

*"Once again with my brothers...as we were together then...we are together now..."*



# SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

*A Nationally acclaimed and award winning Veteran Newsletter & Website*

QUAD CITIES CHAPTER 299 WWW.QCVVA299.ORG

JUNE 2010

*THERE ARE NO NOBEL WARS, ONLY NOBEL WARRIORS*

## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE: ANKLE DEEP

I was ankle deep in stagnant water the other day as a cadre of Chapter 299 members moved 50 gallon barrels, fencing and sandbags which are used to define the course for the annual bike races in Rock Island held each Memorial Day Weekend. It was not a pretty sight in the basement of the Argus Building and it reminded me that for every successful civic event, somebody has to perform the grunt related chores worthy of the operation. An hour later, I was inspecting our soon to be new office spaces in the Safety Building, still in the stinking water logged shoes. Two hours later I was showered and dressed in business attire and on a 90 mile sojourn to Cedar Rapids, Iowa to handle some work for the Department of Justice. Four hours later, I was at home cutting grass and preparing for a weekend Chapter hog roast. Just an average work day for your 68 year old retiree! I don't know how I got anything done when I was doing the 8 to 5 stuff.

This time of the year is a busy time and we as a Chapter have a lot on the agenda. The monument dedication is next month, we have a golf outing in September, there is a fund raiser for the Honor Flight this month at Bud's Skyline and we have numerous hog roasts to conduct throughout the year. This is all in addition to that which we do in the normal course of business like Honor Guard funeral services/vigils, special events, bingo, Vet 2 Vet, parades and what have you.

Any time you feel as though you need to be doing something extra, have a burning desire to get your hands dirty or work up a sweat let us know, we can always find a place for helping hands. Keep your socks dry!

President  
**RESPECTFULLY**  
**RAY HAMILTON**  
PRESIDENT

## CHAPTER 299

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**MINUTES VVA 299 BOARD MEETING - MOLINE VFW HALL -05-11-2010****MINUTES VVA 299 CHAPTER MEETING - ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL -05-18-2010**

The meeting was called to order by Chapter President Ray Hamilton with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for our fallen and missing brothers, both past and present.

Bob Albracht (Director) and Joe Murphy (Trustee) were sworn in as Chapter officers. At this time, Ray announced to those present that Andy Ortiz had resigned his Chapter office(s) and position(s), citing personal reasons.

The past April election was discussed with attention to how to make the process more organized and quicker. After discussion, Ray stated that he would write a Chapter election protocol, have it checked for compliance with the National Constitution, bring it to the Board for review and then publish the finished product in the STS. The meeting after publication, the published version would be discussed and voted on by the membership.

The Baker/VN Vet Monument was discussed. The actual pre-construction phase is almost complete and ground should be broken in June. The Building Trades and Jumer's as well as the stone supplier and the artist are all working in concert to the common goal.

As mentioned in previous minutes, 60 Minutes (or a like TV news magazine) MAY do a story on John Baker, the bridge naming, the monument, our Chapter, and the work Vietnam Veterans have done to honor one of our own. Ray emphasized "MAY". A professional

business plan was sent to CBS last month. This is the same plan that started the partnership with Jumer's.

There will be a customer appreciation at Bud's Skyline at the airport in Moline on Sunday, June 26th, which is the last day of the Air Show. Our Chapter will provide the BBQ pulled pork and man the Stern Beverage beer sales. The money rasi3d will be split between the QCA Honor Flight Program and the Baker/VN Vet monument. More to follow in June. A motion to allocate \$400 for initial (and reimbursable from Bud's) fund to purchase the necessary pork, et al was approved.

Our Chapter's Golf outing will be held Friday, September 10th, more to follow.

