

# VETERANS OF VIETNAM WAR

**Middletown, Connecticut**

**March 2004 Volume XXX**

[www.vietnamvetsmiddletownct.org](http://www.vietnamvetsmiddletownct.org)

**PO Box 2113  
Middletown, CT 06457-2113  
“People Who Care”**

**\*UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE:  
Meetings are to be held on  
the first Tuesday of each  
month at 7:00 p.m.**

## **MARK YOUR CALENDAR MARCH MEETING**

This Months Meeting is on Tuesday, March 2, 2004 at 7:00 P.M. at the American Legion Hall in Middletown. (Bernie O'Rourke Drive). This is the regular Monthly Meeting (**refreshments = Pizza Night with Beer=Half Price** Come to the meeting and renew friendships. Members and guest welcome.

**\*St. Patrick's Day 03/17/04**

**APRIL 2004 meeting is  
Tuesday 04/06/2004.**  
Regular business meeting.  
7:00 p.m.

**CONNECTICUT VETERANS  
CEMETERY,  
BOW LANE, MIDDLETOWN**  
The Vietnam Veterans will be placing flags on the headstones at the Veteran's Cemetery for Memorial Day.  
**Date and Time to be announced.**

**FLAG Removal in 2004  
Date and Time to be  
announced.**

**2004 Memorial Day Parade.  
Date and Time to be  
announced by the Veterans  
Council of Middletown.**  
Right now, we're assuming it's MONDAY, MAY 31, 2004. All Veterans are requested to gather on the Washington Street GREEN at the Vietnam/Korea Monument at 9:00 a.m. for the traditional wreath laying and the short walk to the parade staging area.

## **PARADE: cont.**

Hopefully , the Parents of LCpl Tommy Fritsch (POW\_MIA 5/10/68) will be joining us in the parade again this year. Weather and Health permitting.

## **8th Annual (2004) Golf Tournament 06/03/2004**

The Thomas Fritsch Golf Tournament will be held on Thursday, June 3rd 2004 at the Portland Golf Course. We're looking for a good turnout again this year. We'll be looking for TEE Sponsors, Volunteers, prizes, raffle items; Bottles of Cheer, Gift Certificates, Dinner for 2, etc.) **Tee sponsors, prizes and donations are everyone's responsibility.**

**This IS a group effort!**

Volunteers are needed for the "Hole in One" holes and manning the prizes/raffle items, selling tickets and cheering on the players as they golf.

Committee Members:

Jack Mayoros 860-347-8843  
Rich Couture 203-238-8979  
Joe Labbadia 860-344-3287  
Jim Marshall 860-704-0264  
Barry Moyer 860-267-2950  
Vin Silvestro 860-345-2334  
Patricia Fritsch 860-267-0593

## **GOLF COMMITTEE:**

**Meeting: Tuesday March 9,  
2004 – 6:00 p.m. at Jack's  
home**

## **Scholarship 2004**

Scholarship applications for 2004 can be obtained from Past Comm. Jack Mayoros. Call him at (860) 347-8843. Applications must be returned postmarked by May 15th to the Chapter.

## **2004 OFFICERS:**

A flurry of activity at an early December meeting led to the election of new officers for 2004. They are:  
Commander Frank Martini  
Vice Commander Paul Fazzino  
Secretary Rich Couture  
Treasurer Jack Mayoros

3 yr trustee Marty Reardon

2 yr trustee Dean Buden  
1 yr trustee Joe Damiata

Sgt at Arms Luke Mailhot  
Chaplain Marty Reardon

### **Congratulations and Good Luck to the Officers for 2004!**

#### **Dues Reminder**

Dues are payable at the beginning of the year. \$12.00 per year or \$100.00 for life membership. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** If you are one of the NON-Payers since **WHENEVER, THIS MAY BE YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER.** Signed: **the management**

#### **DUES REPRIEVE**

If you know anyone who would like to join the chapter let me know and the Commander will forward an application. Membership is open to any Vietnam-era vet. \$15.00 initially, includes first years dues and then just \$12.00 per year. **One last time! We are doing a "Welcome Back" program for former members.** Pay \$12.00 dues for 2004 and you will become active again.

#### **Scholarship 2003**

**LCPL. Thomas W. Fritsch Memorial Scholarship.** Commander Jack Mayoros and Joe Labbadia presented E.C. Goodwin Tech Culinary student **Ms. Victoria Trudel** with a check for \$500.00 at an Awards Assembly June 4, 2003. Parents, grandparents

and the school are very proud of Victoria. She is attending the University of Johnson and Wales. Congratulations!

A name plaque provided by our chapter was presented to the new Director of E.C. Goodwin, Mr. George Quigley. The plaque for Victoria will be added to the names of the previous recipients of the Thomas (Tommy) W. Fritsch Scholarship. They are:  
**1997 John Groth**  
**1998 Erik Stanchick**  
**1999 Pawel Domejczyk**  
**2000 Melissa Grandmaison**  
**2001 Fallon Thompson**  
**2002 Marilyz Rivera**  
**2003 Victoria Trudel**

A second award from the Thomas (Tommy) W. Fritsch Memorial Scholarship was given to **Ms. Elisabeth Reardon** of Middletown High School. She is the daughter of our recent Past Commander Marty Reardon. This is the floating award given out to a student from any number of High Schools in the region. Take a moment to nominate your area High School to be considered for this year's scholarship. Contact the Commander.

