



COUNTY OF ROCKLAND
VETERANS SERVICE
AGENCY NEWSLETTER

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CIVIL WAR BEGINS...APRIL 12, 1861

The bloodiest four years in American history begin when Confederate shore batteries under General [P.G.T. Beauregard](#) open fire on Union-held [Fort Sumter](#) in [South Carolina](#)'s Charleston Bay. During the next 34 hours, 50 Confederate guns and mortars launched more than 4,000 rounds at the poorly supplied fort. On April 13, U.S. Major Robert Anderson surrendered the fort. Two days later, U.S. President [Abraham Lincoln](#) issued a proclamation calling for 75,000 volunteer soldiers to quell the Southern "insurrection."

As early as 1858, the ongoing conflict between North and South over the issue of slavery had led Southern leadership to discuss a unified separation from the [United States](#). By 1860, the majority of the slave states were publicly threatening [secession](#) if the Republicans, the anti-slavery party, won the presidency. Following Republican Abraham Lincoln's victory over the divided Democratic Party in November 1860, South Carolina immediately initiated secession proceedings. On December 20, the South Carolina legislature passed the "Ordinance of Secession," which declared that "the Union now subsisting between South Carolina and other states, under the name of the United States of America, is hereby dissolved." After the declaration, South Carolina set about seizing forts, arsenals, and other strategic locations within the state. Within six weeks, five more Southern states--[Mississippi](#), [Florida](#), [Alabama](#), [Georgia](#), and [Louisiana](#)--had followed South Carolina's lead. In February 1861, delegates from those states convened to establish a unified government. [Jefferson Davis](#) of Mississippi was subsequently elected the first president of the [Confederate States of America](#). When Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated on March 4, 1861, a total of seven states ([Texas](#) had joined the pack) had seceded from the Union, and federal troops held only Fort Sumter in South Carolina, Fort Pickens off the Florida coast, and a handful of minor outposts in the South.

CIVIL WAR...

Four years after the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter, the Confederacy was defeated at the total cost of 620,000 Union and Confederate soldiers dead.

VIETNAM WAR ENDS...LAST TROOPS LEAVE NAM ON MARCH 29, 1973

Guess it's not unusual that *The New York Times* and I remember things differently. My unit, the 196th Light Infantry brigade was the last combat unit to leave Nam on March 29, 1973. I, of course, had left four years earlier, when we were winning. But somehow, I don't remember the air conditioning, and other good stuff *The New York Times* article talks about in this story from March 31, 1973.

<https://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/big/0329.html>

REFLECTIONS-REALITIES OF WAR

Vietnam taught me to hate sunsets and those hazy twilights I loved as a kid. The falling Asian sun was no friend – it simply warned of the demons that came in the smoky jungle night. At dawn, at a distance, the Central Highlands could remind you of New York’s Catskill Mountains. In the way of teenagers, we wandered the Highlands like members of some perverse summer camp that could almost at times be playful. At 21, I was the Sergeant, a.k.a. Counselor. This summer camp was unforgiving. Ignore the rules and you became a blood red mist.

The other believable myth was that you would be okay – you would make it through. Even though you walked with death, it wasn’t going to happen to you. Guess you had to believe that. I bought into it until there was this ear-splitting noise and I began to fly. Landing on my back, my first thought was, “Damn, that was loud!” I went to lift up my right arm and it fell off, halfway up the forearm. Two bones stuck out of each piece. Your bones are white! Looking down, my left leg was chopped meat; my right leg was gone. Yet there wasn’t pain – yet. There was a burning from the heat of the blast – then the pain came, but still not enough for the smoldering butchery I saw.

Every Infantryman has a prayer: “If it is to be, let it happen quick and clean. Don’t send me home a cripple.” I think that goes back to the Spartans. But once it actually happens, you begin to fight. The medic was on me in no time, telling me the same lies he told other dying grunts. Then came the morphine. What was left of my mind began to spin – not knowing whether it was the morphine flowing in...or life flowing out.

