



# Nam Express

The Official Newsletter of  
VIETNAM VETERANS of AMERICA CHAPTER 377

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JUNE 2009



## A BUSY WEEKEND - HONORING OUR VETERANS at BAILEY Hall, DVMH, and DeWitt Park



Chapter Members Welcome 108<sup>th</sup> Home at the Bailey Hall Ceremony



Some 108<sup>th</sup> Members at DVMH Lunch



DVMH Barbeque Crew The barbeque was made possible by donations from Tompkins County veterans' organizations, their auxiliaries, and other interested citizens.

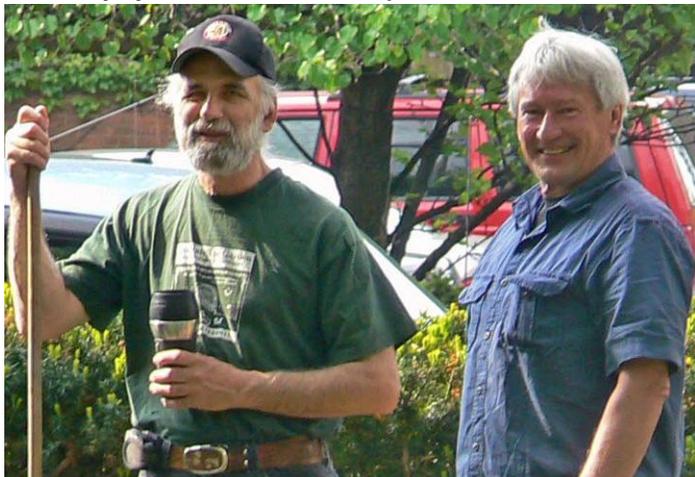


-Photos courtesy Charlie Harrington

Members of DELTA COMPANY 108<sup>th</sup> INFANTRY ARMY NATIONAL GUARD  
They recently returned from a year of service in Afghanistan. Welcome home!

**ANNUAL CLEAN-UP DAY AT DEWITT PARK in ITHACA - Chapter 377 and Sons of Union  
Witt Park in preparation for Memorial Day.**

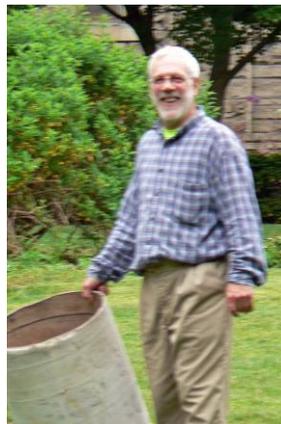
**Veterans volunteers spruced up De**



**George Pierro and René Sylvester**

**Bill Bowker**

**René Sylvester, Ralph Jones**



**Charlie Pearson, Ron Pluck, Art Denman**

**Ray Wheaton, Danny Wheeler, Lyman Baker**



**Butch Pell and Dan Rose**



**Larry Green and Lyman**

**Baker Jim Jones and Larry Green**



**Ryan Wheaton**



**Butch Pell and Ron Pluck**

**Harvey Baker**

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## CHAPTER INFORMATION

President	René Sylvester	272-4217
Vice-President	Fran Moore	756-4482
Treasurer	Harvey Baker	898-3507
Secretary	Ron Pluck	273-2806
Directors	Carl Bullock, Art Denman, Tony Evangelista, Larry Housel, Mike Moran, Paul Pagliaro, George Pierro, Dan Rose	

### CHAPTER CALENDAR

May 30 8 AM Memorial Day Ceremony, Ithaca

June 1 7:30 Meeting

June 14 Flag Day

June 14 US ARMY Established in 1775

June 19 - 21 NYS Council Meeting

June 21 Fathers' Day

► MEETINGS ARE HELD AT DVMH on DRYDEN RD.

### DRYDEN VETERANS' MEMORIAL HOME CALENDAR

June 2 7:00 PM American Legion Meeting

June 6 1:00 PM VFW Meeting

June 23 7:00 PM DVMH Board Meeting

### FROM CHAPTER 377 PRESIDENT

Dear Brothers and Sisters, 5-22-09

May has been a busy month for me as a VVA member, beginning with my representing our chapter on 5-2-09 at Chapter 803's opening of their Vietnam Museum. Must admit I was a bit jealous of their esprit de corps and massive attendance. That feeling went away, however, when I saw the excellent turn-out by varied veterans (Vietnam, Korea, etc.) at the clean-up of DeWitt Park on 5-16-09. Even got some support from a female Air Force veteran, Colleen Hill. Thanks, Holly, for your leadership.

