



Oct-Dec 2020

# LI 202 AFA news

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*Visit us on the WEB:*

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

*Visit us on FACEBOOK:*

*Long Island Air Force Association—LIAFA*

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

*Newsletter editor: Steven Latus*

## President's Message

Although we've had to postpone our Vietnam Medal Ceremonies over the past few months due to COVID-19, we're still accepting applications from any current Long Island Vietnam veterans who wish to receive a Vietnam 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Medal at one of our upcoming ceremonies once they resume. To date we have held 32 Vietnam 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Medal Ceremonies and have presented medals to almost 1,000 veterans.

The requirements are:

- Served in the Vietnam 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)

You will find a medal application at the end of this newsletter. You can also download one from our website 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.**

Let's hope that we can get back to some semblance of normality in the foreseeable future. It will come about sooner if we all follow the medical guidelines and get the vaccine when it becomes available.

I hope you all enjoyed the holidays and are looking forward to a Happy New Year!

## CALENDAR OF LIAFA EVENTS 2021

### Vietnam Medal Ceremonies:

**There are no Vietnam medal ceremonies scheduled for the next several months due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.**

### Memorial Day Weekend:

**Sat & Sun, May 29-30, 2021**

American Airpower Museum  
1230 New Highway  
Farmingdale  
Table Display—All Day

### 80<sup>th</sup> Annual Pearl Harbor Memorial Ceremony—Dropping of the Roses:

**Tue, Dec. 7, 2021**

American Airpower Museum  
1230 New Highway  
Farmingdale  
10:30 AM

## 79th Pearl Harbor Memorial Ceremony (Dropping of the Roses)

As always, the ceremony was held at the American Airpower Museum in Farmingdale on Monday, December 7. This year, special recognition was given to 2 World War II veterans (**Louis Singer** and **Albert O. Klipfel**, both Navy veterans) in the form of proclamations presented by Nassau County Executive **Laura Curran** and Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency Director **Tom Ronayne**. The attendance was restricted this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Other distinguished guests included Chaplain for the 106<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing **LTC Brian McNamara**, Superintendent of the 106<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing Medical Group **CMSGT Thomas Katt**, American Airpower Museum Operations Manager **Larry Starr**, 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, 80 roses (79 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 and Telephonics Corporation.

Special thanks are also due to the American Airpower Museum, Long Island Brass Quintet, vocalist COL 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, GEICO Skytypers, Navy Operational Support Center, Civil Air Patrol Squadron 8 and Costco of Melville.

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



*The roses being loaded onto the SNJ-2 aircraft for delivery to the Statue of Liberty. Pilot Nick Zirilli; backseater Joe Daly. L to R standing are two sailors, LIAFA Treasurer COL (Ret) Bill Stratemeier, Skytyper pilots Tom Daly and Jim Record*



*L to R: Bill Stratemeier, Tom Ronayne and Laura Curran with two sailors holding the roses*



*Tom Ronayne and Laura Curran presenting proclamations to WWII vet Louis Singer*



*The roses and proclamations*

### **Ceremony Honoring Angelo Ciotta, Iwo Jima Marine Veteran**

A small ceremony was held at Veterans Plaza at Eisenhower Park on November 16 to bury a portion of Angelo's ashes underneath the stone memorial dedicated to him that is located near the entrance to the Veterans Museum in the tower at Veterans Plaza. Attendance was limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the family's wishes. Angelo, an Iwo Jima survivor and past president and founder of the Iwo Jima Survivors Association of New York, was also the voice behind the Veterans Plaza and the Veterans Museum and a driving force in the UVO (United Veterans Organization of Nassau County).

As you may remember from the "Taps" section of this newsletter for Apr-Jun 2020, Angelo had died of natural causes at his East Meadow home on April 22 at the age of 95. Angelo had been a corporal and a demolition specialist with the 28<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, Fifth Marine Division in the Pacific theater during World War II.

Please see the photo on the following page.