Committee Chairs were assigned by President Hamilton at the Board meeting and in the days that followed. The 2010-2011 Chair list is as follows:  
 Membership: L Tschappat – Veteran Affairs (Vet 2 Vet): F Eaves – Catering Fund Raisers: B Brooks – Constitution: L Tschappat – Charities/Donation: W Albracht – Investments: R Roman – Vet Benefits: R Albracht – Election: F Perez – Govt Affairs: J Lavell – Community Services (Honor Guard, et al): D Laird – Minority Affairs: J Murphy – Public Affairs: W Albracht- Vet's Day Dance: W Albracht – Golf Outing: Katherman/Lavell/Schroeder – Bingo: C Peterson – ETABO: B Brooks.

Bill Albracht brought two items to the Board that have requested a donation. The QCA Military, Police & Fire Explorer Scout annual Explorer Challenge to be held at the RIA in July - \$400 passed by Board. Next was the River Bend Troop Support who is sends "care packages" to QCA troop's in-theater and in VA hospitals. \$372 was passed (enough to send two dozen cases). The aforementioned will now go to the Charities/Donation Committee and our Chapter membership for final approval.

A motion was made and passed that the \$10 half price Membership special be extended indefinitely. This special program pertains to new AND renewal Chapter memberships.

Larry Tschappat reported that we are holding at 440 members. We vacillate between 7th & 8th place nationally.

Larry added that Chapter member Jim Hixson of Silvis donated a 2010 American Veterans Disabled for Life Commemorative Silver Dollar to be used raffle to generate Chapter funds. THANK YOU JIM!!!

Larry also emphasized that in all Chapter or National elections, the voter must have a valid DD-214 (or other discharge papers) on record to vote. There is no exception. All agreed that this is the corner stone of our Chapter's election protocol.

A motion was made & passed that Rocky Bleier be extended

a complementary Chapter membership.

Dennis Lair briefed the Board on Honor Guard activities. This year, the Chapter was not represented at the Springfield Vigil as in years past. Dennis stated that there were not enough members available to fill the one hour required time slot. It should be noted that Bob Segura and Frenchy Eaves did go and stood with our sister organization, MAVA.

Chapter 299 VVA hat pins are sold at Chapter meetings (\$3 each), but more importantly, they are given to hospitalized vets during the Vet 2 Vet trips to the VA hospitals. The inventory is low and by summer's end, a new batch must be ordered. A motion was made and passed that we allocate \$400 for new Chapter hat pins (order to be place at a later date).

Under GOOD OF THE ORDER, Terry Kramer recommended The Politically Incorrect Guide to the Vietnam War by Phillip Jennings as a "must read" for every VN & Era vet.

Bill Albracht proposed a standing motion (which passed) that states that any Chapter member who receives money from the Chapter to attend a class, convention, meeting, or any other activity, must submit a comprehensive report to the Board & Membership. The only exception is the Honor Guard who will provide a verbal report (see article in this issue of STS for the complete standing motion. Bill also announced that

**God Bless America  
&  
God Bless  
Our Troops & Veterans.**

 **Eriksen**

***CHEVROLET • BUICK***

Milan, Illinois



# AND NOW YOU KNOW

There have been a few stories as to the origination of the military Challenge Coin. According to the USMC NEWS, 04 Mar 2005, one story has the challenge coins originating during World War I. American volunteers from all parts of the country filled the newly formed flying squadrons. Some were

wealthy scions attending colleges such as Yale and Harvard who quit in mid-term to join the war. In one squadron, a wealthy lieutenant ordered solid bronze medallions and presented them to his unit. One young pilot placed the medallion in a small leather pouch that he wore around his neck. Shortly after receiving

the medallion, the pilot's aircraft was hit by ground fire and he was forced to land behind enemy lines and was immediately captured by a German patrol. In order to discourage his escape, the Germans took all of his personal identification except for the small leather pouch around his neck. In the meantime, he was taken to a small French town near the front. Taking advantage of a bombardment that night, he escaped. However, he was without personal identification. He succeeded in avoiding German patrols by donning civilian clothes and reached the front lines. With great difficulty, he crossed no-man's land. Eventually, he stumbled onto a French outpost. Unfortunately, saboteurs had plagued the French in the sector. They sometimes masqueraded as civilians and wore

medallion. He showed the medallion to his would-be executioners and one of his French captors recognized the squadron insignia on the medallion. They delayed his execution long enough for him to confirm his identity. Instead of shooting him they gave him a bottle of wine. Back at his squadron, it became tradition to ensure that all members carried their medallion or coin at all times. This was accomplished through challenge in the following manner – a challenger would ask to see the medallion. If the challenged member could not produce a medallion, they were required to buy a drink of choice for the member who challenged them. If the challenged member produced a medallion, then the challenging member was required to pay for the drink. This tradition continued on throughout the war and for many years after the war while surviving members of the squadron were still alive.



