



Jul-Sep 2019

LI 202 AFA news

Chapter Officers

Fred Di Fabio	President
Steven Latus	Vice President
Ray Donnelly	VP Corporate Development
Kenneth J. Nevor	VP Media and Communications
Cathy Ward	Secretary
Bill Stratemeier	Treasurer

Visit us on the WEB:

LIAFA.ORG

Visit us on FACEBOOK:

Long Island Air Force Association—LIAFA

Email us at: LIAFA202@gmail.com

Newsletter editor: Steven Latus

President's Message

We're still looking for current Long Island Vietnam veterans who wish to receive a Vietnam 50th Anniversary Commemorative Medal at one of our upcoming ceremonies. To date we have held 30 Vietnam 50th 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.

CALENDAR OF LIAFA EVENTS 2019

Vietnam Medal Ceremonies:

Sat, Oct. 19, 2019

Levittown Hall
201 Levittown Parkway
Hicksville
11:30 AM

Annual Pearl Harbor Memorial Ceremony—Dropping of the Roses:

Sat, Dec. 7, 2019

American Airpower Museum
Farmingdale
10:30 AM

§

Other Upcoming Events, Meetings and Programs

Care Package Ship-n-Pack Day

Saturday, October 5, 11 AM–6 PM at Boots on the Ground New York's Veteran Activity Center, 2184 Pond Road, Ronkonkoma. All day event to pack some care packages as well as have a non-perishable food collection and also looking for cold weather items (coats, hats, gloves, etc. for veterans in shelters and programs). To make a donation that will go 100% towards shipping packages, go to 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.

Assemblywoman Judy Griffin's Run for Heroes

Saturday, October 12, 9 AM start time (rain or shine) at Baldwin Harbor Park, Baldwin (go all the way south on Grand Avenue). 5K run/walk. 18 years old or over: advance registration is \$25; same-day registration is \$35 and begins at 8 AM. 17 years old or younger OR college student: \$10. For advance registrations or more information, go to events.elitefeats.com/runforheroes. All proceeds will benefit the American Legion posts in Baldwin, Freeport, Lynbrook, Malverne and Rockville Centre as well as the VFW posts in East Rockaway and Oceanside. If you have any questions, please email raceforheroes5k@gmail.com or call the district office at (516) 561-8216.

Free Seminar on Medicare Basics

Saturday, October 19, 9 AM–10:30 AM at Long Island State Veterans Home, 100 Patriots Road, Stony Brook (on the campus of Stony Brook University Hospital—follow the signs). Continental breakfast will be served. Come to ask questions and to learn about Medicare (Parts A, B and C), Medicare Part D (prescription drug benefit), Medicare Supplemental Insurance (Medigap) and more. Presented by Maryflorencia Brennan of HICAP. For more information, please call (631) 444-8606 or visit lisvh.org.

Veterans Annual Winter Stand Down

Tuesday, November 26, 10 AM to 2 PM at the Freeport Armory located at 63 Babylon Turnpike, Freeport (take Exit M7, Babylon Turnpike West towards Roosevelt from the Meadowbrook Parkway). All services for veterans are FREE of charge at the event. Representatives from federal, state and local agencies will be available. There will be VA benefits counseling, support services, health screenings, legal assistance, clothing, haircuts and nonperishable foods. There will also be a FREE HOLIDAY MEAL. Call (516) 572-6565 or email resposito1@nassaucountyny.gov for more info.

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. You can also visit their website at 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) or Michael Haynes at (631) 824-6386. Their website is 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, Bay Shore, Yaphank, Sag Harbor, Hauppauge and Ronkonkoma. 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, Northport/East Northport, and Mastic-Moriches-Shirley community libraries. For more information, please call (631) 853-8345, send an email to vetspeertopeer@suffolkcountyny.gov or go to 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 Ln. in Levittown at 2 PM on Thursdays; 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; Audrey Lewis at (516) 489-2322, ext. 1260 or email at alewis@mhanc.org. Or check out their website: 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 a lawyer. For information and assistance, please call Director Gary A. Horton at (585) 219-4862 or email him at ghorton@nysda.org.