*Angelo's son John holding the urn in front of his father's memorial monument*

### **Veterans Annual Winter Stand Down**

The 32<sup>nd</sup> annual winter stand down was held at the Freeport Armory on November 24. It was conducted differently this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead of the goods being distributed inside the building, bags (containing winter jackets, clothes, boots, nonperishable food items and frozen holiday turkeys) were placed directly into veterans' cars by volunteers. Those without cars were served at the armory's front entrance. Burger King also provided to-go meals.

## Other Upcoming Events, Meetings and Programs

***We strongly recommend calling or emailing the appropriate organization for any events, meetings or programs that are listed below to make sure that they have not been canceled, restricted, made virtual or postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as many of them have been.***

### 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).

### 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.

### 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/dwyer/programs-services/peer-support-groups](http://mhaw.org/dwyer/programs-services/peer-support-groups). They also have a Facebook page. ***Please note that all support groups are CANCELED until further notice due to the COVID-19 pandemic.***

### 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). ***Please note that all support groups are VIRTUAL until further notice due to the COVID-19 pandemic.***

### **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.

***Please contact Ed Aulman first to see if they're still taping during the COVID-19 pandemic.***

### **Rally Commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the End of World War II (POSTPONED)**

Due to COVID-19 restrictions on large gatherings, this event has been **POSTPONED** until further notice. The organizers hope to reschedule it for sometime in the Spring of 2021. The Village of Lynbrook will be hosting the rally.

Novelty War Bonds to help cover the rally expenses can be bought through the village's website <https://www.lynbrookvillage.net/bond> (click on the big red button) in the name of a family member or in honor of someone who served. These "bonds" will be offered in the following denominations:

Victory Bond (\$20), Liberty Bond (\$100), Freedom Bond (\$500), Constitution Bond (\$1,000) and Peace Bond (\$5,000) ***(Disclaimer—these novelty bonds are DONATIONS, NOT actual investment bonds).***

All novelty bonds purchased will be recognized online and at Greis Park, which will serve as the rally's final stop. After all rally-related expenses are paid, the remaining funds will be forwarded to the United Veterans Organization of Nassau County (UVO) to administer an endowment to aid homeless veterans.

## Fairchild Republic A-10 Thunderbolt II (Warthog)



*U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Janiqua Robinson at Moody AFB, Georgia*

Perhaps the most distinctive-looking aircraft in the Air Force arsenal, the A-10 has been aptly described as a gun with a plane built around it. The gun in question is the General Dynamics GAU-8/A Avenger 30-mm Gatling-style cannon mounted in the aircraft's nose. This beast can fire a range of ammunition, including depleted-uranium armor-piercing incendiary rounds, which can disable a main battle tank at a range of over 6500 meters. The magazine can hold 1350 rounds; the pilot can select a firing rate of 2100 or 4200 rounds per minute. The A-10 has 11 stores pylons that provide an external load capacity of 16,000 pounds and can carry up to ten Maverick air-to-surface missiles. It can also carry Sidewinder air-to-air missiles as well as a variety of bombs, including JDAMs (joint direct attack munitions).

As might well be inferred from the weapons systems onboard this aircraft, the subsonic A-10 is no dogfighter but is instead one of the most impressive and effective CAS (close air support) platforms ever built. It has short take-off and landing capability that allows it to be deployed to forward operating

bases, a good combat radius (about 400 miles) and can loiter for an extended period in the target area to provide long-lasting coverage for ground forces.

The engines are two General Electric TF34-GE-100s, each supplying 9065 lb. of thrust. The plane can fly on only one engine if necessary. Maximum speed is 460 mph; cruising speed is 340 mph.

The single-seat cockpit sports a bullet-proof bubble canopy and is enveloped within an armored titanium "bathtub", both providing excellent protection for the pilot. Newer upgraded A-10s include GPS positioning and terrain profile-matching systems. Lockheed Martin's Sniper XR targeting pod includes mid-wave FLIR (forward-looking infrared), dual-mode laser, CCD-TV, laser spot tracker and IR marker.

