



Oct-Dec 2019

# LI 202 AFA news

## Chapter Officers

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Cathy Ward	Secretary
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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 2020

### Vietnam Medal Ceremonies:

**Sat, Feb. 1, 2020**

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

**Sat, Apr. 4, 2020**

St. Joseph College  
155 W. Roe Blvd.  
Patchogue  
11:30 AM

**Sat, Jun. 6, 2020**

Long Island State Veterans Home  
100 Patriots Rd.  
Stony Brook  
2:30 PM

**(Continued on page 2)**

### Memorial Day Weekend:

**Sat & Sun, May 23-24, 2020**

American Airpower Museum  
1230 New Highway, Hangar 3  
Farmingdale  
Table Display - All Day

### Annual Pearl Harbor Memorial Ceremony—Dropping of the Roses:

**Mon, Dec. 7, 2020**

American Airpower Museum  
Farmingdale  
10:30 AM

## President's Message

We're still looking for current Long Island Vietnam veterans who wish to receive a Vietnam 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Medal at one of our upcoming ceremonies. To date we have held 31 Vietnam 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Medal Ceremonies and have presented medals to over 900 veterans.

The requirements are:

- Served in Vietnam or theater of operations in any branch of the military as per DD Form 214
- Currently living in Nassau, Suffolk, Brooklyn, Queens or Staten Island
- Can attend the ceremony (medals are presented **only** at the ceremony; they are not mailed)

We would like to invite all our members to show their support and to join their comrades at these upcoming events. We know that some of you may be unable to attend, but if you would like to help, you may donate to the chapter and support these programs.

Donations can be sent to:

Long Island Air Force Association  
Fred Di Fabio, President  
67 Pacific Dunes Court  
Medford, NY 11763

You will find a medal application at the end of this newsletter. Please feel free to use it to apply for a medal yourself, or to give it to a qualified friend or family member who would be interested in applying. You can also download an application from our website at [LIAFA.org](http://LIAFA.org).

## Happy Holidays from the Long Island Air Force Association!



### **Other Upcoming Events, Meetings and Programs**

#### **Additional Vietnam Medal Ceremonies**

Thursday, July 23, 2020 at 5:00 PM at the Shootout for Soldiers at the Town of Oyster Bay Field of Dreams, 5619 Old Sunrise Highway, Massapequa.

Saturday, Sep. 26, 2020 at 11 AM at the Cradle of Aviation Museum, Charles Lindbergh Blvd., Garden City.

#### **Military Care Pack Event**

Sunday, January 26, 3 PM–8 PM at That Meetball Place, 54 W. Main St., Patchogue. Hosted by Boots on the Ground New York. To make a donation that will go 100% towards shipping packages, go to [bootsonthegroundny.com/product/sponsor-a-care-package](http://bootsonthegroundny.com/product/sponsor-a-care-package) or mail a check to Boots on the Ground NY, PO Box 675, Bellport NY 11713. Call (631) 615-2200 for more information.

#### **Military Appreciation Tuesdays by Long Island Cares**

Every Tuesday from 9 AM to 5 PM at their Huntington Station, Freeport and Lindenhurst locations. This is a chance for veterans and their families to access food, personal care items, household products and pet food (also school supplies when available). There is also a mobile food pantry for disabled vets. For more information, please call (631) 582-3663.

#### **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 needy veterans on a monthly basis. 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.

#### **VetsWork by Long Island Cares**

This program provides help for veterans seeking employment by assisting with creating a resume, writing a cover letter, learning interview skills and more. They also offer online courses, seminars and

exercises that help veterans handle career adjustment issues. For more information, please call Fern Summer at (631) 824-6385 (email at [fsummer@licares.org](mailto:fsummer@licares.org)) or Michael Haynes at (631) 824-6386. Their website is [www.vetswork.org](http://www.vetswork.org).

### **Joseph P. Dwyer Veterans Peer Support Project**

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 traumatic brain injury; a diagnosis is NOT required for attendance. All groups are confidential and anonymous. Weekly group meetings are held in Amityville (Mondays), Bay Shore, Yaphank, Sag Harbor (Tuesdays), East Patchogue, Riverhead, Patchogue (Wednesdays), and Mount Sinai (Thursdays). Snacks and light refreshments are served at all meetings. They also provide services to student veterans at numerous Long Island college campuses and monthly community outreach in Sachem, Huntington Station, and Patchogue. For more information and exact meeting locations, please call (631) 853-8345, send an email to [vetspeertopeer@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:vetspeertopeer@suffolkcountyny.gov) or go to [mhaw.org/programs/scuv/dwyer-project](http://mhaw.org/programs/scuv/dwyer-project). 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 St. 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); First Presbyterian Church, 178 S. Ocean Ave. in Freeport at 6:30 PM on Thursdays. 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 St. in Hempstead. No pre-registration is necessary. For more information, please contact Brent Russell at (516) 489-2322, ext. 1213 or email at [brussell@mhanc.org](mailto:brussell@mhanc.org); Audrey Lewis at (516) 489-2322, ext. 1260 or email at [alewis@mhanc.org](mailto:alewis@mhanc.org). Also check out their website: [veteranshealthalliance.org](http://veteranshealthalliance.org).

