



Jul–Sep 2024

# LI 202 AFA NEWS

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## CALENDAR OF LIAFA EVENTS 2024

### Vietnam Medal Ceremonies

**Sat, Nov 2, 2024**

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

### 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 a.m.

## 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



*By: Ray Donnelly*

*VP Corporate Development, Long Island Chapter #202, Air & Space Forces Association*

Another great Shootout for Soldiers has just concluded on July 12<sup>th</sup>! It was the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Shootout and in that time the Long Island-based SFS has raised over \$1.5 million for veterans causes. This is a tribute to the SFS Team headed by Mike Nelson and Tom Campolettano combined with the spirit of patriotism of the Long Island Lacrosse Community.

Shootout began in Baltimore by a group of high school students and was quickly adapted by the Long Island Lacrosse community lead by Mike, Tom, and Harry Jacobs, all of whom have special family links to the Veterans community. Using their connections both on and off the field, the event has become one of the primary fundraisers for Veterans groups on Long Island.

This year's 10<sup>th</sup> event itself was what people have come to expect from SFS—great on-the-field action, the jamboree-like atmosphere, and special ceremonies like our own LIAFA Vietnam Veterans Medal Recognition Ceremony. Over 20 Vietnam 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Medals were presented to a group of proud and worthy veterans in front of family and friends, with tears and pride in equal measure.

There are too many teams to thank individually, but we'd like to offer a special nod to our corporate sponsors: PSEG Long Island, National Grid, Betatronix, Transaero, GSE Dynamics, Retlif Testing Labs, Curtis-Wright, Greiner-Maltz Real Estate, Cona Elder Law, M&T Bank, Jake's 58 and Oerlikon. None of this would have been possible without all your commitment and we look forward to seeing you next year!

### **"Fighting with Allies"—Recognizing Australia in Vietnam**

It was that most quotable of 20<sup>th</sup> century figures, Winston Churchill, who said, "The only thing worse than fighting with allies is fighting without them!" In the Vietnam War, America stood largely alone as, for various reasons, many of our traditional allies stayed away. A few, however, did not, notably our faithful friends and partners in the "Land Down Under"—Australia.

All branches—Army, Navy, Air Force—of the Australian military took part, with approximately 60,000 Australians serving in the war; 521 were KIA and more than 3,000 were wounded. Two units received US Presidential Citations: Australian Army Training Team Vietnam and D Company, 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment at the Battle of Long Tan on August 18–19, 1966.

Australian veterans also suffered from the same aftereffects that American veterans experienced, such as PTSD and various health issues arising from exposure to Agent Orange. Australia as a nation also lived through similar divisions in society that we went through here in America, where the war proved to be equally controversial. Those divisions, like in the US, thankfully healed and Australia remains a strong, steadfast ally in defense, economic cooperation and human rights.

In recognition of this valuable and heroic contribution, the LIAFA will be proud to recognize the Australian efforts with a special presentation to military officials from the Australian Embassy in Washington, DC as well as US DOD representatives at our **Vietnam Commemorative Medal Ceremony on November 2 at the Museum of American Armor in Bethpage, start time 11:30 a.m. We hope you can join us!**

*Editor's Note:* Other U.S. allies besides Australia that contributed to the American war effort in Vietnam were South Korea, Thailand, New Zealand, The Philippines, Taiwan and Spain.

### **44<sup>th</sup> Vietnam 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Medal Ceremony**

The weather was not very cooperative during the event, but it did not diminish the emotions of the **twenty-two Vietnam veterans** who were presented with Vietnam 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Medals and Certificates of Appreciation on Friday, July 12, at John J. Burns Park in Massapequa Park during the second day of the annual Long Island Shootout for Soldiers. Distinguished guests included Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor **Joseph Saladino**, National Executive Director of Shootout for Soldiers for Team RWB **Erik Mineo**, Shootout for Soldiers Co-Chairmen **Mike Nelson** and **Tom Campolettano**, Chairman Emeritus of Shootout for Soldiers **Harry Jacobs**, Aviation Center Director at Farmingdale State College USAF Colonel (Ret.) **Michael Canders**, ANG 106<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing Medical Group Officer Major **Joe Nolas** and Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency Director **Marcelle Leis**. Special thanks to our supporters: Shootout for Soldiers, 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 Lt. Quentin Roosevelt Civil Air Patrol Cadet Squadron NY-288. Thanks also to the many Shootout sponsors for their support.