**Vietnam Veterans of America**  
**Chapter 299**  
**Golf Tournament**

September 10, 2010  
Highland Springs Golf Course  
1400 18th Street  
Rock Island, Illinois



**Listen Up!!**

Preferred Ball & Man Scramble  
1:00 Shotgun start  
Entrance Fee \$240.00 per team  
(\$60.00 per person)  
Includes:

- Golf
- High Road to follow (Roast only \$10.00)
- Door Prizes
- 1 Complimentary Keg of Beer after golf
- 2 Drink complimentary beverage tickets in cart

Prizes for 1st Place, 2nd Place  
and Middle Score  
Women and mixed teams welcome!  
50/50 Raffle

**ALSO**

- Mulligans for sale
- Special events
- Car for hole in one



Questions call Jim Levell @ 795-0521 or  
Dick Schroeder @ 795-8549 Chairman John  
Katheman 795-7995

Register by August 15, 2010  
Checks payable to VVA QC Chapter 299  
P.O. Box 8078  
Rock Island, Illinois 61201-8078



**DONATIONS ACCEPTED:**  
*No. Ringers Please!*

*All proceeds support Veterans /  
Community Programs and  
Honor Guard Service*



civilian clothes. Not recognizing the young pilot's American accent, the French thought him to be a saboteur and made ready to execute him. He had no identification to prove his allegiance, but he did have his leather pouch containing the

"minutes" cont. from page 2

Ron States is moving out of the area and therefore has resigned as Chapter Newsletter Co-Editor. Ron is being replaced by Jim Loveless (see article in this STS). Business was concluded and the meeting was adjourned.

MINUTES VVA 299  
MEMBERSHIP MEETING –  
05/18/2010 – RIA

The meeting was called to order by President Ray Hamilton with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for our fallen and missing brothers, both past and present.

All Chapter 2010-2011 officers were introduced.

The minutes for the April Board & General Chapter meeting, as well as the minutes from the March Board meeting were accepted and passed by the membership with comment for the record from Fred Barks. Fred read in the March Board minutes that a motion by Andy Ortiz was passed by the Board in which the Election Committee (EC) was to issue tickets to all voting members as they entered the meeting. Once the meeting was underway and nominations from the floor (if any) were complete, the EC would exchange the tickets for ballots and then the voting would commence. Fred asked why this motion was not followed by the EC,

to which Ray answered that the EC was unaware of the motion. Fred then asked whose responsibility it was to pass this information on to the EC. At this point Chapter Secretary Bill Albracht requested to answer the question. Albracht advised Barks that the responsibility to notify the effected party of a Board motion rests with the Chapter Secretary. Barks then asked Albracht why this notification was not done. Albracht advised Barks that Todd Harlow (as noted at the bottom of the published minutes) was the acting secretary at this meeting so he could not speak as to why the EC was not notified. Todd was unavailable for comment.

At this time Hamilton addressed the Chapter in reference to the planned Chapter election protocol (see minutes).

Ray also asked everyone to consider what is to be done with this Chapter 20+ year's future. E-mail him with any suggestions.

The Baker/VN Vet Monument remains on schedule (see Board minutes and story this issue).

Our Chapter's physical office is being moved due to the fact that IL Oil bldg. has been sold. Bob Jackson has secured funding from the City of RI for our move. Although volunteers will be needed, the work load will be very light.

