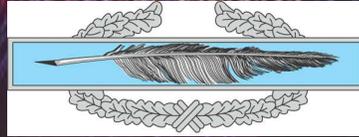


Putnam Veterans SITREP



AN E-MAIL SITUATION REPORT (SITREP) OF THE PUTNAM COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY

JULY 4th ISSUE



The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

Please take the time to read this special document. Every American should read it at least once each year!

Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence between June 11 and June 28, 1776. The Declaration of Independence is the nation's most cherished symbol of liberty. Jefferson's words capture the convictions of the American people's hearts and souls. The political philosophy of the Declaration was not new; its ideals of individual liberty had already been expressed by John Locke and the Continental philosophers. What Jefferson did was to summarize this philosophy in "self-evident truths" and set forth a list of grievances against the King in order to justify before the world the breaking of ties between the colonies and the mother country. The following is the complete text of the Declaration.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time

exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harrass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:

For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies:

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.



Vietnam Veterans Traveling Wall

Coming to Putnam County

September 24-27, 2015

PLEASE HELP FUND THIS EVENT

PURCHASE A JOURNAL AD OR BE A SPONSER



Putnam County Joint Veterans Council (PCJVC) is honored to bring the Traveling Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall to Putnam County Veterans Memorial Park on Gypsy Trail Road in Kent this September. This is a 80% scale model and is the largest of the variety of Walls that are available. This is the third time the PCJVC has brought a replica of the Vietnam Memorial Wall to Putnam County. The Wall will be leaving the park on Gold Star Mothers Day and that makes this special event even more special. We encourage each of you to help us make this a rousing success. There will be several opportunities to donate.

JOURNAL ADS

Full page B/W.....\$100.00

Half Page B/W.....\$60.00

Quarter Page B/W.....\$35.00

Anyone may take a page in the journal

NO ELECTION ADS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

SPECIAL DONORS

GOLD DONORS..\$1,000 or More

Full Page Color Ad first two pages or last two pages or back cover

SILVER DONORS..\$500-\$999

Full Page Color Ad With Silver Star

BRONZE DONORS..\$250-\$499

Full Page Color Ad with Bronze Star

(Tents, chairs, refreshments can be sponsored with these donations)



The Putnam County Joint Veterans Council requires a camera ready digital image for your ad. High quality images produce high quality ads. Please submit ads in a PDF format, either b/w or CMXY (color) at 300 dpi. Maximum files size is 15 MB. Have to be in by August 31, 2015.

Payment for you ad should be made payable to PUTNAM COUNTY JOINT VETERANS COUNCIL (PCJVC) WITH "Traveling Wall" in memo area. E-Mail ad to Art Hanley at Arthur.hanley@putnamcountyny.gov. Mail payments to JVC POB 1513-Carmel, NY 10512

RECEIPT:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Donation: _____ Sold by: _____

VA Expands Disability Benefits for Air Force Personnel Exposed to Contaminated C-123 Aircraft

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) today published a new regulation that expands eligibility for some benefits for a select group of Air Force Veterans and Air Force Reserve personnel who were exposed to the herbicide Agent Orange through regular and repeated contact with contaminated C-123 aircraft that had been used in Vietnam as part of Operation Ranch Hand (ORH).

VA published this regulation as an interim final rule so that it could immediately begin providing benefits to eligible Air Force veterans and Air Force Reserve personnel who submit a disability compensation claim for any of the 14 medical conditions that have been determined by VA to be related to exposure to Agent Orange.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald made the decision to expand benefits following receipt of a 2015 report by the National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine (IOM) on Post-Vietnam Dioxin Exposure in Agent Orange-Contaminated C-123 Aircraft. This VA-requested report found evidence that as many as 1,500 to 2,100 Air Force and Air Force Reserve personnel who served as flight, medical and ground maintenance crew members on ORH C-123 aircraft previously used to spray Agent Orange in Vietnam were exposed to the herbicide.

“Opening up eligibility for this deserving group of Air Force veterans and reservists is the right thing to do,” said Secretary McDonald. “We thank the IOM for its thorough review that provided the supporting evidence needed to ensure we can now fully compensate any former crew member who develops an Agent Orange-related disability.”