*Photo credit: Ken Nevor*



*Christopher De Luca holding the "Welcome Home" sign, with Ken Nevor.*

*Photo credit: Ken Nevor*



## **Nassau County Salute to Veterans**

This annual event was held on Saturday, August 3, starting at 6:30 p.m. at Eisenhower Park, Harry Chapin Lakeside Theater, East Meadow. Salute to Veterans honored five people in the veteran community who have devoted their time and lives to helping Long Island veterans. After the honorees received their recognition and awards, a concert was supposed to have started at 7:30 p.m., but it was unfortunately rained out by a torrential downpour. The honorees were **John Damato**, VFW; **Frank Amalfitano**, United Veterans Beacon House; **Bob Chiappone**, Military Order of the Purple Heart; **Steve Grogan**, Nassau County Firefighters Operation Wounded Warrior and **Robert Biscardi**, Vietnam War Veterans Association. Congratulations to the honorees!

## **Mitchel Field Commissary Rally**

A rally was held on Wednesday, August 28 at the Mitchel Field Commissary to demonstrate support for the re-opening of the commissary, which has been closed since the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend due to structural concerns with the pre-World War II building (bricks falling from the ceiling). Approximately 50 veterans attended the rally, which was covered by News 12 Long Island. Rep. Anthony D'Esposito and Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman were among the elected officials who joined with veterans on Wednesday, calling for urgent action to be taken to re-open the commissary.



*Veterans gathered for the rally outside the shuttered commissary.  
Photo credit: Anthony Florio/Newsday*

## **3<sup>rd</sup> Women's Military Service Medal Ceremony**

**Twenty-seven veteran and active-duty women** were awarded the Women's Military Service Medal on Saturday, September 14 at the Cradle of Aviation Museum in Uniondale. Distinguished guests included Congressman **Anthony D'Esposito**, Cradle of Aviation Museum Executive Director **Jennifer Boxmeyer**, ANG 106<sup>th</sup> Rescue Wing Medical Group Commander Colonel (Ret.) **Pamela Combs**, Director of the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency **Ralph Esposito** and Director of the

Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency **Marcelle Leis**. Special thanks to our supporters— Cradle of Aviation Museum, Shootout for Soldiers, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Band, Military Blue Star Mothers of Nassau County NY14, American Legion Riders from Greenlawn Post 1244, Patriot Guard Riders, Rolling Thunder Chapter 6, Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) Chapter 82 Color Guard and Lt. Quentin Roosevelt Civil Air Patrol Cadet Squadron NY-288.



*Air Force Staff Sergeant Claudia Barrerio-Kerstiens of Shirley with her mother Ana Barreiro, left, holding her son Henry Kerstiens, 7 months, her daughter Gabriella Cutignola, and her sister Kerry Barreiro.  
Photo credit: Joseph Sperber*



*Close-up photo of the medals*

## **Nassau County Veterans Picnic and Resource Fair**

A free BBQ picnic and resource fair to benefit veterans and their families was held on Thursday, September 19 from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Kite Field by Parking Field 6 at Eisenhower Park in East Meadow. It was sponsored by the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency and supported by various veteran service providers. In addition to the free food and beverages, music was provided by Tangerine and The American Bombshells.

## **POW-MIA Night Vigil Remembrance Ceremony**

This annual event was held on Friday, September 20 starting at 5 p.m. at the Veterans Memorial Plaza at Eisenhower Park in East Meadow. The vigil was to honor the POWs and MIAs from Nassau County by reading the names of these local heroes. This event is usually held at dusk, but there was a conflict with a concert so the start time was moved up. It was sponsored by the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency.

