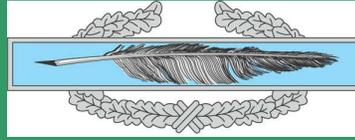


Putnam Veterans Newsletter



An E-Mail Newsletter of the Putnam County Veterans Service Agency

Van Donated to Veterans Service Agency

The final wishes of a grateful World War II veteran came to pass today when his 2007 Honda Odyssey was donated to the Putnam County Veterans Service Agency. Thomas Hearn, the son of former Somers resident John W. "Jack" Hearn, flew in from his Maryland home to officially turn over the keys of his father's van to Karl Rohde, director of the county's Veterans Service Agency. County Executive MaryEllen Odell was also present for the event.

Odell, who has accompanied several WWII veterans on Honor Flights to Washington, DC, said this was just another example of very special individuals who were part of what has become known as the Greatest Generation.

"I have encountered this kind of thoughtfulness from so many of our World War II veterans," Odell said. "They are such wonderful examples for the rest of us, always looking to see how they can help another veteran. It is indeed an honor for us to accept Jack Hearn's gracious donation."

Why did Jack Hearn choose to donate his vehicle to Putnam County?

"My father lived in Heritage Hills in Somers for 14 years before he relocated to Castle Point two years ago. He was most grateful for all the help he received from Brennan Mahoney of

the New York State Department of Veterans Affairs and wanted to make sure that his van would be donated to an organization that could help veterans. Mr. Mahoney suggested I consider donating the van so that it could be used by Putnam County's Department of Veterans Affairs," said Thomas.

Also, while residing in Somers, Jack became close friends with Carmel residents Christine Venezia, her mother, Dee Seftner and Steven Pirolo, all of whom, Thomas said, enriched his father's life.

"Donating the van to Putnam County veterans is a way to recognize their friendship and support," Thomas said.

Jack was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, better known as Lou Gerhig's disease, and purchased the van which had been adapted to transport a passenger confined to a wheelchair in 2011. Jack made clear to his son that he wanted the van to be donated specifically for use by wheelchair bound veterans like himself. Karl Rohde, Putnam's director of Veterans Service Agency, was thrilled to learn of Jack's decision.

"We are so grateful to Jack and Thomas Hearn for this very thoughtful gesture. While we already have a bus that can easily carry about 12 veterans, it will be nice to have a smaller, more economical vehicle for those time we only need to transport one or two wheelchair-bound veterans," Rohde said.

The timing of the donation is particularly relevant for the Veterans Service



World War II Veteran John "Jack" Hearn in his wheelchair alongside his 2007 Honda Odyssey.

Agency as they are presently expanding their transportation services to make it easier for veterans to get to their medical appointments at Castle Point and Montrose VA facilities.

"Actually, we are looking for veterans to volunteer as drivers for us and assist us in getting our veterans to and from their doctor appointments at the VA," said Rohde. "Anyone interested can contact our office at (845) 808-1620 or contact County Executive Odell at (845) 808-1001," he said.

Once the Heritage Hills condo where his father lived was sold, donating the van became a priority for Thomas.

"So now I'm wrapping up the unfinished business of seeing to it that dad's van gets donated to the Putnam County Veterans Service Agency," he said.

According to his obituary, Jack Hearn was born on February 17, 1927 and died on October 14, 2014. As a young man, Jack served on the US Navy destroyer USS Otter from July 11, 1945 to Aug 11, 1946. In 1949, he married Theresa Dickson, who predeceased him in 1996. Following her death, Jack moved from White Plains where the couple raised their seven children and relocated to Heritage Hills. Jack is survived by his children, John Jr., Mary Ann, Andrew, Katherine, Thomas, Theresa, Margaret and seven grandchildren.

Marty Collins



County Executive MaryEllen Odell watches as Thomas Hearn presents Veterans Service Agency Director Karl Rohde with the keys to his father's Honda Odyssey

1st Battalion, 69th Infantry (Mechanized), NY Army National Guard Who Is The Fighting 69th?

When the Great Hunger brought the Irish to the United States in great numbers they arrived during an era of anti-immigrant, anti-Catholic, anti-Irish, anti-Papist discrimination and a general pro-British stance as exemplified by the populist Know-Nothing Party. With the outbreak of hostilities following Fort Sumter the Irish joined the Armies of both sides in large numbers and served with great distinction, heroism and honor; the 69th NY suffered the sixth highest casualties of the more than 2000 Regiments serving the North. As the battlefield exploits and colorful demeanor of these Sons of Erin became reported feelings started to sway toward a less hostile attitude permitting the process of assimilation to accelerate. These men were truly trailblazers for their exploits permitted the Irish to join the ranks as proud citizens of their adopted land as equal partners and paved the way for the full measure of citizenship we all enjoy today.