Through the pain I can’t explain the pure euphoria at the sight of the belly of the dust-off chopper. I was rolled in a poncho and tossed onto the floor of the Huey. Between the movement and the down-blast of the rotors, the wounds that had slightly healed, opened, and more pain came. We hit the aid station at Hawk Hill, I think.

There, the first concern was cutting away what was left of my saddlebag pocket to get my A.O. map wrapped in a PRC 25 plastic battery bag. I remember wondering why the map was more important than my wounds – that guy obviously was not a medic – God knows they cared.

My clearest memory of Da Nang’s 95th Evac Hospital was the air conditioning. Going through those doors, I froze. And the thirst, begging for water – what I got was ice chips wrapped in gauze.

Then there was surgery and more surgery. When I woke up, there in person were the NY Mets – they were part of the USO Tour.

I figured I was dead and nobody was telling me. Then more surgery, and now in Japan’s 106th Evac, I came to consciousness. Bonanza was on the ward TV, in Japanese. Then I knew for sure I was dead!

The Evac plane landed in Anchorage. We were slung in liters in light G. I. pjs. It’s now November and they dropped the tailgate of the plane so the Red Cross ladies could bring us hot chocolate in 40-degree weather. We froze, the ladies were nice, the “HOT” chocolate was cold.

Like General Washington, I spent the winter at Valley Forge. Actually, I spent the winter, spring, summer, and fall at Valley Forge Army General Hospital.

Nam seems like a day ago, yet more than 16,000 days have flown. It’s the nights that drag.

Still in the silence of my own midnight, I wonder if any of this ever happened. Wonder why as a group, they say we’re crazy.

In the abnormal world of war, reacting normally can get you killed. You have been turned into a weapon, loaded, and sent into combat. Problem comes when one day they tell you it’s over, and the weapon is sent home still loaded. Yeah, it’s over for you like it’s over for me....over, and over, and over.....

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UPCOMING EVENTS

April 12th: The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Ellis Camp and the African American Historical Society of Rockland are hosting a commemorative event to honor and remember the contributions of African Americans in the Civil War. It will take place at the Mount Moor Cemetery in West Nyack, Saturday, April 12 at 1 p.m. All are invited. RSVP by April 1 to James Meaney at jgmny1@gmail.com or 917-453-8573.

April 12th: On Saturday, April 12th, the Women Veterans Association of Hudson Valley, Inc., invites you to attend their Annual Women Veterans Luncheon at the Crowne Plaza in Suffern, New York 10901. For further information, please contact Anngela or Nancy at 845-596-6267 or via e-mail: anngcoop@aol.com.

April 26th: A group of Veterans known as the Bob Hope Division will visit the VA Nursing Home on Saturday April 26, 2014 at 1230hrs. During this event they will show a Dean Martin Celebrity Roast to the patients. They need help bringing the wheel-chaired patients to the show. The nursing home is located at: 2090 Albany Road, (Route 9) Montrose, NY 10548. For further information, please contact Chip Hayes via e-mail: chip1440@lawyer.com

April 26th, 2014: The 2nd Annual Spring Valley Rotary Motorcycle Run is coming up. Start the morning off with Coffee and Bagels at Boulder Stadium in Pomona. Registration on day of run is from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. KSU at 10:00 a.m. Then, take a leisurely ride through the Lower Hudson Valley – ending at Rhodes North Tavern for lunch, live music, raffles, prizes and more. Registration is \$25/\$20 for Rider/Passenger and includes lunch. Lunch only is \$25.00. For further information or to pre-register, please contact Chris Bailey at 914-906-6373 (phone or text) or send her an e-mail at: cbailey@vistaelectric.com

April 26th: The next Honor Flight leaves on **Saturday April 26, 2014** For further information, contact Becky via e-mail: becky01126@hotmail.com Hudson Valley Honor Flight (HVHF) is the local chapter of the Honor Flight Network which “Honors American Veterans” for all their sacrifices by transporting these heroes to Washington, D.C. to visit their memorials at no cost to them. Get details by calling 845-391-0076 or visit their website at: www.HVHonorFlight.com.