Under this new rule, Air Force and Air Force Reserve flight, medical and ground maintenance crewmembers who served on the contaminated ORH C-123s are presumed to have been exposed to herbicides during their service, thus making it easier for them to establish entitlement for some VA

benefits if they develop an Agent Orange-related presumptive condition. In addition, for affected Air Force Reserve crew members, VA will presume that their Agent Orange-related condition had its onset during their Reserve training. This change ensures that these reservists are eligible for VA disability compensation and medical care for any Agent Orange-related presumptive condition, and that their surviving dependents are eligible for dependency and indemnity compensation and



burial benefits.

The interim final rule can be found on the Federal Register: www.federalregister.gov/public-inspection. VA will immediately begin processing claims and issuing benefits to eligible Air Force crew members.

VA encourages reservists who were assigned to flight, ground or medical crew duties at Lockbourne/Rickenbacker Air Force Base in Ohio (906th and 907th Tactical Air Groups or 355th and 356th Tactical Airlift Squadron), Westover Air Force Base in Massachusetts (731st Tactical Air Squadron and 74th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron) or Pittsburgh,

Pennsylvania, International Airport (758th Airlift Squadron) during the period 1969 to 1986, and developed an Agent Orange-related disability to file a disability compensation claim online through the joint VA-Department of Defense web portal, eBenefits

VA also has identified several active duty locations where ORH C-123 aircraft may have been used following their service in Vietnam. Active duty personnel who served in a regular USAF unit location where a contaminated C-123 was assigned and who had regular and repeated contact with the aircraft through flight, ground or medical duties during the period 1969 to 1986, and who develop an Agent Orange-related disability, also are encouraged to apply for benefits.

For more information on applying for these benefits, including the affected units, Air Force Specialty Codes and dates of service for affected crew members, and a listing of Agent Orange-related conditions, visit

In order to avoid unnecessary delay of benefits, claimants should annotate “(C-123)” after each Agent Orange related disability in *Part II, Block 14* of [VA Form 21-526](#) or *Section I, Block 11* of VA Form [VA Form 21-526EZ](#) when filing on eBenefits. Example: Diabetes (C-123). If claimants have any of the following documents, they should be attached to their application:

Discharge, separation papers, (DD214 or equivalent)
USAF Form 2096 (unit where assigned at the time of the training action)
USAF Form 5 (aircraft flight duties)
USAF Form 781 (aircraft

maintenance duties) Dependency records (marriage & children's birth certificates)

Medical evidence (doctor & hospital reports)

VA will process all claims related to C-123 exposure at the St. Paul, Minnesota, VA Regional Office. Claims not filed through eBenefits should be mailed to the following address (or faxed to 608-373-6694):

Department of Veterans Affairs
Claims Intake Center
Attention: C123 Claims
PO Box 5088
Janesville, WI 53547-5088

Individuals with specific benefit questions related to herbicide exposure on C-123s may call VA's special C-123 Hotline at 1-800-749-8387 (available 8 a.m. – 9 p.m. EST) or e-mail VSCC123.VAVBASPL@va.gov.

LET FREEDOM RING: ECHOES OF HISTORY

"I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty; it ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forever more."

-President John Adams

There are few quotes that are more apt in predicting the future of July 4th Celebrations than that of our second President. The quote always moves me.

The Revolutionary War was won by soldiers, sailors and Marines. This may seem like an obvious statement of fact. Now viewing it from a Veterans Service Agency the war was won by American citizens who had joined the military and now were in need of compensation for services performed. These Veterans were in desperate need of a Veterans Service Agency to be their clarion voice for assistance. In 1818 new principle of Veterans benefits was introduced with the Service Pension Law.

Here is how the pensions went:

1. Invalid pensioners who were disabled prior to 8/26/1776 (and since 4/19/1775). The Act of 1782 extending the provisions found that

there were 1500 (invalid) pensioners on the rolls. 2. Half-pay for life went to officers, and widows of those officers.

This began in 1780; then in 1788 Congress granted seven years half-pay to officers who served at the end of the war.

3. 2,480 officers received Commutation Certificates, however, delayed payments existed.



A photograph of Samuel Downing who was thought to be the last Revolutionary War veteran at the time of his death in 1867

DEATH OF WIDOW OF VETERAN OF 1776

RUTLAND, Vt., Nov. 11.—Mrs. Esther Sumner Damon, said to be the last surviving widow of a soldier of the Revolutionary war, died at her home in Plymouth Union at the age of 93 years. She was married in 1835 when she was 21 years old, to Noah Damon, who was then 75 years of age. Damon served in the Revolutionary war, having enlisted in 1775.