69th Infantry Piper in Afghanistan

That tradition of service to the Nation continued as the 69th, the sole surviving Unit of the Irish Brigade, volunteered to a man answering the call for Volunteers for

the Spanish-American War. In 1916, the Regiment was posted on the Mexican Border during the punitive expedition against Pancho Villa.

The entrance of America into WWI found the 69th redesignated the 165th Infantry and selected to be part of Gen. Douglas MacArthur's newly formed elite shock Division - the 42nd (Rainbow). The "Fighting 69th" once again served with great distinction and set a record for combat service that was unequaled. The tradition continued as the Regiment served from 1940-1945 in the Pacific invading Makin, Saipan and Okinawa adding another chapter to the 69th role of honor. That esprit de corps, tradition and history of service continues to this day as the "Fighting 69th" continues to serve the Nation and the State as the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry (Mechanized), NY Army National Guard.

(Honor a service member by dedicating a fundraising card in honor of someone who served. § Happy St. Patrick's Day! See Page 6.)

VETERANS TRANSPORTATION

Two years ago the Putnam County Veterans Service Agency Bus began transporting Veterans who reside in Putnam County to medical appointments at VA and private medical facilities. The bus is able to transport both ambulatory and wheelchair bound passengers. The use of this free service by Veterans has grown beyond all expectations. If you are a Veteran, have a medical appointment and are in need of transportation, call the Transportation Department at (845) 878-RIDE (7433) to make a reservation for a ride. The Transportation phones are manned Monday thru Friday 4:15 a.m. to 9:15 p.m. and Saturday 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. It is important to keep the following in mind: This is service is only for Putnam County Veterans and does not extend to family members.

If you are going to an appoint-

ment at a private medical facility you will need to provide proof of your Veteran status to the Transportation Department, if you have not already registered with them.

If you have an appointment at the VA Clinic in Carmel, or the Montrose or Castle Point VA Hospitals, you will be transported there directly. If you have an appointment at either the Bronx or Manhattan VA Hospitals, you will be transported to and from the Castle Point VA Hospital to connect with the VA shuttle service.

This is not a taxi service. Reservations must be made in advance. You must be ready to leave at the time of your scheduled pick-up. Do not expect the driver and vehicle to wait more than a couple of minutes.



If you are scheduled for a medical procedure that requires a signature from a home caregiver before you can leave the facility, the service will not be able to provide transportation home.

The men and women who schedule your transportation and drive the vehicle will do everything in their power to accommodate your needs and make your ride a wonderful experience. Please remember that they are not your servants and that they should be treated with respect.

Art





McDonald's predecessor. Here is a excerpt from the VA Inspector General's Report :

The beat goes on, beat goes on Drums keep pounding a rhythm to the brain.

Who remembers the song "Beat Goes On"? It was written by Sonny Bono and sung by Sonny and Cher. The reprise was:

The beat goes on, beat goes on Drums keep pounding a rhythm to the brain.

This could be the theme song of the VA. Corruption-Cover-up-Corruption –Cover-up. The focus on the Veterans and the needs of the Veteran are sublimated and the acts of the people who run the VA take over. The problem with Secretary McDonald is that he feels he is more important then the average Veteran. He could not even admit a lie, he claims in his official statement :

"While I was in Los Angeles engaging a homeless man to determine his Veteran status, I asked the man where he had served in the military. He responded that he had served in Special Forces. In an attempt to connect with that Veteran to make him feel comfortable, I incorrectly stated that I, too, had been in Special Forces. That was wrong. I have no excuse. I have great respect for those who have served our nation in Special Forces. They, and all Veterans, deserve a Department of Veterans Affairs that provides them the care and benefits they have earned. We at VA are working to restore trust. Again, I apologize to those who may have been offended by my misstatement. We remain very focused on continuing our progress to better serve Veterans."

It was a "misstatement" not a lie and it was actually the homeless Veteran's fault because apparently the only way to connect with a homeless Veteran is to lie to them. I was unaware of that. This is worse then Brian Williams' stolen valor because the man stealing this valor is a Veteran and should know better. The man is in charge of the VA. With the problems the VA has with its public image this is not something they needed.

The beat goes on, beat goes on Drums keep pounding a rhythm to the brain.

