

PUTNAM VETERAN'S REGISTER

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

Celebrate

Flag Day

June 14, 2012



year this most patriotic organization sponsors a wonderful program honoring our beloved American Flag.

Some may wonder why we should take the time to honor the American Flag. While the answer to that may seem self evident the sad reality is that it is not self evident. Our flag is under attack from many directions. Supreme Court

Justices who feel it is free speech to burn the American Flag. Other judges who find that public school students cannot be required to stand when reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. College basketball players who turn their back to the Flag when the National Anthem is being sung. There are also simpler attacks like people who do not remove their hats when the Pledge is being recited or do not hold their hands over their hearts when the National Anthem is being sung. So I am going to attempt to explain why it is important to honor the American Flag.

The story of prisoner of war Mike Christian has been related by Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Leo K. Thorsness and Senator John McCain both former POWS during the Vietnam War. While the memories of the event vary slightly between the two men the essence is identical.

Mike Christian was being held in the infamous Hanoi Hilton. He found materials to sew and dye an American Flag. He then sewed it on the inside of his prison uniform. Every afternoon when they were served their meal of thin

It is my hope that all of the readers of this newsletter can take time out of their busy schedule so that they can attend the Brewster Elks Flag Day Ceremony. Each

soup Mike would take of his shirt, hang it on the wall the men would recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Senator McCain relates that this was a special moment each day. One day during an inspection the North Vietnamese guards discovered that flag on the inside of his prison jacket. He was taken out and beaten for hours. After he was thrown back into the cell the others tried to clean him up. Later that evening they all noticed Mike under the naked light bulb with his bamboo needle in hand, his eyes almost swollen shut from the beating crafting another American Flag. The conclusion will be a direct quote from a speech Senator McCain made in 1988:

He was not making the flag because it made Mike Christian feel better. He was making that flag because he knew how important it was to us to be able to pledge allegiance to our flag and our country.

So the next time you say the Pledge of Allegiance, you must never forget the sacrifice and courage that thousands of Americans have made to build our nation and promote freedom around the world. You must remember our duty, our honor, and our country.

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

No other words are needed!

*Join the Brewster Elks for
FLAG DAY*

June 14, 2012 6 PM

Refreshments after the ceremony

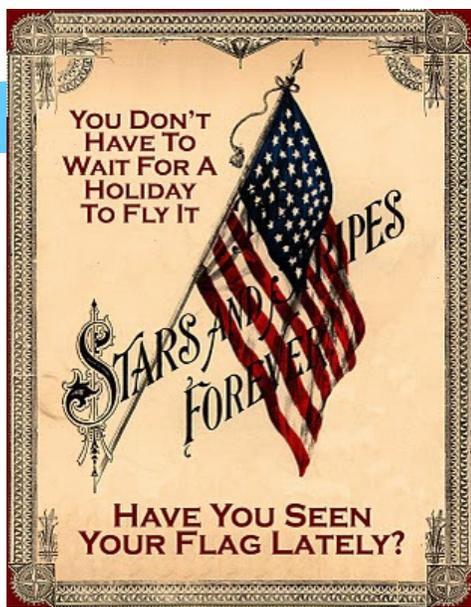
Keynote Speaker

County Executive

Maryellen Odell

Rt 22 & Milltown Rd, Brewster NY





The History of Flag Day

By Andrew Hollandbeck

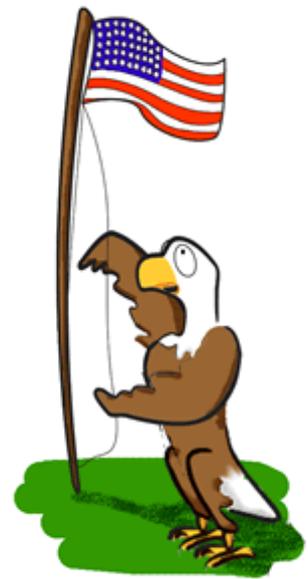
"Resolved that the flag of the thirteen United States be Thirteen stripes alternate red and white: that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation." Thus read the fifth item of the Second Continental Congress's daily agenda of June 14, 1777. Passage of this resolution that day established Betsy Ross's stars and stripes as the flag of the new United States of America.