## **Walls of Honor Ceremony**

On September 28 at Veterans Memorial Plaza in Eisenhower Park in East Meadow, nearly 1000 people attended the event, held to add 440 veterans' names to stainless steel panels mounted on granite walls in a ceremony carried out by the Nassau County Veterans Monument Fund, Inc. Presiding over the ceremony was Morris Miller, the national education program director for the Veterans of the Vietnam War Inc. & The Veterans Coalition. Since the early 1990s, over 11,000 names have been added to the walls, which stand right next to the Veterans Memorial Tower. Approximately 300 to 400 names are added to the walls each year, representing all branches of the military. Most of the names represent veterans, although some of them are active-duty military. There is a \$100 donation required to add a name to the walls; this amount covers the cost of adding the name, with any extra funds used to maintain the grounds. Eligibility was recently narrowed to Nassau County residents only (past or present) so going forward into 2025, proof of residency will be required.

Frank Amalfitano, Vietnam veteran, and president and CEO of United Veterans Beacon House, a Bay Shore nonprofit that provides shelter for homeless veterans, had his name added this year. "It's what a veteran always wants: to be remembered, not forgotten."





*View of the crowd at the Walls of Honor Ceremony  
Photo credit: John Scalesi.*



*Walls of Honor at Eisenhower Park  
Photo credit: Walls of Honor Nassau County, NY Facebook page.*



## Upcoming Non-LIAFA Events

### Blue Star Mothers Widows' Brunch

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20, 11 a.m. TO 2 p.m.** at VFW Post 7763, 1012 Park Blvd., Massapequa Park. Please join them in celebrating the wives of our fallen veterans. Hosted by Blue Star Mothers NY 14. RSVP to Laura at (516) 355-1254 by October 7. **NOTE: For widows and widowers ONLY!**

### Suffolk County Veterans Resource and Stand Down Event

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25, 10 a.m. TO 3 p.m.** at Suffolk County Community College, 121 Speonk Riverhead Rd., Riverhead. Free entry. To register, go to <https://form.jotform.com/242195031949056>.

### United Veterans Organization of Nassau County (UVO) Annual Veterans Day Ceremony

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 10 a.m. TO 11 a.m.** at Veterans Memorial Plaza (Parking Field 6A) in Eisenhower Park, East Meadow. Open to all; attendance is free.

### Long Island National Cemetery Memorial Organization (LINCMO) Annual Veterans Day Ceremony

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2 p.m. TO 3 p.m.** at Long Island National Cemetery located at 2040 Wellwood Avenue in Farmingdale. Open to all; attendance is free.

### Veterans Annual Winter Stand Down

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.** at the Freeport Armory, 63 Babylon Turnpike, Freeport. It will again be a drive-through-only event; the only items distributed will be clothes, boots, toiletries, and nonperishable foods. Free entry. For more information, call the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency at (516) 572-6565.

### Laying of Remembrance Wreaths at Long Island National Cemetery

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14** at Long Island National Cemetery, 2040 Wellwood Ave. in Farmingdale. *Wreath placement will take place immediately after the ceremony, which will begin at 12 noon.* The cemetery is seeking volunteers to help lay Remembrance Wreaths on the gravesites under the *Wreaths Across America* program. For more information, please call the cemetery at (631) 454-4949.

## Announcements and Programs

### 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](http://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](http://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—Nassau County Veterans Service Agency**

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 a.m. to 5 p.m. 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 (516) 572-6565 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 a.m.–12 noon.

### **Volunteer Drivers Wanted for Veterans—Disabled American Veterans (DAV)**

DAV is also looking for volunteer drivers to help veterans get to VA medical appointments. A valid New York State driver's license is required. For more information, please send an email to [Robert.Erdody@va.gov](mailto:Robert.Erdody@va.gov) or call (631) 235-8220. For a volunteer application, please send an email to [Jennifer.Pohl2@va.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Pohl2@va.gov) or call (631) 261-4400, ext. 7182.