This was not Sec. McDonald's first foray into lying to Veterans since he took office. The "wait list fraud" was something he inherited. This story broke in the Phoenix Veterans Health Care System. It brought down

1,700 veterans who were waiting for a primary care appointment but were not on the [electronic waiting list]. Until that happens, the reported wait time for these veterans has not started. Most importantly, these veterans were and continue to be at risk of being forgotten or lost in Phoenix HCS's convoluted scheduling process. As a result, these veterans may never obtain a requested or required clinical appointment.



It soon spread like wildfire across the VA system nation wide. Well McDonald reported in Mid February that 900 people had been fired and that 60 of them were involved in the "Wait List Fraud" Early reports scoff at this claim. The Disabled American Veterans Service Organization reported:

"Paperwork provided by the House Committee on Veterans Affairs shows VA proposed disciplinary action for only 75 people linked to the scandal. Of those, only 8 were fired. If you include those allowed to retire or resign, then the number increases to 16 terminated VA employees. If true, this means mean McDonald inflated the numbers by almost 400%"

The beat goes on, beat goes on Drums keep pounding a rhythm to the brain.

The VA has to get its act together. Since becoming a Cabinet level part of the government in 1989 all but one Secretary (including acting) were officers. No offense to my officer friends but perhaps it is time for a senior non-commissioned officer or warrant officer to come in and straighten things out. The commissioned officers have well...for those who served will understand, the VA is FUBAR.

It should be pointed out that while there are problems system wide we have gone relatively unscathed with these major problems in the Hudson Valley VA System that includes Montrose Hospital, Castle Point Hospital and 8 Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC). We have a great working relationship

with our Director and regular meeting to air our problems and seek solutions. This Veterans Advisory Committee (VAC) is comprised of VA representatives, Directors of the various county service agency's in the area and members of various Veterans Service Organizations. We try to meet monthly at rotating locations between the two campuses. We work hard to keep our lines of communication open for the good of the Veteran.

Karl



PUTNAM COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY

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CARMEL, NY 10512
PHONE (845)808-1620 FAX (845)808-1940
KARL ROHDE, DIRECTOR
ART HANLEY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR**

COMBAT STRESS VS. PTSD: HOW TO TELL THE DIFFERENCE

This blog post is from Navy Medicine Live, written by Cmdr. Carrie Kennedy, a neuropsychologist and aerospace experimental psychologist with Marine Corps Embassy Security Group. Kennedy describes the similarities and differences of combat stress and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) to help you prevent or effectively manage both. It seems like the terms combat stress and PTSD are everywhere these days; it's hard to go a few days without seeing a news story about veterans and these issues. But what are these concepts? Do they mean the same thing? And, perhaps most importantly, what can be done?

Combat stress and PTSD are very different. However, because they share certain symptoms, you may not easily recognize that they're different. It requires some understanding to separate the two. Unfortunately, sometimes they look similar, which can make understanding them somewhat complicated.

By definition, combat stress is an expected and predictable reaction to combat experiences. After being in a combat zone where you're under constant physiological stress (poor diet, extreme temperatures, little opportunity for good personal hygiene, etc.) and psychological stress (concerns about improvised explosive devices, snipers or the death of fellow service members), a number of responses is expected. These responses often show up as hyperstartle (exaggerated response when something surprises you — often a loud noise), hypervigilance (always being on guard or super-alert), nightmares, irritability, sleep problems, etc. While they sound negative, some combat reactions are actually considered adaptive, notably hyperstartle and hypervigilance. PTSD, on the other hand, refers to a psychological disorder which impairs functioning. It's considered very serious whereas combat stress is considered to be a normal reaction to traumatic circumstances. To receive a PTSD diagnosis, specific symptoms have to be present following a traumatic event in which death, serious injury or sexual violation occurred or was a real possibility. These include re-experiencing symptoms (recurrent dreams, flashbacks or

intrusive images), avoidance symptoms (avoiding conversations about the event or people associated with the event, memory loss, etc.) as well as sleep disturbance, irritability/anger problems, concentration difficulties and hypervigilance.

Although there's some overlap between combat stress responses and PTSD symptoms, they're not addressed in the same way. Keep in mind that combat stress isn't considered a medical problem or something that requires treatment. For many war veterans, combat stress wears off after being back in the states for a few weeks to months. However, if service members don't do



Sgt. Trevor Scott
1-506th Infantry
101st Airborne Division
United States Army

certain things, combat stress can persist or morph into something else, like PTSD, depression or alcohol abuse. Knowing what to expect may prevent that from happening. Because of destigmatization programs and policies, service members are more likely to question whether or not their combat stress reactions should worry them. Military mental health providers and psychiatric technicians can provide one or two sessions of psychoeducation discussing what combat stress is and what the usual reactions are, assist in processing difficult experiences, and teach how to proactively address combat stress (maintain contact with other veterans, have a plan for anniversaries of friends' deaths, keep alcohol use low, etc.). For those with normal reactions, this is often all it takes to make a smooth transition from the combat zone.