Exactly 108 years later, Bernard Cigrand — a 19-year-old school teacher from Waubeka, Wisconsin — posted a small 38-starred American flag on his desk at the Stony Hill School. The young Cigrand, a student of American history, asked his students to write an essay about what the flag meant to them as a celebration of the flag's "birthday." A year later, he published in Chicago's *Argus* newspaper his first public proposal to create a national holiday to honor the flag.

So began Bernard Cigrand's lifelong quest to have the federal government recognize a National Flag Day honoring the flag's adoption and meaning. Throughout the remaining years of his life, Cigrand published books and articles about the history of the flag and other American emblems.

His dream really began to take shape in 1894 when, on the third Saturday of June, the first general public children's celebrations of Flag Day in Chicago were simultaneously held in five Chicago-area parks. The celebration caught on around the United States. Flag Day celebrations had become so prevalent that, on May 30, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson penned Proclamation 1335 calling for a nationwide observance of Flag Day on June 14 of each year, thus creating Flag Day. Then, in 1949, the U.S. Congress passed and President Harry Truman signed an Act of Congress designating June 14 as Flag Day, establishing the day in the United States Code.

Bernard Cigrand's efforts were not forgotten. On June 14, 2004, the U.S. House of Representatives passed Resolution 622, stating in part that Flag Day originated in Cigrand's home of Ozaukee County, Wisconsin. The Stony Hill School, where he set his students to writing about what the flag means to them, is today a historic site.



PTSD



RAISE AWARENESS



Meet Veterans who have been there.

Share what you learn with someone who needs help.

Maybe that someone is you.



June 2012

Visit www.ptsd.va.gov





JUNE IS PTSD AWARENESS MONTH

An invisible “wound” that used to be ignored by many is very much at the forefront today. The Veterans Administration site <http://www.ptsd.va.gov/index.asp> provides a wealth of information and links for the public (Veterans, the general public and family & friends) as well as professionals (researchers, providers and professional helpers).

As part of PTSD Awareness Month the VA has a four week online series dedicated to raising PTSD awareness.

- Week 1: How I knew.
- Week 2: My family suffered
- Week 3: How treatment helped
- Week 4: My advice: Don't wait

You can find it at http://www.ptsd.va.gov/about/ptsd-awareness/ptsd_awareness_month.asp

In addition to the VA website there is a Facebook page for National Center for PTSD - U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs which can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/VAPTSD> . There is also a Twitter feed at



BY-
Brennan Mahoney
State Veterans' Counselor
bmahoney@veterans.ny.gov
Castle Point VAMC
(T, W, TH)
PO Box 633, Bldg 19,
Rm C210
Castle Point, NY 12511
845-831-2000 x5449
Putnam Veterans Service Agency
(M & F)
110 Old Route 6, Bldg 3
Carmel, NY 10512
845-808-1620

Advice on Filing Service Connected Disability Claims with VA

If a veteran is interested in potentially filing a claim for service connection with VA,

there are a few bits of advice that should be considered before proceeding. First, never for a moment, assume the VA will “do the right thing for you.” The VA has a prescribed set of procedures within which they operate, and no individual person or case will cause them to deviate from these procedures. These procedures often seem counter-productive to the veteran filing the claim, yet they will be followed by VA despite the impressions they may allow. Also, the VA operates under very specific sets of laws, so

http://twitter.com/#!/VA_PTSD_Info

All of these are excellent sources of information and help for both the Veteran suffering from PTSD and those who live with, work with or love a Veteran who suffers from PTSD.