INTERNET FINDS

Band of Brothers You may have served in Combat or in non-combat. You may have retired out or you may have served for a short time. You may have been a draftee or a volunteer. You may have served in the Corps, Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard or the Merchant Marines, BUT YOU SERVED. YOU DID YOUR JOB HONORABLY and for that I am PROUD to call you Brother. You may have served during Korea, WWII, Vietnam, Persian Gulf, Iraq or Afghanistan, But you served, you did not run. You have a DD 214 with those words "HONORABLY DISCHARGED" - two of the most noble words in the world. We are proud to know each and every one of you.

A Soldier's Memoir video link:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RLwZs_LwXfM

Statistics for Traumatic Brain Injuries in the military 2000 – 2013
http://dvbic.dcoe.mil/sites/default/files/uploads/2000-2013_dod-tbi-worldwide-2000-2013-13_02-26-14.pdf

ROCKLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CLASSES

The following programs offered by the Rockland County Department of Health are scheduled this Spring:

- **Better Choices Better Health: Managing Ongoing Health Conditions:** Do you have a chronic health condition that is stopping you from living your life to its fullest? If yes, then join us at this free six-session workshop series. We will help you gain the skills you need to better manage your ongoing health conditions and improve the quality of your life. You'll feel more in control of your health! Our next workshop series begins on April 25 in Pearl River. Call 364-2501 to reserve your spot.
- **Living Well with Diabetes:** This free six-session workshop series will help you: understand diabetes and learn how to prevent complications; keep track of your blood sugar; eat healthy; be more physically active; learn relaxation techniques to cope with stress; and take charge of your health. Our next workshop series begin April 7 in Sparkill or April 24 in Suffern. Call 364-2501 to reserve your spot.
- **A Matter of Balance:** We are looking for volunteers to teach our fall-prevention program, A Matter of Balance. Free training is provided. Our next eight-session training begins April 23 in Pomona. Call 364-3839 for more information.
- **Put It Out Rockland Quit Smoking Program:** Our award winning, highly successful program offers a series of one-on-one, or group, quit smoking sessions with a quit smoking specialist and low-cost nicotine replacement products (for those medically eligible) to double your chances of being successful. Call 364-2651 or visit www.putitoutrockland.com to get help to quit.

Want to stay up-to-date on important information from the Rockland County Department of Health? Follow Rockland County Department of Health on Facebook: www.facebook.com/rockhealth and Twitter: www.twitter.com/rockhealth

The father of Veterans Service Agency Office Manager Nela Cardona has recently passed away. Her Dad was a World War II veteran. Please keep Nela and her family in your thoughts and prayers.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL

Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center is in need of dedicated, compassionate individuals that would appreciate the opportunity to be part of their Volunteer Services Department.

They are very interested in individuals who would like to be involved in a new program that was implemented this past summer. "Call Bell Connect Liaisons" is a unique program in which you interact with patients. You would be given extensive training in regards to patients with any non-clinical needs and would be the guest services representative between the patient and the clinical staff.

There are many other volunteer positions available as well! They ask that you consider joining their team and becoming part of the Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center family.

If you have any questions, please contact Lynn Beers, Volunteer Coordinator (845) 368-5482 or via e-mail: Lynn_beers@bshsi.org

PILOT STUDY FOR TREATMENT OF TRAUMATIC MEMORIES - PTSD

The RandR Trauma Center in Middletown, NY is conducting a Pre Pilot Study of Reconsolidation of Traumatic Memories (RTM) for the Treatment of PTSD. This is a totally anonymous study and its results will not be reported to medical or military authorities. Your identity will be protected. Participants will be given complete anonymity.

Needed: Veterans and active service members suffering from recurring nightmares and flashbacks related to combat experiences for a research study of a new, experimental treatment for traumatic memories.

