsGregg).*

## VVA Chapter 12 Happenings

On Nov 23 Chapter members attended Lt Brennan annual gala. We were honored and were given a \$5000.00 for Chapter programs.



# VVA Chapter 12 Happenings

## 2019 Holiday Party Photos





## VVA Chapter 12 Happenings



Chapter members Linda and Bobby Lopez received awards from Commander Milmoie at Seabees Christmas party for there outstanding work for their Seabees Island X group



The Colonels, grandson, Preston, register 14059 Aluminum tops to Ronald McDonald House.



Special Thank to Donna ,Eileen and Sandy for beautiful decorating Christmas tree in time for Holiday Party.



State of New Jersey  
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS  
NEW JERSEY VETERANS MEMORIAL HOME AT MENLO PARK  
POST OFFICE BOX 3013, 132 EVERGREEN ROAD  
EDISON, NEW JERSEY 08818-3013

PHILIP D. MURPHY  
*Governor  
Commander-in-Chief*

SHEILA OLIVER  
*Lieutenant Governor*

☆  
JEMAL J. BEALE  
*Brigadier General  
The Adjutant General*

December 31, 2019

Mr. Preston Goode, Student  
C/O VFW Post 2179  
1 Veterans Lane  
Port Monmouth, NJ 07758

Dear Mr. Goode:

On behalf of the residents and staff at the New Jersey Veterans Memorial Home at Menlo Park, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you, your organization and your school for thinking our residents and providing them a Community Service Project with a holiday gift donation.

Our residents enjoyed the wonderful gifts and spending time with such caring people like you. They were appreciative of all the hard work that you did in providing them with this wonderful event and generous donation.

Again, thank you for thinking of our residents. Happy Holidays!

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Schiff-Heedles, L.S.W., L.N.H.A.  
Chief Executive Officer

Christine Caratozzolo, CTRS  
Supervisor of Recreation

"Serving Those Who Serve"

The Colonel's grandson, Preston, receiving a letter of appreciation for his holiday gift donation

## PTSD Research Quarterly VOLUME 30/NO. 2, 2019

The latest issue of the *PTSD Research Quarterly* is now available:

### [PTSD and TBI Comorbidity](#)

Jasmeet P. Hayes, PhD

Brain injury, has often been a concern in PTSD patients, most notably from shell shock to TBI during WW I and OEF/OIF/OND, respectively, but also from domestic violence and motor vehicle accidents. This issue of the Research Quarterly provides a comprehensive and thoughtful guide to the literature on PTSD and comorbid mild TBI.

Sign up for the [PTSD Monthly Update](#) or [other publications](#) from the National Center for PTSD.

ARE YOU TREATING U.S. VETERANS WITH PTSD?

**WE CAN HELP.**



Our [PTSD Consultation Program](#) can answer questions about assessment, treatment, medications, and more: [PTSDconsult@va.gov](mailto:PTSDconsult@va.gov) or 866-948-7880.

**ARE YOU HAVING AN  
ACTIVITY IN THE PTSD UNIT ?**

**BOTTLED WATER, SODA, PAPER PLATES, 16 OZ. PLASTIC CUPS  
AND  
PLASTIC UTENSILS ARE NEEDED**



I hope all my brothers and sisters are all well and are enjoying the summer, the guitar classes have been going well, we have 10 Vets in the class and they are doing good . We still have one guitar left for a Vet who would like to join the class, for info contact Dennis Champ 723-239-6288 or email me at [dsclnc1953@gmail.com](mailto:dsclnc1953@gmail.com).

The Vet band has been very busy this summer, some of the gigs we played were Lakehurst joint base, Earle Naval base, Honor Night at Lakehurst, just to name a few , we will also be playing at the Lakewood Vet center picnic , hope to see you all there. Enjoy the rest of the summer, take care and be will. Keep on pickin.

Dennis Champ



**New Pilot VAVS Program  
“Courtesy Transportation”**

**VA New Jersey Health Care System is seeking contributions of Uber  
gift cards for Veterans  
in need of transportation assistance.**

**Uber services will be offered to Veterans that are not eligible for  
beneficiary travel and have no means of transportation home.**

**Uber gift cards are now available nationwide.**

**Any questions regarding this special need, please contact Voluntary  
Service at  
908-604-5814.**

# TAPS

## Shore Area Vietnam Vets Called Home By The Lord

MARTIN J.MCGREEVY ARMY

THOMAS VICTOR PORTER ARMY

DR. RICHARD WARNER,PHD ARMY

THOMAS J. MCCORMIC ARMY

DALE EDWARD BROCKER ARMY

KENNETH W, SCHNEIDER ARMY

DONALD 'PETE' RUMSEY ARMY

SIMON G. RUBIN ARMY

JOHN C. HETZEL ARMY

RONZEL D. HERSMAN ARMY

RICHARD H. FORD ARMY

ROBERT J. OSTERVICH ARMY

WILLIAM F. MCINTYRE NAVY

RONALD CHARLES BOND NAVY

LARRY R. KATHENES NAVY

SGT.ROBERT'BOB' ADRIAN SCHNOOR NA-  
VY

NICHOLAS VIDNANSKI NAVY

JOHN T. EGGER MARINES

EDWARD ANDREW HAYDUCKO MARINERS

RICHARD A GROSCHER MARINES

BENJAMIN JOHN O'NEILL MARINES

SMSgt LORRAINE D, JONES US Air Force  
retired