**VOLUNTEERS:** Besides volunteers to assist on Thursday evening Bingo at the Moline America Legion, Hog Roast Volunteers are also needed. The idea is to compile a list of 30 individuals who could be called upon to work event date by event date. This could entail volunteering a couple of hours or for the duration. If on one day an individual is busy, the next event day the individual could be free to help.

Larry Tschappat provided the membership report – see Board minutes.

Charities Committee/  
Donation Committee – See Board Minutes.

Honor Guard – The Honor Guard continues to be active in the community in parades, veteran funerals, the presenting of the Colors, flag disposal as well as much more. They are always looking for members. See bottom right directory of the STS if interested in being a part of our Chapter's finest.

Vet 2 Vet – Vet's Day Iowa will be held at the Marshalltown Vets Home on June 26th. See Frenchy Eaves for further details. Chapter 776 will be traveling to the IA City VA Hospital on June 16th at 8am from the Flying J parking lot. All are welcome to make the trip with our sister Chapter from Bettendorf.

The Treasurer report was given by Terry Kramer. All is

in order.

The Welcome Home Veterans Day Dance is looking for a new home. The COL Ballroom has lost its parking lot on the east side of the building. This eliminates the majority of the safe lighted parking in and around the COL. The Committee has a proposal to a suitable venue out at this time, more to follow.

The Chapter's AVVA will be sponsoring a GARAGE SALE on July 9th & 10th at 164-15 Avenue, EM and it will run from 7a-4p. See Freda Goodwin for additional information.

Art Hyderman, Chapter 776, addressed the Chapter in reference to emergency assistance for military families here in the QCA. With men & women deployed, many families suffer financial hardship. Art can be contacted through Chapter 776.

The Chapter's \$25 drawing for Chapter members in attendance was won by Jim Kerr, who promptly donated it to the Baker/VN Vet Monument fund. THAN YOU JIM!!!

The 50/50 VVA life membership was won by Al Van Lerberghe.

With no further business, President Hamilton adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by Bill Albracht – Chapter Secretary

[WWW.QCVVA299.ORG](http://WWW.QCVVA299.ORG)

# ARMY HERO AND NFL LEGEND TOGETHER

On Friday evening, July 30th, 2010, Chapter 299 and Jumer's will sponsor a cocktail reception at Jumer's Hotel & Casino, Rock Island. The event will run from 6pm-9pm. We are very fortunate to have the Quad Cities own Medal of Honor recipient, John Baker AND NFL legend and combat wounded and decorated Vietnam veteran Rocky Bleier!

Tickets to this reception

are \$50 each to the general public and \$40 each to VVA Chapter 299 members. This too is one of a series of fund raisers for the John Baker/Vietnam Veteran Monument that will be dedicated on Saturday at 11am.

The dress will be business casual and there will be an open bar plus hors d'oeuvres. This will also be an event to acknowledge and thank many of the



people that made our Chapter's monument project happen.

John had a book, we would have that there too!

By request, Rocky will have copies of his book **FIGHTING BACK**, which tells the inspiring story of his life and his incredible journey from the NFL to Vietnam and back. While recovering from his wounds, he was told that with therapy it was likely that he would walk without a limp. Four Super Bowl rings later, he continues to set the standard in what one can accomplish in life.

Tickets to the Baker-Bleier reception will be available at the door but for planning purposes, please make a reservation. Contact Bill Albracht at [walbracht@gmail.com](mailto:walbracht@gmail.com) or call at 797-2660. If you are interested in a copy of Rocky's book, also notify Bill so one can be reserved in your name.

The Monument Committee

The books are available in limited quantities and all will be signed by Rocky. If

## CHAPTER TO MOVE OFFICE... AGAIN

Two years ago we moved the Chapter office/storage into the ILLINOIS OIL building in Rock Island. It has been sold and is slated to become housing. Chapter member Bob Jackson, former owner of IL Oil, has taken up the task of finding our Chapter a new home to secure our Chapter records, our Honor Guard equipment, and all the rest of the items that our Chapter holds.

Your Chapter Board has inspected and approved our new space. So in July we will be moving to the third floor of the Rock Island Safety Building located on 3rd Avenue at 18th Street. Although our physical address will change, the phone number and PO Box will be unchanged.