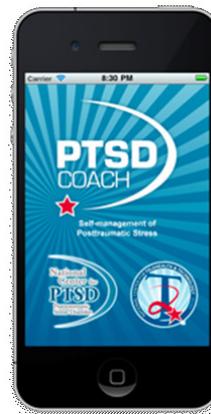
For those of you with an I-Phone, I-Pad or Droid Phone, there is a Free App available from the VA, **PTSD Coach**. PTSD Coach mobile app won an FCC award for helping

people use technology to manage PTSD symptoms.

Features include:
■Reliable information on PTSD and treatments that work.

■Tools for screening and tracking your symptoms.

■Convenient, easy-to-use skills to help you handle



stress symptoms.

■Direct links to support and help.
■Always with you when you need it.

Information about the PTSD Coach app can be found at <http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/pages/PTSDCoach.asp>

This article is from the National Center for PTSD. The site noted have a wealth of information, we encourage you to access them. If

any veterans in our community are having trouble with PTSD or if there are any family members have concerns regarding PTSD please contact our office at 845-808-1620. We will help you with any issues you may have.

Art Hanley,

Deputy Director



although logic would assume a particular conclusion to an argument, the law may not be written to allow for that same conclusion. Therefore, it's helpful to know and understand Title 38, Code of Federal Regulations (38 CFR), so that one can understand how the VA has come to its decision in a particular case. As always, it's advisable for any veteran with any potential claim, to consult with a qualified Veterans' Service Officer (VSO), to inquire about the relevance of any such claim.

Nguyen Charlie cartoons appeared in the Pacific Stars and Stripes newspaper during the Vietnam War.



Thursday June 21, 2012 on Wall Street in New York City

The one-day conference will be at the 60 Wall Street Atrium and Cipriani's in New York City, convening Wall Street firms, industry participants, transitioning service members, recent veterans and their families, military and government leaders, military support organizations and others who have a shared interest in veterans employment opportunities. The conference seeks to raise the profile of veterans on Wall Street and highlight the financial services industry as a veteran-friendly employer. The conference is sponsored entirely by the participating banks; attendance is free of charge, and contributions above conference cost will be allocated across a handful of established, national veterans-focused charitable organizations. Seating is limited. For more information please email: vows.network@db.com.



SCAM TARGETING VETERAN RECIPIENTS

(Information provided by Willie Nazario, Commander Westchester/Putnam Military Order of the Purple Heart)



Emails are being sent to individuals, including military members, military retirees, and civilian employees, which appear to be sent by Defense Finance and Accounting Services. Although the email appears to come from DFAS and displays a *.mil* email address it is actually from a non-government email account.

The emails indicate that individuals who are receiving disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs may be able to obtain additional funds from the IRS. These emails are not issued by DFAS.

The email indicates that individuals receiving VA disability compensation can receive additional funds from the IRS by sending copies of VA award letters, income tax returns, 1099-Rs, Retiree Account Statements, and DD 214s, to a

retired Colonel at an address in Florida. These schemes can be quite costly for victims. Promoters may charge exorbitant upfront fees to file these claims and are often long gone when victims discover they've been scammed. Taxpayers should be careful of these scams because, regardless of who prepared their tax return, the taxpayer is legally responsible for the accuracy of their tax return and must repay any refunds received in error, plus any penalties and interest. They may even face criminal prosecution.

To avoid becoming ensnared in these schemes, taxpayers should beware of any of the following:

- Fictitious claims for refunds or rebates based on false statements of entitlement to tax credits
 - Emails from unfamiliar senders asking for personal information
 - Internet solicitations that direct individuals to toll-free numbers and then solicit Social Security numbers or other personal information
- If you receive a notice from the IRS, **respond immediately**. If you believe someone may have used your SSN fraudulently, please notify IRS immediately by responding to the name and number printed on the notice or letter. You will need to fill out the IRS Identity Theft Affidavit, Form 14039.