## **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 p.m. 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.

If you have any questions before filing a 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 (NCFF-OWW)**

A nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization **not** affiliated with the Wounded Warrior Project or any other Operation Wounded Warrior organization, the NCFF-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 NCFF-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 NCFF-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 NCFF-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 NCFF-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](http://clothingdonations.org) or call (631) 582-0242 to schedule a pick-up. Please put the donation outside before 7 a.m. 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](http://vietnamveteranscardonation.org) or call (800) 435-7838 to schedule a donation—FREE towing is provided!

**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 p.m. and Cablevision channel 20 on Fridays at 6:30 p.m. It is also on at various times on Verizon FIOS channel 36, 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 p.m. on Mondays and 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays; Levittown Public Library, 1 Bluegrass Lane in Levittown at 2 p.m. on Thursdays (biweekly). There are also spouse/partner meetings at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and women-only meetings at 6:30 p.m. 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 Hway., 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, please call Allison Ridam Krivosheiw at (516) 236-3245 or email her at [alliridam@gmail.com](mailto:alliridam@gmail.com).

***NOTE: A new requirement has been put in place that applicants must be current or former Nassau County residents. A copy of the newly-revised two-page application form has been attached to the end of this newsletter.***

## **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 \$75 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.

## **Free COVID-19 At-Home Test Kits**

Everyone, not just veterans, can now request 4 free COVID-19 at-home test kits (one set per household) by going to the following website: <https://covidtests.gov>. These new test kits are designed to detect the recent virus strains and, they hope, the forthcoming winter ones. If you already have unused test kits at home, this site can also direct you to the FDA's website so that you can find out if those older test kits have expiration dates that have been extended. The new test kits will begin shipping during the first week in October via the United States Postal Service.

Now would also be a good time to get the updated COVID-19 vaccine to help protect you from severe disease, hospitalization and death. It is especially important to get your 2024–2025 COVID-19 vaccination if you are age 65 or older, are at high risk for severe COVID-19, or have never received a COVID-19 vaccine. Vaccine protection decreases over time, so it is important to stay up to date with your COVID-19 vaccine.

**D**id you know . . .

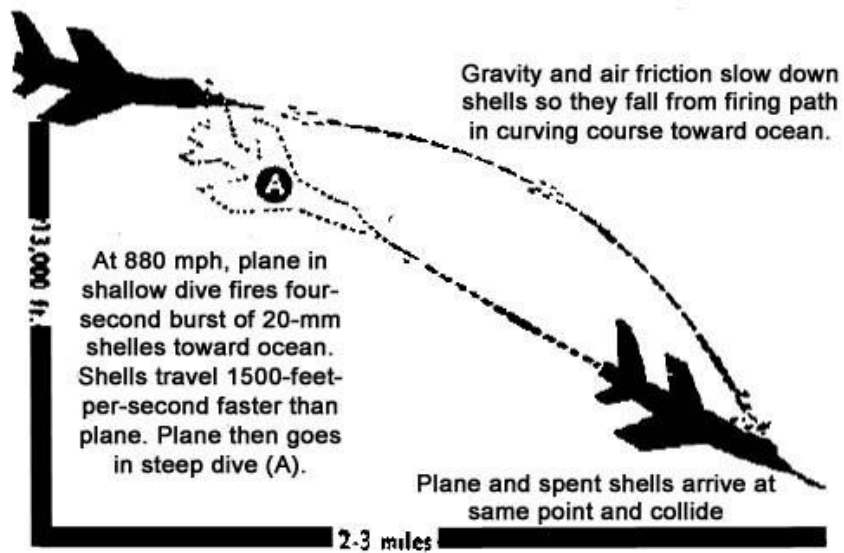
**September 21st, 1956—Grumman company test pilot Tom Attridge shoots himself down in a Grumman F11F-1 Tiger while flying a test profile during a Mach 1.0-plus 20-degree dive from 22,000 feet.**

How did he do that, you ask? Well, as Tom pushed his nose forward, at 0.5 g's in a supersonic descent, he test-fired two bursts from the Tiger's four Colt 20 mm cannons, as planned.