However, the real key to effective management of combat stress and long term

adjustment is something that veterans have known through the ages — namely — veterans have to be in regular contact with other veterans. Talking about difficult experiences with members of the same unit is the best way to process combat experiences, stay grounded, get rid of lingering doubts and concerns and prevent the development of abnormal problems. This is done frequently while in the combat zone and should continue when you return home. Other good people to talk to are veterans of the same war even though they may have served in a different unit or branch of service as well as veterans of any other war. While warfare changes somewhat over time, the basic stressors are enduring. American Legions, Veterans of Foreign Wars and other veteran-centric groups are significant assets in effectively dealing with combat stress. What about PTSD? While treatment for PTSD will involve some of the same concepts as those necessary to effectively manage combat stress,

the primary interventions need to be done with a mental health provider. The good news is that there's very effective treatment available — Cognitive Processing Therapy and Exposure Therapy are provided by just about every mental health department in military and Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals and clinics. These treatments help with symptom resolution and lifelong strategies for the effective management of disturbing wartime experiences, decreasing the likelihood of symptom recurrence.

In short, combat stress is a reaction which through some basic self-implemented strategies, in addition to the passage of time, wears off. Terrible experiences and memories will always be troubling to think about. — the goal is not to make these kinds of experiences easy. However, through observation of anniversaries, life-long interactions with members of the unit and other veterans, you can move into different phases of your life without too much difficulty. PTSD is a higher hurdle, but not one you can't overcome. If you're experiencing PTSD symptoms, seek help. New, evidence-based treatments effectively address PTSD, even for veterans of prior wars.

By the Defense Centers of Excellence For Psychological Health & Traumatic Brain Injury
Bytimpearce
– February 18, 2015
Posted in: Behavioral Health, Wounded Warriors

Military Family Appreciation Day



**FREE showing of "Home"
with FREE popcorn and FREE drink!
Saturday, March 28, 2015 at 10:00 AM
The Value Village Empire Cinema
1620 Route 22 Brewster, NY**



**Military or Veteran ID required day of event; reservations required:
Email: jmazzucco@mhaputnam.org Phone: 845-278-7600 ext. 214**



Sponsored by The PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Vet2Vet Program of Putnam County

The first person to call the Veterans office to identify the creator of comic *Half Hitch* will win a P-38.
Hint: after a stint in the Navy he created one of America's most beloved comic characters.



Putnam County is proud to be a "Commemorative Partner" for the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War. The commemoration is from 2015-2017. We will be honoring Vietnam Veterans this year with two events. The first event will be taking 12 Vietnam Veterans to the 25th Annual Vietnam Veterans Get Together June 20th. From their website:

The annual Vietnam Veterans' Get Together at the Boonville, NY, VFW is one of the largest one-day gatherings of Vietnam veterans in the Northeast. Veterans and their families and friends assemble for an afternoon of camaraderie and fellowship that is truly emotional. Memories are shared, new friendships are formed and the sacrifices made are remembered. The day brings many of us back to the time when we served our country with passion and honor and commitment—a time we do not want to forget and that will stay with us to our last breath. And it is the main reason we go to the effort we do to put on the Get Together.



The Putnam County Veterans Service Agency will transport up to 12 Vietnam Veterans to Boonville.

Others are welcomed to follow us in their personal vehicles. Please contact this office if you wish to go. This will be a first come first served deal. This is a wonderful event no speeches just Veterans being Veterans.

The second event will be our bringing the Traveling Wall to Putnam County this September. There will be more about this soon. We are raising funds. This is a joint effort between the Veterans Service Agency and the Joint Veterans Council. Part of the funding came from the Row of Honor Flag donations. Please fill out the fundraising card below to honor a Veterans and send it with your donation to the Veterans Service Agency and we will hang it on our **WALL OF HONOR**.



PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- I. To thank and honor veterans of the Vietnam War, including personnel who were held as prisoners of war or listed as missing in action, for their service and sacrifice on behalf of the United States and to thank and honor the families of these veterans.
- II. To highlight the service of the armed forces during the Vietnam War and the contributions of federal agencies and governmental and non-governmental organizations that served with, or in support of, the armed forces.
- III. To pay tribute to the contributions made on the home front by the people of the United States during the Vietnam War.
- IV. To highlight the advances in technology, science and medicine related to military research conducted during the Vietnam War.
- V. To recognize the contributions and sacrifices made by the allies of the United States during the Vietnam War.