Obituary for Esther (Sumner) Damon, Duluth News-Tribune (Duluth, Minnesota), 12 November 1906, page 5

4. The Law of 1818 provided that every indigent person who had served to the war's close, or for nine months or longer, would receive a pensions. When the law was rewritten in 1820, many names were removed from the pension rolls because they were not indigent.

5. In 1832 most of the benefits were stripped. According to historian John P Resch "the importance of this pension act is

that it was a precedent for later Veterans programs. The act nearly shattered 40 years of congressional resistance against awarding lifetime pensions for completing military service"

The words of Mr. Resch are hauntingly familiar today. We can hear the echoes of our comrades of over 200 years ago asking their government for assistance as we do daily battle with both the VA and the congress for proper compensation for jobs well done that insured and preserved our freedom. Let's take pause to reflect on the Declaration of Independence and the sage words of President Adams. This experiment in democracy is still the best example of freedom the world has ever known.

Happy Independence Day!

Karl



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KARL ROHDE, DIRECTOR
ART HANLEY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Inaugural Armed Forces Appreciation Festival July 11, 2015

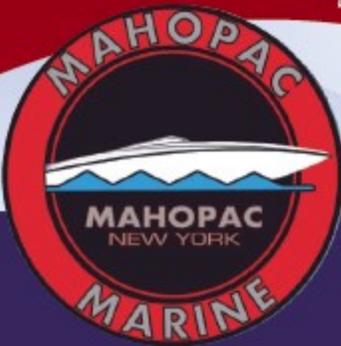


**A Community Event To Benefit The Men And
Women Who've Served Our Great Country
Both Past And Present.**

Mahopac Marine, with support from the Putnam County Sheriff's Dept Marine Unit and the Putnam County PBA, is holding the Innagural Armed Forces Appreciation Festival on beautiful Lake Mahopac. It will include BBQ Picnic with free food for all military personnel and veterans, various contests and a raffle with prizes. The NYS Parks & Rec "Wear-It" boat will be giving out free ice cream to the first 200 children they find wearing their life jackets! And Mahopac Marina will have a snack barge selling food and drinks with 100% of the proceeds donated to the Disabled American Veterans. Donations will accepted throughout the day and 100% of the funds passed along.

THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE DAY WILL BE
A boat RAFT-OFF STARTING IN THE MAHOPAC MARINA COVE around 12 PM
Sheriff Donald Smith will judge the boats to determine the winner of most patriotic themed vessel decorated with red white and blue. A trophy will be awarded to the winner!

STAY TUNED and download the Mahopac Marina App for your phone to get the most up to date info. Additional details to follow!



845.628.6550
www.mahopacmarina.com



ON THE ROAD TO- BOONVILLE!

No, it's not a new Bob Hope/Bing Crosby movie, although there were plenty of laughs along the way. It was a trip sponsored by the Putnam County Veterans Service Agency and the PFC Joseph Dwyer Peer to Peer Program of Putnam to a Vietnam Veterans Get Together. In 1991 Boonville VFW Post 5538 hosted their first of what was to be twenty-five annual Vietnam Veterans Get Together events. Last year the Post announced that this would be the final time they would host the event, as the Vietnam Veterans who did all of the work putting it on, were getting old and tired. Hearing this, Putnam County VSA Director Karl Rohde decided that it would be a good idea to add a road trip to our Peer To Peer events calendar. Many Vietnam Veterans wanted to join us on the trip, but due to illnesses, graduations, and other conflicts we ended up with room on the bus. We opened it to other Veterans and were joined by one Vietnam era Veteran, one Somalia Veteran and one peace time Veteran. The camaraderie on the bus and at the event was off the



Photo op at a rest stop



4 Vietnam Veterans on road trip



chart. At rest stops along the way we were thanked for our service by fellow travelers and while on the highway cars and motorcycles would honk as they passed, giving us a thumbs up.

The highlight of the event was the display of the Traveling Wall. The VFW, VVA and other organizations working hand in hand transformed a large dirt parking lot into a park like setting to host the Wall. Sod was laid out, pathways leveled, park benches put in place, and flag poles erected.