A few of us attended Delta Company's return ceremony this past Sunday at Cornell. Very nicely done and meaningful. I cannot help thinking that greater appreciation and recognition would have been an important antidote to our PTSD after Vietnam.

Had the pleasure of chatting with Lt. Col. Brian Page, Army ROTC, at the Dryden VFW dinner for Delta Company. He reminded me of how open the military is to talent and effort. He started as a private and has recently been promoted to full colonel. We will miss him as he has been a steadfast supporter of all veterans' events. Thanks, Colonel Page.

Hope to see many of you at the Dryden Memorial Day Parade.

P.S. If you get this newsletter but have not become a VVA member yet, please do so. We need clout in Washington, DC, for veterans' issues and benefits.

Fraternally,

René A. Sylvester, Chapter President

Almost forgot. We want to start a veterans' motorcycle group for **VVA 377** and friends. Monthly? Twice a month? Harvey Baker, Charley Pearson, and I will be sparkplugs to get this rolling. Ideas welcome.

### FROM CHAPTER 377 SECRETARY

V.V.A. Chapter 377 meeting May 4, 2009 was called to order at 7:30 pm with a pledge to the flag. It was dedicated to Robert J. Williams, US Army. Harvey gave his monthly treasury report which was accepted. René talked about catfish derby, the Dryden parade, the city cemetery service on May 30 at 8:00 AM. We talked about the clean-up at DeWitt Park on May 16 and the Welcome Home for Delta Company 108<sup>TH</sup>. We collected \$290 at the meeting for the Welcome Home barbeque. We talked about the NY State Council meeting and the opening of the Vietnam Museum in Elmira, across from the Woodland Cemetery. Holly talked about the rededication of DeWitt Park ceremony that is scheduled for October 3. We discussed advertising some of our functions in the future but tabled it until the next meeting.

Harvey Baker and René Sylvester have volunteered to be VVA Chapter mentors. In case anyone has a problem of some kind, they can give Harvey or René a call, and they will help them get in touch with someone who can help. Meeting was adjourned at 8:37 PM.

On a personal note, I want to thank all the chapter members and other veterans who came to help clean up at DeWitt Park. We had 15 or 16 people there. It was great.

---Ron Pluck, Secretary



## TRADITIONAL MEMORIAL DAY

### Ceremony

### Ithaca City Cemetery

On Saturday, May 30, at 8:00 AM, the Sons of Union Veterans, Sydney Camp, will hold their annual Memorial Day Ceremony at the GAR Monument.

The chapter will join the Sons again this year. Form-up is at 7:30 AM. The ceremony begins at 8:00.

## --QUOTES OF THE MONTH

●Be alert to give service. What counts a great deal in life is what we do for others. --Anonymous (From God Bless America - Prayers & Reflections for Our Country, p. 201)

●Freedom is one of the deepest and noblest aspirations of the human spirit. ---Ronald Reagan

●Knowledge is the small part of ignorance that we arrange and classify. --Ambrose Bierce

## ARMY BIRTHDAY

The United States Army was established on June 14, 1775. **Happy Birthday, US ARMY!**



## ALL-NIGHT EVENT

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 480, out of Owego, is having its 14<sup>th</sup> annual All Night Catfish Derby on June 6 & 7. Call 821-2912 for info or go to VVA480.org.

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## TO YOUR HEALTH

Camp Lejeune Drinking Water Registry

"Did you live or work at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune in 1987 or before? If so, please register with the Marine Corps by visiting [www.marines.mil/clsurvey](http://www.marines.mil/clsurvey) or by calling the Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water Call Center at 877-261-9782, Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

"In the early 1980's, two solvents, trichloroethylene (TCE) and perchlorethylene (PCE), both unregulated at the time, were found in two water systems serving the Tarawa Terrace and Hadnot Point areas....

"The Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry is determining if there is an association between exposure to water and certain adverse health effects. The National Academy of Sciences is evaluating specific health risks associated with that exposure.