Donate a Bike to Beacon House to Help a Veteran

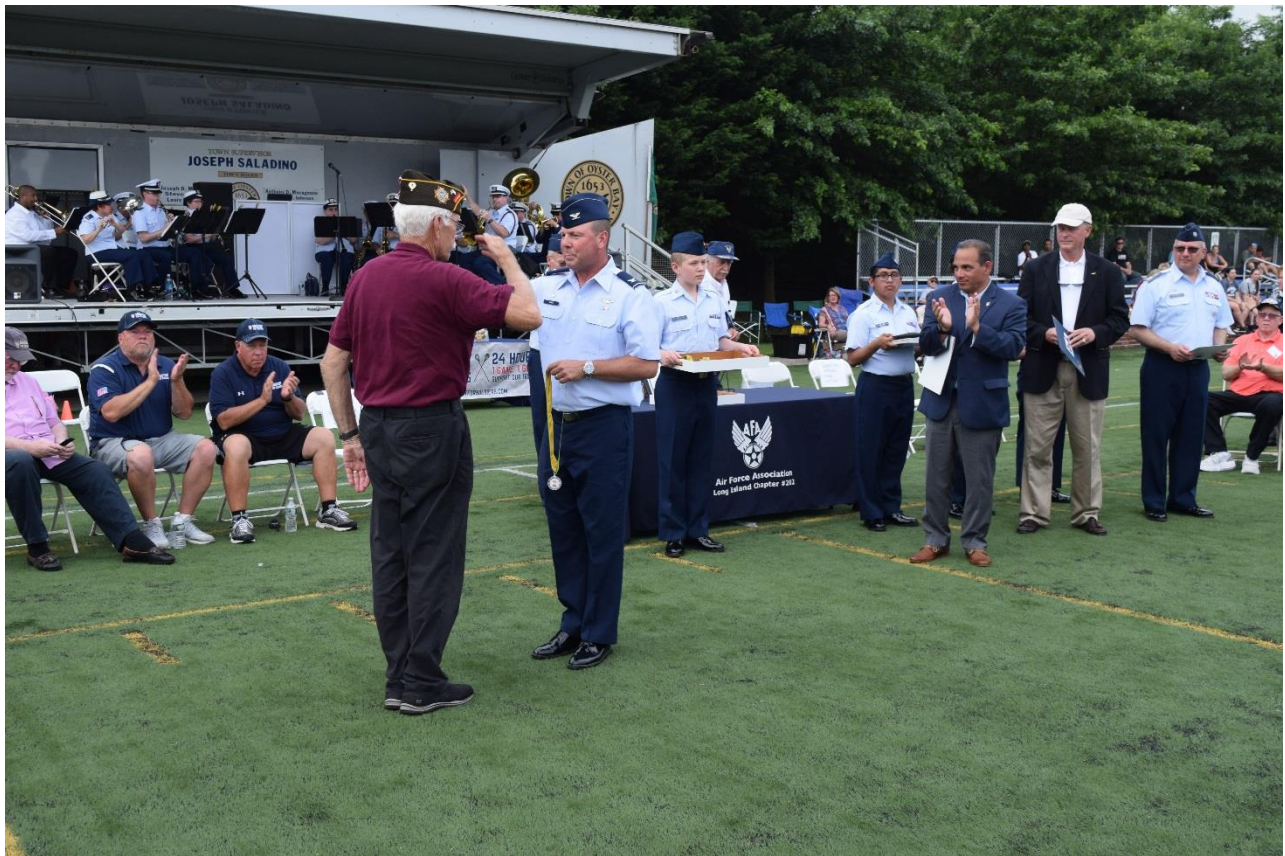
Everyone has a bicycle in their garage they will never use again. Why not donate a perfectly good bicycle to Beacon House to help a veteran in need? Beacon House provides housing in 42 locations throughout Nassau and Suffolk counties. On any given day, over 255 men, women and children from the tri-state 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 or call him at (516) 921-0595. A charitable donation receipt will be provided by Beacon House.



The annual Shootout for Soldiers Long Island took place on Thursday, July 18-19 from 9 AM to 9 AM at the Town of Oyster Bay Field of Dreams, 5619 Old Sunrise Highway in Massapequa. This annual event features 24 one-hour games in a row; a running score is kept between the two teams, Stars and Stripes. Participating teams play in 1 one-hour slot during the event and the event is open to men's and women's teams of all ages. The mission of the Shootout is to use lacrosse as a platform to support American veterans and foster good community relations. Long Island Chapter 202 of the Air Force Association is proud and grateful to be one of three local charity beneficiaries that share in a portion of the net proceeds (after expenses) raised from this event. The fundraising total for this event totaled almost \$175,000. Shootout for Soldiers is a registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.