For the Vietnam Veterans, having our peers with us as we visited those whom we lost was comforting. Having our fellow Veterans along with us, and the support they offered, also made an impact.

The day was long, beginning at 6:30 AM, ending at 8:00 PM with over eight hours on the road but every one of us enjoyed ourselves and happy that we made the trip.



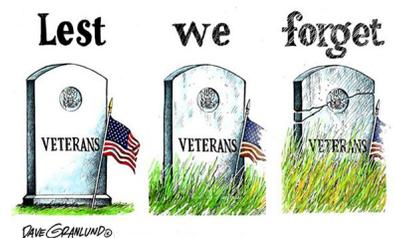
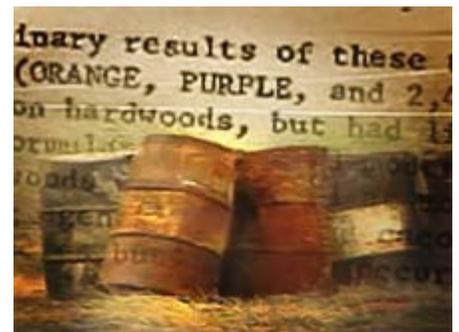
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THE CONTEST

Be the first to e-Mail the answer to poveterans@putnamcountyny.gov to win your very own P-38!

Why is Agent Orange called Agent Orange?
There will be 2 winners each time: County Employees and non-County
GOOD LUCK!

Last Issues answer was June 14 is Flag Day what other important event was on that day? The US Army's Birthday!



SAVE SPANLUND

Please try to attend: Putnam County Veterans Service Agency in conjunction with PFC Dwyer Peer to Peer Program will have an information table at this open house. Stop by and say hello!



Summer of Service event seeks to deepen partnerships in community

MONTROSE, N.Y. (June 23, 2015) – Creating and building partnerships to grow the number of people serving Veterans in the VA nationwide is fueling an [**Open House event July 1 at the VA Hudson Valley Health Care System.**](#)

[**Scheduled from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.,**](#) Wednesday, July 1, the VA Hudson Valley Open House will include opportunities to gather information from the VA, Veteran Service Organization as well as county and state Veteran officers. The event will take place at the [**Castle Point campus inside the multipurpose room, 41 Castle Point Road, Wappingers Falls, NY.**](#) Everyone is invited to attend. A shuttle will ferry attendees from the lower parking lot to the event location.

Scheduled from VA Hudson Valley: Caregiver Program managers, County and State Veteran Service Officers; Homelessness, Human Resources, MyHealthVet, nutrition and food services, OEF/OIF/OND Program, Patient Advocates, Video Telehealth, and Women's Veteran Program. Also scheduled to appear are members of the Disabled American Veterans; the Marine Corps League; and others. Dozens of handouts will also be available.

Several displays will also showcase various VA Hudson Valley capabilities.

VA Hudson Valley Health Care System Leadership will also be available for conversations and dialogue about the Summer of Service and volunteering at the VA. A shuttle will be available to take patrons from the parking lot to the multipurpose room during the hours of the Open House.

VA facilities across the nation will conduct similar open houses throughout the week. "We have made progress over the past year addressing the challenges we face in delivering care and benefits to millions of veterans and their families," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Bob McDonald. "While there is more work to do to honor our commitment to veterans, we also recognize that VA cannot do it alone. We are asking Americans everywhere to join the Summer of Service and help us give back to those who have given so much to our nation."

VA will build upon the ongoing work of its more than 350,000 employees and 76,000 volunteers around the nation – and the 426 volunteers at VA Hudson Valley. While the central focus of the campaign will be increasing volunteerism and partnerships, it will also provide individuals and communities an opportunity to support other important priorities. Despite a hiring effort that brought more than 11,000 net-new employees onboard over the past year, VA still needs more health care providers, claims specialists, medical support assistants, and cemetery directors to continue to expand needed services. VA's partners can help by getting the word out this summer.

In the coming weeks, VA Hudson Valley will also be working closely with Congressional partners, Veterans Service Organizations, mayors and local communities, private sector and non-profit organizations, and VA employees to identify new and innovative ways to support VA's commitment to care for those who "have borne the battle" and their families.

For more information, call the VA Hudson Valley Public Affairs Office at (914) 737-4400 ext. 2255.