"Upon completion of the research, the Marine Corps will directly notify those on the registry through direct mail and email." ---Copied from May 2009 DAV Magazine

**Ithaca Veterans' Acupuncture Clinic**

"Free acupuncture is available for veterans at the Ithaca Free Clinic, 223 South Fulton Street, every Tuesday, from 5-7 PM.

"BOOST ENERGY! IMPROVE SLEEP! RELIEVE STRESS, ANXIETY, NIGHTMARES! QUIT SMOKING! Family members are welcome.

"We serve active, non-active, and retired service persons. Veterans deserve the support of their communities when they return home. Ocular (ear) acupuncture is a helpful treatment for people who are coping with traumatic experiences.

"Our clinic is part of the national group Acupuncturists Without Borders. The organization began in 2006 to provide disaster relief. AWB expanded its mission in 2007 to include caring for returning war veterans. Today there are more than 20 veterans' acupuncture clinics in the US.

"Participants sit in a group. An acupuncturist places five tiny acupuncture needles in each ear. People rest with the needles in for 15 to 45 minutes. You can end the treatment at any time. Acupuncture is relaxing and is not painful." [Copied from IVAC pamphlet]

For more information, contact Abigail Thomas-Costello LAc, 607-274-7520 or at [Abigail@ithacacenterforhealth.com](mailto:Abigail@ithacacenterforhealth.com) or Betsy Caughey 607-330-1253 or at [outreach@ithacahealth.org](mailto:outreach@ithacahealth.org).

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**LOCAL NEWS**  
**VVA 377 PATRIOTISM AWARD**



Mike Moran represented **Chapter 377** on Saturday, April 25, at the annual ROTC Tri-Service Award Ceremony. The award is given each year to the Midshipman or Cadet who exhibits an exceptionally high degree of patriotism. MIDN Ruth S. Kelty was the recipient of an American Flag in a case custom-made by our master cabinet maker, Harvey Baker.



**TRANSITIONS**

**Condolences** to the families and friends of...

- **Thomas Lynn Austen**, 77. He served in the US Army, 1948-62 and 1975-82.
- **Edward A. Russell**, 70. He served in the US Army from 1956-1964.
- **Robert J. Williams**, 65. He served in the US Army.

**Happy Birthday to...**

John Simson	June 3
Allie Elizabeth Grier	June 6
Don Gilbert	June 7
Linda Pierro	June 9
Claude Wagner	June 12
Madison Leigh Peckins	June 12
Keith Gentz	June 13
Brian Moore	June 15
Julie King	June 18
Fran Moore	June 20

**Happy Anniversary to...**

George & Linda Pierro	June 6
Paul & Nancy Pagliaro	June 12
Wil & Barbara Kone	June 15

**Sick Call**

Tony Evangelista has had stents put into his heart and is feeling better.

▶▶ PLEASE SEND items for TRANSITIONS to [pthollingsworth@aol.com](mailto:pthollingsworth@aol.com) or call 539-7696.Thanks!

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**FLAG DAY JUNE 14**



The First Flag of the United States was adopted by Congress in 1777. This date was formally proclaimed "Flag Day" in 1966.

## WRITERS' FORUM

"For those who are unaware, at a military theater, the National Anthem is played before every movie.

"From a Chaplain in Iraq: "I recently attended a showing of 'Superman 3' here at LSA Anaconda. We have a large auditorium we use for movies, as well as memorial services and other large gatherings.

"As is the custom back in the States, we stood and snapped to attention when the National Anthem began before the main feature. All was going as planned until about three-quarters of the way through the National Anthem, the music stopped.

"Now, what would happen if this occurred with 1,000 18-22 year-olds back in the States? "I imagine there would be hoots, catcalls, laughter, a few rude comments, and everyone would sit down and call for a movie. Of course, that is, if they had stood for the National Anthem in the first place.

"Here, the 1,000 soldiers continued to stand at attention, eyes fixed forward. The music started again. The soldiers continued to quietly stand at attention. And again, at the same point in the Anthem, the music stopped.

"What would you expect to happen? Even here, I would imagine laughter, as everyone finally sat down and expected the movie to start. But here, you could have heard a pin drop. Every soldier continued to stand at attention. Suddenly, there was a lone voice, then a dozen, and quickly the room was filled with the voices of a thousand soldiers, finishing where the recording had left off.