This aircraft is built with survivability in mind. The fuel system is self-sealing with anti-explosion foam both inside and outside and the redundant hydraulic flight-control systems are further backed up by manual systems. The aircraft can survive direct hits from armor-piercing and high-explosive projectiles up to 23 mm.

The first flight of the A-10 was in May 1972 and a total of 713 aircraft were produced. Production came to an end in 1984. It was originally manufactured by Fairchild, but since 1987 the prime contractor has been Northrop-Grumman, which performs support and structural upgrade programs. Boeing also got a piece of the action in June 2007 for the A-10 wing replacement program.

The A-10 has seen action in various conflicts over the last 30 years, including Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo and has acquitted itself admirably.

While popular with the ground troops that it helps protect and with the pilots who fly it, the A-10 program has periodically come under fire from top Air Force brass who have been faced with the budgetary Sophie's choice of continuing to field the A-10 or spending the available money on modernization priorities such as space technologies and the Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control concept. In the recent fiscal 2021 National Defense Authorization Act, Congress has stipulated that no defense funds can be used to divest or retire any A-10s in the fleet. This happened after the Air Force had sought to retire 44 Warthogs out of the total A-10 fleet of 281.

Some may call it ugly and it is perhaps not the most glamorous plane the Air Force has, but it's tough and it does its job superbly well. It is certainly a worthy successor to its namesake predecessor, the P-47 Thunderbolt fighter-bomber of World War II fame.

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## *Did you know . . .*

**The US Department of Defense controls over 30 million acres of land worldwide**, which combined would make up an area slightly larger than the state of Pennsylvania.

**The US Military wore blue** until shortly after the Spanish-American War in 1898, when it adopted khaki uniforms. The use of camouflage-colored uniforms began during World War II and was originally designed by artists. Today, computer-generated, pixelated camouflage is used. Blue uniforms are still used for formal occasions.

**Only 4 percent** of all Air Force personnel are pilots.

## Taps



**Charles Elwood (Chuck) Yeager**, World War II fighter ace, test pilot and the first person to break the sound barrier on October 14, 1947 in the experimental aircraft Bell X-1, died on Pearl Harbor Day, December 7, at a hospital in Los Angeles, CA at the age of 97. No cause of death was given. He enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Forces in September 1941 at the age of 18 and was first trained as an aircraft mechanic. He later volunteered for flight training and became a flight officer in 1943. Stationed in England, he flew P-51 Mustangs over Europe. His WWII service included getting shot down over France in March 1944, evading capture with the help of the French Resistance (Maquis), returning to England, and later being allowed to return to combat, despite a policy at the time prohibiting escaped pilots from flying over enemy territory again (to prevent possible capture and torture, potentially revealing details of the activities of the resistance groups). General Eisenhower approved him to return to combat, as Yeager had strenuously requested, after D-Day since, as Yeager said, "He cleared me for combat after D-Day, because all the free Frenchmen—Maquis and people like that—had surfaced." He also commanded a fighter wing as a colonel during the Vietnam War, flying 127 missions, mostly in B-57 Canberra light bombers over the Ho Chi Minh Trail. After almost 34 years of service and being the recipient of numerous awards and decorations, Yeager retired from the Air Force as a Brigadier General on March 1, 1975. He is survived by his second wife, Victoria (his first wife, Glennis, with whom he had four children, died in 1990); two daughters, Susan Yeager and Sharon Yeager Flick; and a son, Don. Another son, Michael, died in 2011.



*Chuck Yeager standing in front of the Bell X-1, nicknamed "Glamorous Glennis", in 1947. (U.S. Air Force photo)*



SEASON'S GREETINGS

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR  
FROM THE LONG ISLAND AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION!



## 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 DiFabio, President  
67 Pacific Dunes Ct.  
Medford, NY 11763



For information call:  
631-754-6383

- Visit our web page at [LIAFA.ORG](http://LIAFA.ORG) to view a video of the ceremony.
- 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.