Scholarship applications for 2003 were returned in time for the June monthly meeting. The Peter M. Taft Scholarship Committee selected the 2003 winner. She is **Ms. Danielle Dube**, the granddaughter of Honorary member, Ron

Delisle, USMC.

**Congratulations to Victoria, Elisabeth and Danielle.**

**STAND DOWN '2004'** is scheduled for Friday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on the Rocky Hill campus. This one day event, sponsored by the CT Dept. of Veterans Affairs is put on to help the homeless veterans of the state with a variety of benefits which include medical help, legal assistance and clothing, etc.

#### **For the Good of the Chapter:**

Commander Frank Martini is asking members to come forward with suggestions for fundraisers or ideas for events that may be of interest for the chapter. Call him.

2005 marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the chapter. Party anyone?

The Veterans of the Vietnam War, Middletown Inc. have a new WEBSITE:

[www.vietnamvetsmiddlesownct.org](http://www.vietnamvetsmiddlesownct.org) Please take a few minutes of your time to "ADD IT TO YOUR FAVORITES", become familiar with its content and related links.

The wife of Life Member Bob Natrass, Julie, is our webmaster. Peruse the site. You'll see that she's done a great job. Kudos to Julie Natrass.

We want your E-mail: The chapter would like all members who have a

computer and consequently an email address to forward their address to the committee or to the WEBMASTER. See above. The main purpose of this request is to lessen the costs of mailing this newsletter. A secondary purpose would be to send out notices for the monthly meetings and any other special notes of interest to the chapter members.

### **Museum**

Member Ron Organek has advised that the Greater Middletown Military Museum for Northern Middlesex County is now OFFICIAL.

They have elected Officers. They have an office with some storage space donated by the Middletown Press. They have been collecting museum items for quite some time now. Included are the history of the VFW and a list of monuments in the Middletown area as well as historical figures from the area. The committee hopes to make the museum and all of this information available as a research facility for area residents and students. MEMBERSHIP for the organization is \$25.00 per year or \$150.00 for a Life Membership. Contacts for

the museum are: Ron Organek @ 860-346-5100 and or Phil Cacciola @ 860-346-6013. Gentlemen, good luck in your endeavors.

**Chapter Jackets;** Jackets are available at "ANYTHING GOES" in Durham, CT Call Rose Marie at 860-349-3315

**April 2004 meeting will be on Tuesday 4/06/2004.**

Regular business meeting.  
7:00 p.m.

Members and guest welcome!

WHAT IS A VET?      Father Denis Edward O'Brien, USMC

WHAT IS A VET?

Some veterans bear visible signs of their service: a missing limb, a jagged scar, a certain look in the eye. Others may carry the evidence inside them: a pin holding a bone together, a piece of shrapnel in the leg - or perhaps another sort of inner steel: the soul's ally forged in the refinery of adversity. Except in parades, however, the men and women who have kept America safe wear no badge or emblem. You can't tell a vet just by looking.

What is a vet?

He is the cop on the beat who spent six months in Saudi Arabia sweating two gallons a day making sure the armored personnel carriers didn't run out of fuel.  
He is the barroom loudmouth, dumber than five wooden planks, whose overgrown frat-boy behavior is outweighed a hundred times in the cosmic scales by four hours of exquisite bravery near the 38th parallel.  
She - or he - is the nurse who fought against futility and went to sleep, if sleep came, sobbing every night for two solid years in Da Nang.  
He is the POW who went away one person and came back another - or didn't come back AT ALL.  
He is the Quantico drill instructor who has never seen combat - but has saved countless lives by turning slouchy, no-account rednecks and gang members into Marines and teaching them to watch each other's backs.  
He is the parade - riding Legionnaire who pins on his ribbons and medals with a prosthetic hand.  
He is the career quartermaster who watches the ribbons and medals pass him by.  
He is the three anonymous heroes in The Tomb Of The Unknowns, whose presence at the Arlington National Cemetery must forever preserve the memory of all the anonymous heroes whose valor dies unrecognized with them on the battlefield or in the ocean's sunless deep.  
He is the old guy bagging groceries at the supermarket - palsied now and aggravatingly slow - who helped liberate a Nazi death camp and who wishes all day long that his wife were still alive to hold him when the nightmares come.  
He is an ordinary and yet an extraordinary human being - a person who offered some of his life's most vital years in the service of his country, and who sacrificed his ambitions so others would not have to sacrifice theirs.  
He is a soldier and a savior and a sword against the darkness, and he is nothing more than the finest, greatest testimony on behalf of the finest, greatest nation ever known.

So remember, each time you see someone who has served our country, just lean over and say Thank You. That's all most people need, and in most cases it will mean more than any medals they could have been awarded or were awarded.

Two little words that mean a lot, "THANK YOU".

Remember May 31st is Memorial Day

"It is the soldier, not the reporter,  
Who has given us freedom of the press.  
It is the soldier, not the poet,  
Who has given us freedom of speech.  
It is the soldier, not the campus organizer,  
Who has given us the freedom to demonstrate.  
It is the soldier,  
Who salutes the flag,  
Who serves beneath the flag,  
And whose coffin is draped by the flag,  
Who allows the protestor to burn the flag."

Father Denis Edward O'Brien  
USMC

This years' tournament is: **Thursday, June 3, 2004.** SAVE THAT DATE!

**VETERANS of the VIETNAM WAR, Middletown  
Box 2113  
Middletown, CT 06457-2113**

mail to:

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