The rent for this office space in this immaculately maintained building will be a modest \$234 a month and will include all utilities. Chapter Treasurer Terry Kramer is coordinating the lease and the physical moving of all the Chapter's required documents, records and equipment.

# OFFICIAL CHAPTER TRAVEL ACCOUNTABILITY

At the Board of Directors meeting on May 11, 2010, the Board passed the below standing motion by a wide margin. The standing motion speaks for itself, but more importantly it speaks to the membership that the Board requires accountability to the membership when Chapter monies are spent.

All official Chapter travel will be documented and information gleaned as a result of the travel will be relayed to the membership via a report that will be published in the Chapter Newsletter – Shoulder To Shoulder (STS). See below:

“Any Chapter member who attends a class, convention, meeting or any type of travel in which the Chapter pays

all or part of the incurred expenses, shall be required to submit a comprehensive report in writing to the Chapter Board and membership within 30 days of their return. Failure to comply will result in the Chapter member repaying the Chapter the amount of the allocated funds.”

“The only exemption to this motion will be travel expense incurred by the Chapter Honor Guard when it is acting in its official capacity and by direction of the Board. A verbal report will be required in lieu of a written report. This report will be given by the Honor Guard leadership to the membership at the next scheduled Chapter meeting upon their return.”

## MAVA GETS TRIVIAL

That’s right; MAVA will be hosting a Trivia Night at the Moline American Legion on Friday night, July 23rd. The doors will open at 5:30pm and the game starts at 6:30pm. Trivia Night is always fun and even more so in the company of fellow veterans & friends. Please support this MAVA event as they have supported ours.

## 2010 CHAPTER COMMITTEE CHAIRS

President Hamilton has selected the Chairman positions for the Chapter committees (see May Board minutes this issue). If there is a committee that you wish to serve or an area of interest you would like to pursue, see the committee chair to volunteer.

## WHAT A WEBSITE!

Take a look at our website, [www.qcvva299.org](http://www.qcvva299.org), at least once a month. It is chock full of interesting information and chapter events. It includes links to important chapter info such as ABOUT VVA, CHAPTER EVENTS, MISSION STATEMENT, MEMBERSHIP, CONTACTS, CHARITIES/DONATION PROTOCOL, LINKS, and ADDITIONAL VETERAN INFORMATIONAL LINKS. It also includes recent posts from YouTube and other sites that are of interest. We can thank the sole sponsor, Eriksen Chevrolet-Buick in Milan, for this living web. Without their support, this website would not even exist. We can also thank Eriksen Chevrolet-Buick for being a major sponsor of our chapter newsletter.

# VETERANS' EMERGENCY CARE FAIRNESS ACT OF 2009

This is a bill introduced by Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Daniel K. Akaka (D-HI) to cover gaps in emergency care for veterans with limited insurance. The bill was introduced on February 10, 2009 and signed by the president on February 2, 2010 as the Veterans' Emergency Care Fairness Act of 2009.

"For veterans with limited insurance, a trip to the emergency room should not result in financial ruin," said Chairman Akaka. "With this new law, VA will be positioned to help veterans who are enrolled in VA care whose insurance does not cover the full cost of emergency treatment."

According to Jose M. Garcia, National Executive Director Catholic War Veterans, USA, The Veterans'

Emergency Care Fairness Act will enable the Department of Veterans Affairs to reimburse veterans enrolled in VA health care for the remaining cost of emergency treatment if the veteran has outside insurance that only covers part of the cost. Previously, VA could reimburse veterans or pay outside hospitals directly only if a veteran has no outside health insurance.

He also stated that in addition to reimbursing veterans for emergency care in the future, the bill allows the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide retroactive reimbursements for care received prior to the passage of this bill. Akaka has received correspondence from veterans who were unable to receive financial assistance under the previous rules,

and plans to share their information with Secretary Gen. Eric Shinseki.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that this legislation will cover approximately 700 future claims per year and as many as 2,000 veterans retroactively.