### **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).

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

Beacon House provides housing in 42 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. Contact 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.

**Veterans News UVO Long Island is looking for volunteers** to act as crew members for its weekly show on public access TV. The show airs on Cablevision channel 20 on Tuesdays at 6:30 PM and on channel 115 on Thursdays at 3:30 PM or any time on YouTube by entering *Veterans News UVO*. The crew meets at the Cablevision Studio in Hauppauge to tape the program, usually on the last Tuesday of each month at 1 PM. Please contact Ed Aulman at [mardiv1@optonline.net](mailto:mardiv1@optonline.net) or call him at (516) 921-0595.

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### 31<sup>st</sup> Vietnam 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Medal Ceremony

**30 Vietnam veterans** were presented with Vietnam 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Medals and Certificates of Appreciation during LIAFA's 31<sup>st</sup> Vietnam medal ceremony on October 19 at Levittown Hall in Hicksville. Distinguished guests included Town of Hempstead Supervisor **Laura Gillen**, New York State Assemblyman **John Mikulin**, Secretary of the Army Civilian Aide **Steve Castleton**, Co-Chairman of Shootout for Soldiers **Harry Jacobs**, Director of Inspections for the 106<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing LTC **Giuseppe Scaglione**, Chaplain for the 106<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing LTC **Brian McNamara**, and New York State Air Force Association President **Maxine Rauch**. We'd also like to thank our sponsors Shootout for Soldiers, Telephonics Corporation and the Town of Hempstead as well as the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 82, American Legion Riders Greenlawn Post 1244, Patriot Guard Riders, Civil Air Patrol Cadet Squadron 8, vocalist Flotilla Staff Officer Louis DiLeo and the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Band Flotilla 22-7, who always add so much to our ceremonies.

Please go to our website at [LIAFA.org](http://LIAFA.org) for photos.

### 78<sup>th</sup> Pearl Harbor Memorial (Dropping of the Roses) on December 7, 2019

As always, the ceremony was held at the American Airpower Museum in Farmingdale. This year, special recognition was given to **26 World War II veterans** in the form of proclamations from Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone, State Senator John Brooks and State Senator Kevin Thomas.

Distinguished guests included Suffolk County Executive **Steve Bellone**, State Senator **John Brooks**, State Senator **Kevin Thomas**, Army Maj. Gen. (Ret.) **Anthony Kropp**, Vice Wing Commander of 106<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing Col. **Shawn Fitzgerald**, Chaplain for the 106<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing LTC **Brian McNamara**, Suffolk County Veteran Services Agency Director **Tom Ronayne**, Co-Chairman of Shootout for Soldiers **Harry Jacobs**, Secretary of the Army Civilian Aide **Steve Castleton**, Deputy Executive Director of the LI State Veterans Home **Jonathan Spier**, VP of Honor Flight Long Island **Roger Kilfoil**, American Airpower Museum President **Jeff Clyman**, Skytyper Pilot **Tom Daly** and New York State Air Force Association President **Maxine Rauch**.

After the roses were blessed, the colors were retired, and the indoor ceremony ended around noontime, 79 roses (78 red roses, with 1 white rose for 9/11) were presented to the pilots of the GEICO Skytypers, who then departed to drop the roses over the Statue of Liberty at 12:55 PM to mark the exact time of the Pearl Harbor attack.

Many thanks, as always, to our sponsors: Shootout for Soldiers, Telephonics Corporation, Long Island State Veterans Home, Atlantic Aviation, and the National Defense Industrial Association.

Special thanks are also due to the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Band, vocalist Flotilla Staff Officer Louis DiLeo, Sergeant at Arms Paul Massi (USMC), Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 82, Plainview VFW Post 5942, Patriot Guard Riders, American Legion Riders Post 1244, Rolling Thunder Chapter 6, U.S. Military Motorcycle Club, American Airpower Museum, GEICO Skytypers, Navy Operational Support Center, Civil Air Patrol Squadron 8, Costco of Melville, Town of Babylon and Applebee's.

Some pictures from the event are on the following pages. Please go to our website at [LIAFA.org](http://LIAFA.org) for more photos.





L to R: NYS Senator John Brooks, Col. (Ret.) Bill Stratemeier, Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone, Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Anthony Kropp and LIAFA President Fred Di Fabio

## Dual Honors for a Fallen Airman

30-year-old Technical Sergeant Dashan J. Briggs of Port Jefferson Station was one of seven members of the 106<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing (ANG) who were killed in March 2018 during a helicopter crash in Iraq near the Syrian border.

On December 18, a portrait of the fallen airman was unveiled at Boyle Road Elementary School, where his son and daughter are students. Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone, who praised the life of Briggs at the unveiling, was in attendance.

Later that same day, the corner of Bedford Avenue and King Street, where he lived, was renamed Tech. Sgt. Dashan J. Briggs Way.