" *'And the rockets red glare, the bombs bursting in air, gave proof through the night that our flag was still there. Oh, say does that Star Spangled Banner yet wave, o'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.'*

"It was the most inspiring moment I have had here in Iraq. I wanted you to know what kind of soldiers are serving you here. Remember them as they fight for you!

"Pass this along as a reminder to others to be ever in prayer for all our soldiers serving us here at home and abroad. For many have already paid the ultimate price."

Written by Chaplain Jim Higgins

LSA Anaconda is at the Ballad Airport in Iraq, north of Baghdad. ---Provided by Margaret Rolf

If you've read or written *something you'd like to share* in the Nam Express, please send it to [pthollingsworth@aol](mailto:pthollingsworth@aol) or to 245 Burns Road, Brooktondale, NY, 14817.

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♥♥♥♥♥ IF YOU PREFER TO GET THE NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL, let me know at [pthollingsworth@aol.com](mailto:pthollingsworth@aol.com). THANKS! --Pat

## POW/MIA LIVE-SIGHTING SUMMARY

" As of September 26, 2008, 1,993 first-hand live sighting reports in Indochina have been received since

1975; 1,942 (97.44%) have been resolved. 1,341 (67.29%) were equated to Americans now accounted for (i.e. returned POWs, missionaries, or civilians detained for violating Vietnamese codes); 45 (2.26%) correlated to wartime sightings of military personnel or pre-1975 sightings of civilians still unaccounted for; 556 (27.90%) were determined to be fabrications. The remaining 51 (2.56%) unresolved first-hand reports are the focus of current analytical and collection efforts: 45 (2.26%) concern Americans in a captive environment; 6 (0.30%) are non-captive sightings. The years in which these 51 first hand sightings occurred are listed below:

Pre-1976: 37	1976-80: 3	1981-85: 0
1986-90: 1	1991-95: 0	1996-2000: 5
2001-08: 5	TOTAL: 51 "	

--From National League of Families Newsletter, Apr. 2009



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## LIGHTER SIDE

A Kansas farm wife called the local phone company to report her telephone failed to ring when her friends called – and that on the few occasions when it

did ring, her dog always moaned right before the phone rang.

The telephone repairman proceeded to the scene, curious to see this psychic dog or senile lady. He climbed a telephone pole, hooked in his test set, and dialed the subscriber's house.

The phone didn't ring right away, but then the dog moaned, and the telephone began to ring.

Climbing down from the pole, the telephone repairman found: 1) The dog was tied to the telephone system's ground wire with a steel chain and collar; 2) The wire connection to the ground rod was loose; 3) The dog was receiving 90 volts of signaling current when the number was called; 4) After a couple of jolts, the dog would start moaning and then urinate; 5) The wet ground would complete the circuit, thus causing the phone to ring...which demonstrates that some problems CAN be fixed by pissing and moaning.

Thought you'd like to know.

---From Paul Pagliaro



## 19<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL VIETNAM VETERAN GET-TOGETHER

On Saturday June 20, 2009 in Boonville, New York, from 12:00 to-6:00, at the VFW on Main Street, there will be a get-together for Vietnam Veterans.

There will be music, vendors, barbeque, and many other events. The whole village turns out for this gathering, and they really do a nice job for Vietnam Veterans.

*Diana Blodgett*

MasterStylist

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**APPRECIATION PRESENTATION  
 To Town of Lansing**



Harvey Baker presented a POW/MIA Flag and letter of appreciation to Steve Cole, Director of Parks and Recreation, Town of Lansing, for the many years **Chapter 377** has been able to use Myers Park for the POW/MIA Watch Fire.

**The Watch Fire this year will be held on SEPT. 18.**

### POW/MIA UPDATE: May 16, 2009

"There are now 1,740 US personnel listed by the Defense POW/MIA Office as missing and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War. The remains of **Major Harmon Polster**, USAF, listed as MIA in Laos on July 15, 1969, were jointly recovered April 21, 2007 and identified March 30, 2009. The remains of **Major Wilbur R. Brown**, USAF, previously missing in South Vietnam, were recovered May 19, 2003 as part of a recent group identification. The number of US personnel accounted for since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 is now 842. 90% of the 1,740 still missing were lost in Vietnam or areas of Laos and Cambodia under Vietnam's wartime control."

--From National League of Families Newsletter, May 2009



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