If you, someone currently serving in the military, or a veteran that you know has nightmares of traumatic experiences and flashbacks of traumatic memories, you/they may be eligible to participate in a pilot study of a form of cognitive behavioral therapy, administered by a New York State Licensed Psychologist. Participants will receive up to \$200.00 for participating. The protocol requires four-to-six, two-hour visits to the center in Middletown, New York. For further information, please call Frank Bourke at 855-572-0252 or via e-mail at:

frank.bourke@randrproject.com.

SEARS NOW HIRING PRODUCT REPAIR TECHNICIANS NATIONWIDE

Turn your military training, or electromechanical skills, into a successful career with Sears In-Home. We have an immediate need nationwide for experienced dedicated technicians who, during their time in service, were enlisted under the following Military carrier fields:

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- Quartermaster and Chemical Equipment Repairer
- Utilities Equipment Repairers
- Aviation Electrician • Aviation Electronics
- Ships Serviceman (specialization in electromechanics and refrigeration) • Machinist • Electronics Technicians

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VETERAN CHRIS DAY, ARTS COUNCIL OF ROCKLAND AND NORTH ROCKLAND HIGH SCHOOL EVENT

April 11th: On Friday, April 11th at 7:00 p.m. Chris Day - Iraq and Afghanistan Veteran, The Arts Council of Rockland, and North Rockland High School Present – U.S. Army Field Band and Soldiers Chorus. Tickets for this event are free but reservations are essential. The Chorus will be held at North Rockland High School, Hammond Road in Thiells, New York. For further information, call the Arts Council of Rockland at 845-947-3660, send e-mail to:

info@artscouncilofrockland.org, or visit this website:

<http://artscouncilofrockland.org/united-states-army-field-band-and-soldiers-chorus/>

VETS REP IN ROCKLAND

If you are a veteran who is in the market for employment possibilities or a career change, contact our Veterans' Representative from the NY State Department of Labor -

Natalie 845-356-5429,

or via e-mail:

Natalie.Hernandez@labor.ny.gov

or on twitter at NatDOLVetRep.



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We would like to keep you up-to-date on events and matters of interest to veterans and will be sending these newsletters regularly. If at any time you no longer wish to receive them,

please send a note to info@rockvets.com. Your e-mail address will immediately be deleted from our newsletter mailing list. If you find any of this information useful, please pass it along to others.

ROCKVETS - ON THE INTERNET AND AIRWAVES

You can find information, useful links, and view our webpage at www.rockvets.com. Previous copies of our newsletters are also available on our website at: www.rockvets.com/newsletters. You can e-mail us at: info@rockvets.com or visit our facebook page: www.facebook.com/rockvets.

On the first Friday of each month, just after the 10:00 a.m. news-break, RockVets has a live call-in talk show on Rockland County's local radio station – WRCR 1300 AM. We encourage you to call-in and ask any questions you may have relating to veterans or the military. This is also a good opportunity to promote any upcoming events for your organization that would be of interest to the veteran/military community. The call-in number is 845.362.0013. The show is also live on the internet at: www.wrcr.com. So please listen in, and call if you have questions or information to share.

The next radio broadcast will be on Friday, April 4th, 2014 right after the 10:00 a.m. newsbreak. Once again we appreciate the support of the Marine Corps League - Rockland County Detachment.

So that we can keep you up to date on as much information as possible, we have included links to many articles so you may read further about those items. At the time the newsletter is sent to you, the links are all working well. If the links do not work for you, just cut and paste the address into your browser and that should bring you to the correct article, or you can do a search for the article on the web. Providing the information in this newsletter does not necessarily constitute our endorsement or opinion.

If you have information that can benefit the military and veteran community, or would like the community to know about an event your group is hosting, please send it to us so we can publish it in the next newsletter: info@rockvets.com.

**VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY
OF ROCKLAND**

If you plan to come to the Veterans Service Agency office, please call to make an appointment so we can give you the time you need - 845.638.5244.

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**WE ARE HERE TO CARE FOR YOU
WHO HAVE WORN THE
UNIFORM – NO MATTER WHERE
OR WHEN YOU SERVED. THANK
YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE.**