Briggs grew up in Riverhead and since his death has had a street there named after him and a scholarship at Riverhead High School created in his honor.

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## Lockheed P-38 Lightning



One of the more radical American airplane designs from World War II, the Lockheed P-38 Lightning served as a fighter, fighter-bomber and reconnaissance platform. It was used mostly in the Pacific



theater, where its long range and twin engines proved especially useful over the vast stretches of water that constituted the battleground in the island-hopping campaign against Japan.

It was first conceived in 1937 by Lockheed chief engineer Hall L. Hibbard and his then-assistant Clarence "Kelly" Johnson (he of U-2 and SR-71 fame) to satisfy an Army Air Corps directive to design a high-altitude interceptor. When officially introduced in 1940, the twin-boomed P-38 sported two liquid-cooled, turbo-supercharged Allison engines along with a formidable mix of four 50-caliber machine guns and a 20-mm cannon. The armament was all mounted in the nose with the consequence that its maximum effective firing range was about 1000 yards compared to about 200 yards for conventional fighters that had their guns mounted in the wings (since the wing-mounted guns had to be tuned for pattern convergence, where the bullets would converge at a single point). When it was first introduced, the P-38 could climb to 3300 feet in about a minute and reach 400 mph, about 100 mph faster than any other fighter in the world at the time. It was capable of carrying a larger payload than early B-17s and had a range of about 1150 miles.

Perhaps the most famous use of the P-38 was on April 18, 1943 in the interception and shoot-down of the aircraft carrying the architect of Japan's naval strategy in the Pacific (including the attack on Pearl Harbor), Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto. After American codebreakers discovered that Yamamoto was flying to Bougainville to conduct a front-line inspection, 16 P-38s were dispatched from Guadalcanal to Bougainville, flying 435 miles at heights of 10 to 50 feet above the water to avoid detection. The P-38s reached the island just as Yamamoto's two G4M "Betty" fast bomber transports and six escorting Zero fighters arrived there. Both Bettys and two Zeros were destroyed with the loss of one P-38. The death of Yamamoto was a deep psychological blow to the Japanese while being a large morale booster for the Americans.

America's ace of aces and his closest competitor both flew P-38s in the Pacific. Major Richard I. "Dick" Bong tallied 40 victories while Major Thomas B. "Tommy" McGuire made 38 kills. Both men were awarded the Medal of Honor.

About 10,000 P-38s, including 18 distinct models, were produced during the war, flying more than 130,000 missions around the world. There were over 100 P-38 aces and, as a reconnaissance aircraft, the P-38 obtained 90 percent of the aerial film captured over Europe. With the beginning of the Jet Age, the P-38 was retired from service several years after the war ended in 1945.

## Did you know . . .

**The Air Force is how Johnny Cash got his name.** He was originally named J.R., but when he enlisted, the recruiters wouldn't allow him to use only initials as his formal name. He therefore chose the name John R. Cash. He served from 1950 to 1954 as a Morse code operator. He created his first band, the *Landsberg Barbarians*, while serving in Landsberg, Germany. He signed with Sun Records in 1955 and had his name changed again to Johnny Cash.

**There are over 200 career fields in the Air Force** and most of them don't involve actually flying a plane.

**Before Chuck Norris became a famed martial artist, he was an air policeman.** He picked up Tang Soo Do (karate-based Korean martial art) while serving at Osan Air Base in South Korea.

## Taps



**Bernard Dunetz** of Hewlett, an Iwo Jima survivor, died on November 1 at the age of 95.

**Richard Knickerbocker** of Smithtown died on December 22 at the age of 81. He was an Air Force veteran and a 26-year veteran of the Suffolk County police force.

**John Moon**, believed to be the oldest known surviving Iwo Jima survivor, died on October 29 in Macomb, IL at the age of 103. He served in the Marine Corps 5<sup>th</sup> Division.

**Roy S. Richardson** of Cleveland, OH, died on December 3 at the age of 90. He was a member of the famed Tuskegee Airmen and worked the flight line pre-flighting, taxiing and performing aircraft maintenance.

**Lt. Col. John “Matt” Kincade**, 47, an instructor pilot assigned to the 5th Flying Training Squadron and **2nd Lt. Travis B. Wilkie**, 23, a student pilot assigned to the 71st Student Squadron, were killed on November 21 during a T-38C Talon training mission, according to a release from Vance Air Force Base in Oklahoma.





# 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 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 (sanitize your Social Security Number) and this application to:

Fred DiFabio, President  
67 Pacific Dunes Court  
Medford, NY 11763



For information call:  
631-754-6383

- The Long Island Air Force Association has awarded to date over 650 medals during 21 ceremonies
- Visit our web page and view the video to gain a sense of the ceremony: [LIAFA.ORG](http://LIAFA.ORG)
- Checkout our Facebook page at: 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.

**THIS MEDAL IS TO HONOR OUR LONG ISLAND LIVING VETERANS  
(Not awarded posthumously)**