THE VIETNAM TRAVELING WALL 3.0

PLEASE CUT THIS OUT FOR THE WALL DEDICATE IT TO SOMEONE AND SEND IT OVER TO THE PUTNAM COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY WITH A DONATION AND WE WILL PUT IT ON OUR WALL BY IN THE OFFICE!



THE TRAVELING WALL COMING TO PUTNAM SEPTEMBER 24-27, 2015





THANKS AND A SALUTE TO SENATOR SERINO

On February 17, 2015 we were honored to have State Senator Sue Serino paid a visit to our office. The Senator and her staff sat with us at the agency office to discuss the needs of Veterans in Putnam County. After that discussion we took her on a tour of the Veteran Residence. The Senator was very impressed with our residence and with the residents.

They offered her a personal tour of the building including their rooms.

Senator Serino remarked several time about how proud they were of the residence. We would like to thank Senator Serino for taking the time to understand the needs of Putnam's Veterans.



"I cannot thank the VA's Director, Karl Rohde, and Deputy Director, Arthur Hanley, more for the great work they're doing on behalf of Putnam County's veterans."

Lest we forget



DAVE SAMLUND



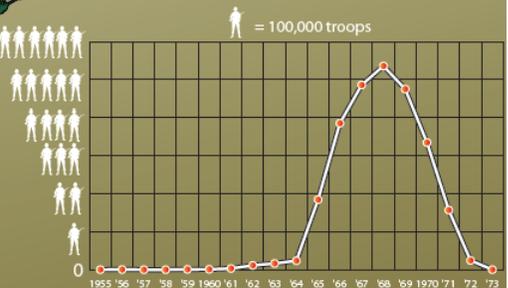
The average U.S. infantryman in Vietnam saw about **240 days of combat in one year**, thanks to the mobility of the helicopter. In comparison, the average infantry in the South Pacific during World War II saw only 40 days of combat in four years.

U.S. forces sent to Vietnam were the **highest educated** of all previously deployed armies. **79% had at least a high school degree** prior to entering military service.



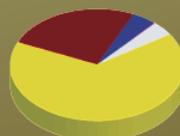
STATISTICS OF THE VIETNAM WAR

U.S. Troop Strength by Year End (1955 - 1973)



U.S. ARMED FORCES TOLL OF WAR (1955-1975)

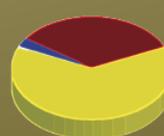
KILLED



As of 2013, the total number of U.S. armed forces killed in Vietnam in the two decades of involvement was 58,253.

Of these, there were:
38,224 Army,
14,844 Marines,
2,586 Air Force,
2,586 Navy,
26 Merchant Marines
7 Coast Guard.

WOUNDED



The total number of U.S. armed forces non-mortally wounded in Vietnam was 153,363.

Of these, there were:
96,802 Army,
51,392 Marines,
931 Air Force,
4,178 Navy,
60 Coast Guard.

658 U.S. prisoners of war returned home alive from Southeast Asia.

As of 2014, 1,638 are still unaccounted for.

PEAK STRENGTH OF ALLIED ARMED FORCES DURING VIETNAM WAR⁶⁸

Australia	7,672
New Zealand	552
Philippines	2,061
Rep. of Korea	50,003
South Vietnam	1,048,000
Thailand	11,586
United States	543,482

The VA logo consists of the letters 'VA' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, centered within a dark blue square. The background of the entire top section of the flyer is a light blue pattern of small white stars.

VA Information Fair

Apr. 18, 2015 | 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. | 1875 Route 6 | Carmel, NY 10512

VA Hudson Valley Health Care System will provide the following services at its Carmel Community Based Outpatient Clinic:

- Registration for your VA Health Care
- Take pictures for the VHIC I.D Card for registered Veterans
- Blood pressure checks
- Demonstrations will be given on the Clinical Video Telehealth (CVT) program.

On hand from VA Hudson Valley providing information will be:

- Women Veterans Program
- My Health Vet
- Home Telehealth
- Caregiver Program
- TeleMOVE Program
- Returning Combat Veteran Service

In addition, Putnam County Clerk will be present in order for Veterans to obtain their Putnam County FAVOR Card, as well as the Putnam County Veterans' Service Agency and New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs, providing information on the additional services available by the county for Veterans and their families.

Please bring a copy of your DD-214.

For more information, call Nicole Embry at (914) 737-4400, Ext. 3106.



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in the 21st Century

www.hudsonvalley.va.gov