During the Shootout, on July 18 at 5 PM, LIAFA held its 29th Vietnam 50th Anniversary Commemorative Medal Ceremony on the lacrosse field. Colonel Michael Bank, Jr., Commander of the 106th ANG Rescue Wing, presented the medals to 22 recipients. Among those in attendance were Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor Joseph Saladino, Farmingdale State College Aviation Center Director Colonel (Retired) Michael Canders, PhD, Shootout for Soldiers founder Tyler Steinhardt and Shootout for Soldiers Long Island co-chairmen Harry Jacobs and Mike Nelson. Thanks to the efforts of the Allstate Agents of Long Island, the Shootout received a \$10,000 Helping Hands grant from the Allstate Foundation. As the ceremony finished, the crowd was treated with paratroopers from the All Veteran Group who navigated their way through the air to land at midfield.

We'd like to give a big shout-out to our sponsors, Shootout for Soldiers Long Island and Telephonics Corporation, as well as special thanks to the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Band, American Legion Riders from Greenlawn Post #1244, Patriot Guard Riders, Rolling Thunder Chapter #6 and Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) Chapter #82 Color Guard.





One Tough Marine Remembered

At 2 AM, as the Shootout for Soldiers Lacrosse Tournament continued its 24-hour run, the Suffolk CC team took the field, wearing a decal honoring the life and legacy of Chris Moeller, who was, as his fellow USMC Nam vets said, 'one tough Marine.'

Chris enlisted in the Marine Corps out of high school, seeing action at Tet and The Triangle. After Vietnam, he found his way to Suffolk Community College, where he earned an associate's degree and was a valued teammate and two-year starter on defense for the Suffolk CC Clippers lacrosse team in 1972 and 1973.

Sadly, Chris passed away in 1981 from the effects of Agent Orange not long after his daughter was born—a life cut short just as it was starting. This year's Suffolk CC team, now known as the Sharks, remembered Chris playing with the spirit and heart you'd expect from 'one tough Marine.'



Vietnam Memorial Traveling Wall – “The Wall That Heals”

The Wall That Heals visited Nassau County from Thursday, August 29 through Sunday, September 1 at Eisenhower Park, Field 2 in East Meadow. There was a candlelight vigil on Friday, August 30 at 7 PM; the closing ceremony was on Sunday, September 1 at 2:30 PM. The Wall That Heals is a three-quarter scale replica of the Washington, D.C. Vietnam Memorial Wall; it is 375 feet long and stands 7.5 feet high at its tallest point. The 53-foot trailer that carries the Wall transforms to become a mobile Education Center, which carries additional exhibits about the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., among which is a video display of names and photos of local area service members whose names are on the Wall. The memorial wall is a tribute and remembrance to the 58,318 military service members who gave the ultimate sacrifice for freedom during the Vietnam War.



Vietnam War Veterans Association Color Guard at The Wall That Heals at Eisenhower Park

30th Vietnam 50th Anniversary Commemorative Medal Ceremony

33 Vietnam veterans were presented with Vietnam 50th Anniversary Commemorative Medals and Certificates of Appreciation during LIAFA's 30th Vietnam medal ceremony on September 21 at the Cradle of Aviation Museum in Garden City. All but two were also former Nassau County Police Officers. Distinguished guests included Congressman **Peter King**, Nassau County Executive **Laura Curran**, Nassau County Police Commissioner **Patrick Ryder**, Commander of Joint Task Force Empire Shield **Col. Paul Salas**, Executive Director of the Cradle of Aviation Museum **Jennifer Baxmeyer**, Regional Director for Shootout for Soldiers **Harry Jacobs** and 106th Rescue Wing Chaplain **Major Sung H. Lee**. We'd also like to thank our sponsors Shootout for Soldiers, Telephonics and the Cradle of Aviation Museum as well as the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 82, American Legion Riders Greenlawn Post 1244, Patriot Guard Riders, Vietnam Veteran Riders, Civil Air Patrol Cadet Squadron 8 and the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Band Flotilla 22-7, who always add so much to our ceremonies.