Unknowingly, poor Tom was now in a loose formation with his own cannon projectiles somewhere overhead his canopy. 11 seconds later, commencing his pull-out, his jet was immediately struck multiple times by his own shells. One cracked his windscreen, and the other was ingested by the engine, shredding the compressor blades. With the plane now disabled, Tom was fortunate in that he was able to crash-land the stricken plane  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile short of the Calverton runway, running into some trees. The plane was on fire, but Tom was able to quickly escape, although suffering a broken leg and multiple broken vertebrae in the process. The Grumman crash crew and rescue helicopter were on the scene in less than three minutes, transporting Tom to a local hospital within eleven minutes.

Per the military.com website, Attridge was also fortunate in that the cannon shells were dummy practice rounds—straight metal slugs that did not explode on impact like real cannon shells would have. If they had been real shells, he likely would not have survived.

While the Navy at the time dismissed the incident as a “million-to-one shot,” Attridge disagreed, saying that “At the speeds we’re flying today, it could be duplicated anytime”—and he was right. In 1973, another test pilot ejected safely after his F-14 Tomcat in California was hit at the end of its fuel tank by its own dummy AIM-7 Sparrow missile.



*Graphic on how F11F-1 test pilot shot himself down.  
Graphic credit: theaviationgeekclub.com.*



*Grumman F11F Tiger. The F11F was the second supersonic fighter in U.S. Navy service.  
Photo credit: Sierra Hotel Aeronautics.*



## ★★★ Supporters' Corner ★★★

### Louis DiLeo

Louis “Lou” DiLeo of Seaford has been a fixture at LIAFA events for many years, lending his powerful and distinctive voice to the proceedings. No matter whom you may hear sing *The Star-Spangled Banner* or *God Bless America*, you haven’t really heard it until you’ve heard Lou sing it. His nickname among some veterans is *The Voice* for a reason; he can hit those high notes, sustain them and make it seem easy. As if singing superbly wasn’t enough, Lou is also Principal Trumpet and Chief Bugler with the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Band Flotilla 22-7 as well as a Colonel with the 11<sup>th</sup> New York Regiment USA-Volunteers. He has also served as Special Bugler for the New York Military Forces Honor Guard and the New York Army National Guard.

If you have attended a funeral in the Long Island area for a deceased veteran within the past twenty years or so, you have quite likely heard Lou play Taps, since he has done so for literally thousands of funerals. According to a News 12 Long Island article from 2012, Lou said that he lives by two mottos: Nothing is more important than honoring a fallen soldier, and there's no such thing as sounding Taps too many times. "They put on the uniform, and at that point they wrote a blank check to the United States of America, payable up to their lives," DiLeo says. "That can't go unrewarded and unthanked." Lou was inspired to play Taps live at military funerals after hearing a recorded version of the song played at his godfather's funeral, which he said felt too impersonal.

Thank you, Lou, for all that you have given us and others.



Louis DiLeo, December 18, 2023  
Photo credit: Lisa J. Laura-Cohen

## Taps



**Edward J. McEvoy Sr.** of Oyster Bay passed away on September 9 (age unknown) of undisclosed causes. Ed was an Army veteran and was a member of the American Legion as well as one of the first members of AMVETS Oyster Bay Post 21.

Ed was also a life member and former chief of the Oyster Bay Fire Department Company #1, and a member of the Volunteer & Exempt Firemens Benevolent Association of Oyster Bay.

Ed's wife Ellen, his brothers James and Robert, and his sister Jean Callaghan, all predeceased him. He is survived by his son Edward Jr., married to Jessica; his daughter Kerry Golden, married to Eric; his dear sister-in-law Ann; and his grandchildren Eric Jr. and Thomas.

No picture is available.



## 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.



# 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)



# The Nassau County Veterans Monument Fund, Inc.

PRESENTS:

## "WALLS OF HONOR"



### The "Walls Of Honor"

offers places of remembrance to residents of Nassau County, NY  
within *Veterans Memorial Plaza*,  
Eisenhower Park, East Meadow, New York.