According to Senator Akaka and Director Garcia, this will help veterans who need emergency care and previously would have been hit with the bills associated with that emergency care.

To view this bill in its entirety, go to [www.vawatchdog.com](http://www.vawatchdog.com) and click on SENATE CVA NEWS on the left side of the page. Then scroll down until you find it listed.

## FAREWELL TO A GOOD FRIEND AND A VALUED VVA MEMBER

It is with mixed emotions that I am writing this article. We, as friends and fellow VVA members, are saying farewell to Ron Staes. Ron and his family are moving to Texas to enjoy his retirement. Those of us who have known Ron for years are sorry to see him go, but wish him the best in his new digs. Those of us who are still working are quite envious! Ron has been one of the hardest workers in this chapter over the years and was recognized by being named Chapter Member of the Year for 2009. He has been Co-Editor of the Shoulder To Shoulder newsletter and has helped raise that publication to its current very high level. Ron's editorial abilities and attention to detail has lifted the newsletter to be one of the best of its kind in the nation! Along with the STS, he has been involved in the co-chairing of the Veterans' Day Dance, on the Charities Committee, on the John

Baker/Vietnam Veterans Monument Committee, and also helped head up the Senior Olympics. These are only a few of the activities that Ron was a part of.

I will be assuming the position of Co-Editor of the newsletter after Ron's departure. At this point, I am not involved in as many activities as he. I am a member of the chapter Honor Guard and am very proud of that unit and what we do. I am also still working full time for the Iowa Workforce Development Center. I will try to the best of my ability to maintain the high standard that he has set.

Please join with me in wishing Ron a fond farewell and a happy retirement. He will be sorely missed!

-Bill Albracht

# SGT BAKER/VN VET MONUMENT NEARS COMPLETION

The photos below represent an almost two year process that is coming to completion with its dedication on July 31st. QCA artist of note, John Ketner is in the finishing process for the bronze sculptures that are to anoint the

three sided obelisk style monument.

The oval bronze is that of a young John Baker back "in the day"



and was taken from an old photo. He stands at the ready now as he did then. His MOH citation will be inscribed around his bust. Side two will be a tribute to all QCA Vietnam and Vietnam Era veterans who served. Side three will embrace all veterans, past, present and future.

The monument will set atop a stone base and on one side of the base embedded into the stone and mortar will be a brick from the infamous Hanoi Hilton. This brick

will honor all those who were POWs as well as those whose fate is still unknown.

The eagle, symbolic of the American warrior ethos, is vigilant and at the ready. He is prepared to defend and attack if necessary. Baker's Medal of Honor is secure in the talons and is shown to remind us of the extraordinary

duty, honor and bravery that John Baker displayed in his actions in defense of our country.

The watchword here is Legacy. Our Chapter will end with the passing of the last member, but this monument will always be a reminder of who we were and that **WE SERVED WITH HONOR.**

Chapter 299 Monument Committee – Ray Hamilton, Bill Albracht, Joe Murphy, Mike Ellis & Ron Staes.



## DD-214 – NEED IT? GET IT!

In the last 4 years or membership rolls have tripled. We have welcomed in our brothers from coast to coast and boarder to boarder. We have went from an obscure Midwest Chapter to the 7th or 8th largest in the over 600 Chapters nationwide. With growth of this magnitude comes the administrative burden of keeping our Chapter records updated and correct. Several members have joined our Chapter with a verifying “buddy letter” to substantiate eligibility. The word of a member in good standing vouching for his veteran brother is a personal guarantee and trust that is the center piece of our organization. And as good as this is, once in the door, we need the paper. Larry Tschappat, our membership chair, is

in the process of updating our Chapter records. If your separation papers (DD-214, et al) are not on file, we will be contacting you and requesting same. It should also be noted that your DD-214’s are kept under triple lock security and are never, let me repeat that, NEVER released to anyone or any organization except VVA National.