*L to R: Maj. Sung H. Lee, Col. Paul Salas, Patrick Ryder, Laura Curran and Michael O'Leary, medal recipient.
Photo by Walter Geary*



*L to R: Maj. Sung H. Lee, Col. Paul Salas, Patrick Ryder, Laura Curran and Michael Yarocki, medal recipient.
Photo by Walter Geary*

Walk With Frank: A Documentary Film

As you may recall from our last newsletter, 70-year-old Vietnam veteran Frank Romeo, who started off his 750-mile walk across New York State from Buffalo on March 1 to advocate for attention to veteran issues such as PTSD, suicide and homelessness, finished his journey on June 8 in his hometown of Bay Shore.

Accompanying Frank on his journey and documenting his experiences along the way was a crew from Mayers Films, who are working on producing the film. They are seeking to raise money to cover the costs of production, editing, sound mixing, marketing and various other costs involved with making the film. This film will be a part of the new [Walk With Frank Curriculum](#) and has the potential to reach millions of people. By donating to this cause, you will be participating in a movement to help make positive change for our veterans and homeless suffering from mental illness.

For those who may be interested in making a tax-deductible donation towards the making of this film, go to www.indiegogo.com, click on the search icon and type **walk with frank**. Click on the first search result that comes up and it will take you to the page where you can read about the film and make a donation.

The American Legion Celebrates Its 100th Anniversary

The American Legion began its life on March 15, 1919 at the American Officers Club in Paris, France. That first caucus established the first four 15-member committees for Convention, Permanent Organization, Constitution and Name. On March 17 a second caucus was held in Paris for the purpose of establishing a purpose, forming committees and choosing a temporary name. Still another caucus was held in St. Louis on May 8, 1919 under the temporary chairmanship of Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. where a draft preamble and constitution were approved, and a permanent organization name was chosen. The American Legion was federally chartered by Congress on September 16, 1919. Today, there are nearly two million members of the American Legion with more than 12,000 posts in every state, with additional posts in the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, France, Mexico, and the Philippines.

The LEGION Act was signed by President Trump on July 30. It allows every person who has served in the United States military after December 7, 1941 to be eligible to join the American Legion.

§

Did you know . . .

“Air Force One” isn’t a plane. It’s the radio call name for any U.S. Air Force plane carrying the President of the United States. The same as the Marine helicopter carrying POTUS is “Marine One.”

Air Force weathermen are special forces. They go through Army Airborne School at Fort Benning, Georgia, Air Force Basic Survival School, Air Force Water Survival Training, Air Force Underwater Egress Training, Combat Control School at Pope Field, North Carolina, and Special Tactics Training at Hurlbert Field. They work primarily with Air Force and Army Special Operations Forces but can also be attached to Marine MARSOC and Navy SEAL teams.

22% of Air Force casualties in Iraq were Security Forces airmen.

Taps



Charles C. "Charlie" Bock, Jr., died August 22 at Tahoe Forest Hospital in Nevada at the age of 93. Bock served in the Air Force for 30 years as a bomber pilot, fighter pilot, test pilot and a military astronaut designee. He flew 51 combat missions in the Korean War with the 90th Bomb Group and in Vietnam he flew 52 combat missions with the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing. Among his many accomplishments, he served as a B-52 launch pilot for all of the first captive and launch flights of the rocket-powered X-15 during the early 1960s. As a retired colonel and Rockwell test pilot, he commanded the first flight of the B-1 Lancer bomber (AKA The Bone) on December 23, 1974.

Robert J. "Bob" Gilliland, who made the historic SR-71 first flight on December 22, 1964, died on July 4 at the age of 93 at the Rancho Mirage, California retirement facility where he had been living for several years. His wartime experience included flying F-84 Thunderjets against MIGs during the Korean War. After the war, he was selected for the elite Air Force Research and Development team where he flew virtually every aircraft in the USAF inventory including "expanding the envelope" in the Lockheed F-104 Starfighter. Following the maiden flight of the SR-71, he continued as the principal test pilot of the SR-71 development program, personally flying each Blackbird as it became operational. Bob logged more test flight hours at Mach 3 than any other pilot in the world.



THE LONG ISLAND AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION (LIAFA)

a Department of Defense (DOD) Vietnam 50th Anniversary
Commemorative Sponsor

LIAFA proudly presents the Vietnam 50th 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
- 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)