**The Walls of Honor are exactly what they state, they are Honor Walls, not memorial walls.** Stainless Steel Panels, mounted on Granite Walls, Engraved with Veterans names, ensures that the greatest contribution to our legacy of freedom is recognized for generations to come.

### **GIVE THE GIFT OF A LIFETIME**

Reserve a place of **HONOR** for yourself, family member or friend and become part of a monument to the men and women who bravely served this nation through its darkest moments or protected it during times of peace. **Any** Veteran of any U.S. involved war. **Any** Veteran who is currently serving. **Any** Veteran living or deceased. **Any** Veteran who took the oath of enlistment & has been honorably discharged is eligible to be remembered.

The *Walls of Honor* is on-going. As long as veterans apply, there will be room for their names. Once a year we welcome all to attend our **Annual Honoree Dedication Ceremony** where new honorees names are placed on the Walls of Honor.

**There is a \$100.00 application fee for each name to be engraved.**

Donations are always greatly appreciated.

For additional information please contact Allison Ridam Krivosheiw  
cell/text: 516-236-3245 /alliridam@gmail.com

revAR 05/2024



## TO REGISTER:



Type or Print all information CLEARLY

Each registration form should include ONE NAME - For additional forms contact Allison or Joan Ridam @ 516-804-5802

**NOTE: BE SURE TO INCLUDE A COPY** of DD-214 or SEPARATION PAPERS or ANY OTHER TYPE OF PROOF OF SERVICE

Along with Proof of Nassau County Residency

Donor's name:

Address:

Town:

State:

Zip Code:

Area code & Phone number (Please circle: Home / Cell )

### HONOREE INFORMATION:

All Letters are Capital Letters. For lower case letters, circle the box (e.g. Mc, Mac)  
Leave blank boxes for space between words.

1. Name of Veteran being honored:

( First, Middle, Last)

JOHN E. MCCORMICK

2. Branch of service:

\* See below for abbreviations

3. Date of service: (optional)

4. If applicable: Prisoner of War - Missing in Action - Killed in Action Please include proof of status.

check box: POW ☐ MIA ☐ KIA ☐

**IMPORTANT:** SERVICE MEMBERS' NAMES ARE NOT ENGRAVED ALPHABETICALLY. THEY ARE ENGRAVED IN THE ORDER THEY ARE RECEIVED. THE INFORMATION YOU SUBMIT IS WHAT WILL BE ENGRAVED ON THE WALL.  
DOUBLE - CHECK YOUR INFORMATION. If you wish to place multiple names on a panel, submit together a separate application for each person. In receipt of this form, the donor will be sent a certificate of acknowledgement.

#### \*Service Branch Abbreviations:

USA - US Army / USAF - US Air Force / USN - US Navy / USMC - US Marine Corps / USCG - US Coast Guard /  
USAAC - US Army Air Corps / USAAF - US Army Air Force / USMM - US Merchant Marines / USANG - US Army National Guard /  
NYARNG - NY Army Reserved National Guard / ANG - Air National Guard / USNG - US National Guard / WAC - Women Army Corp /  
ABN - Army Airborne / USSF - US Space Force / All service prior year 1900, e.g.: Civil War, Revolutionary War-please contact us.

Submit this completed form, payment and proof of service & residency to:

Nassau County Veterans Monument Fund, Inc

PO Box 7911

Hicksville, New York 11802-7911

For additional information please contact Allison Ridam Krivosheiv cell/text: 516-236-3245 / alliridam@gmail.com

The Nassau County Veterans Monument Fund, Inc. is a 501-(c)(3) non- profit organization. It is a private organization and not part of Nassau County government and has no affiliation with any government agency. Federal Tax # upon request.

Please make check payable to : Nassau County Veterans Monument Fund, Inc.

The Walls Of Honor are open to Nassau County Veteran residences living &/or deceased

*A \$100.00 application fee for each Veteran name is all that is required to ensure that future generations know the sacrifice & courage of these brave Americans.*