It is the most important document that a veteran has. It is the first thing you are handed upon separation and the first thing your family needs for veteran death benefits. It should be filed with your respective County Clerk’s office and kept in a safe place at home. But yet it is surprising how many vets haven’t the foggiest idea

where they can lay hands on theirs. Guys, do yourself and your family a solid and get your DD-214 now, you will never regret it.

Go to [www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/](http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/) and click on the vet record request at bottom of page OR you can write the NATIONAL PERSONNEL RECORDS CENTER, 9700 Page Avenue, St. Louis, MO, 63132. If your request is written, use an SF 180 (which can be found on-line) if possible. If it is not used provide as much information as you can in reference to SSN, DOB, dates of service, place of discharge, etc. Do it today.

## THE SPIRIT OF THE BAYONET NOW A GHOST

Basic training – 1966 - fix bayonets. The DI’s yelled at us all the burning question; “WHAT IS THE SPRIT OF THE BAYONET?!?” And we answered in a resounding chorus that was so loud and with so much feeling we surly would scare Charlie all the way back to Hanoi “TO KILL WITHOUT MERCY!!!” and we believed it! Who was bad? Well at Ft. Campbell, that of course would be basic training company B-4-1, Awake Alert & Ready. Sir!

So imagine my shock and surprise when I read about the demise of the bayonet. It will go the way of the Calvary sa-



ber and the .45 pistol. Once a staple, now a museum piece. To quote LT Gen. Hertling of the Army’s Training & Doctrine Command, the Army wants to “make the training relevant to the conditions on the modern battlefield.” So it is fitting that Col. Louis Millett, who lead the last official bayonet charge of

the US Army while commanding a Infantry Company in Korea, passed last year. When I spoke to him last, I asked him a simple question...why a bayonet charge. And like the story of the man who took off all his clothes and ran through a cactus patch and was asked why, he simply “it seemed like a pretty good idea at the time. So to Medal of Honor recipient Louis Millett and the US Army bayonet – rest in peace. Just one man’s observations - Bill Albracht

# VA LINKS MORE DISEASES TO AGENT ORANGE

It fell like a mist. It wasn't a pleasant thing to be caught in, but we all figured that the result went in the plus column. Clearing a perimeter and increasing field of fire was a good thing, how it was done turned out to be a bad thing...a very bad thing. Agent Orange and other in use jungle defoliants have not been conclusively linked to a myriad of serious and often fatal disorders. We now have three more: ischemic heart disease (IHD), Parkinson's disease and chronic B-cell blood cancers, including hairy cell leukemia.

These are the latest additions to a list that never seems to



stop. If you served in-country, you were exposed. If you were exposed, you are at risk. If you

are at risk, you must always keep this in mind when seeing your doctor. Sadly, more times than not, you must also educate your physician about Agent Orange and how it can manifest itself in your body. There has been much research and much written, but at the end of the day, it is the VN veteran that has yet another price to pay for service to their country. Questions? Contact your local VA or VA advocate (see Veteran Service Officers-VSO- listed on the page one directory).

## RIVER BEND TROOP SUPPORT – BRINGING A TOUCH OF HOME TO THE TROOPS

AVVA Member Jeannie Flagel, wife of Chapter member Scott, has been sending deployed and hospitalized area troops everything from hand lotion to bug repellent for the past several years.

Our Chapter has donated to her cause each year since her first request and as long as Jeannie continues her work, we will continue to be one of her sponsors. Our last donation (May 2010) will be used to help pay postage on donated cases of Girl Scout cookies.

Think of that for a moment. How good would that be to receive “back in the day”?!?

To date, RBTS has sent over 1,400 “care packages” to the greater Quad Cities Area troops. As she relays from one of “her guys”, sometimes being forgotten is on your mind more than the enemy.

If you have a serviceman in a war zone, e-mail Jeannie at [sjaflag@netins.net](mailto:sjaflag@netins.net) with his/her address.

**SHOULDER TO SHOULDER IS BROUGHT TO YOU EACH MONTH BY:**

**BILL ALBRACHT NEWSLETTER CO-EDITOR**

**and SEAN MURPHY - CHAPTER WEBMASTER & NEWSLETTER COORDINATOR**

