Please note the location for breakfast today!!

Come and have breakfast with other chapter members at the Chat-R-Box in Kellner.
Breakfast starts at 9 a.m.

Chapter Membership Information
Life memberships are now $50.00. There is no longer a yearly membership.
YOU MUST SUPPLY A COPY OF YOUR DD - 214 WHEN APPLYING. NO 214, NO MEMBERSHIP!
NATIONAL SAYS THE 214 IS DESTROYED WITHIN 30 DAYS OF RECEIPT.
Contact Ron Clark at 715-421-4615 if you have membership questions or need help.
Breakfast Note

Breakfast this month. Our breakfast meeting will be held at the Chat-R-Box in Kellner. The date is Monday, February 3rd. Breakfast starts at 9 a.m. Please come by and join us!

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American Heroes Cafe' Activities
Crossview Church – Wisconsin Rapids
Courtesy of Bill Haack

The cafe is open and coffee and donuts available for your enjoyment! Looking forward to seeing you there! Please note the closing coming up below.

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There will be regular hours until March when we take a Winter Break.

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From Chapter President
Bill Haack

3 Quick Notes:

1. If there are any members of 101 who have not received a Quilt of Valor and would like to get one, please contact Bill Haack ASAP.

2. Sign ups for Orange Blossoms will begin with the March meeting. We are adding two places in Marshfield this year. This is an untapped area and should be very good. Since we are the only Chapter in Wood County, it falls within our area. We will only be doing 4 hours on Friday and four hours on Saturday at these two locations. I especially want to encourage people to volunteer for a shift or two that have not participated in the past. This is our major fund raiser and it determines the amount that we can donate to veterans projects throughout Wisconsin.

3. I want to express a special Thank You to the Color Guard and all others for participating in the events over the holidays.
VVA Monthly Raffle

The “Monthly Drawing” is now being done among those who are present. The 50/50 Drawing continues to be done as before.

In December Bob Holtz won the 50/50 Drawing and Tom Sachs won the Monthly Drawing. Congratulations to both!

Looking Ahead
Feb. 3rd - Breakfast at the Chat-R-Box.
Feb. 13th - NO CHAPTER 101 MEETING TONIGHT!
Feb. 20th - VFW Post Meeting - 7 pm.

Mar. 12th - First regular Chapter 101 Meeting of the New Year at the VFW Post - 7 pm.
Mar. 19th - VFW Post Meeting - 7 pm.

Apr. 9th - VVA Chapter Meeting, VFW Post at 7 pm.
Apr. 16th - VFW Post Meeting - 7 pm.

1. You can tell a lot about a woman’s mood just by her hands. If they are holding a gun, she’s probably very unhappy.
2. You know that tingly little feeling you get when you really like someone you’ve just met? That’s common sense leaving your body.
3. I didn’t make it to the gym today. That’s 1,500 days in a row.

Kid’s Advice to Kids
“Don’t wear polka-dot underwear under white shorts.”
Kellie - age 11.

Ritchay Funeral Home
715-423-1414
1950 12th St. S.
Wis Rapids, WI

Feldner/Ritchay Funeral Home
715-886-3161
615 1st St
Nekoosa, WI

“Family - to - Family Service”
Unmanned Ships

The head of the U.S. Navy's Fleet Forces Command has ordered the service's surface force to develop a concept of operations for both the large and medium unmanned surface vessels in development, according to a December 19th message seen by Defense News. The message, which was coordinated with U.S. Naval Forces Europe and U.S. Pacific Fleet, directs the surface fleet's Surface Development Squadron to develop concepts for “the organization, manning, training, equipping, sustaining, and the introduction and operational integration of the Medium Unmanned Surface Vehicle and Large Unmanned Surface Vessel with individual afloat units as well as with Carrier Strike Groups, Expeditionary Strike Groups, and Surface Action Groups.”

The message comes after a long battle with Congress over funding for unmanned surface combatants, during which lawmakers expressed skepticism that the Navy was knowledgeable enough about the technology for which it was seeking funding. Ultimately Congress appropriated funds for the Navy to buy two large unmanned surface vessels, but lawmakers forbade the service from equipping the vessels with vertical launch tubes, as the Navy intended. The concepts of operations is meant to define what would be considered “initial operating capability” for the medium and large USV’s and goes on to define what those platforms are intended to do.

1. Medium Unmanned Surface Vehicle will be a high-endurance vessel with capacity for carrying various modular payloads,” the message read. “Large Unmanned Surface Vessel will be a high-endurance vessel equipped with Vertical Launch System (VLS) cells.

2. The Medium Unmanned Surface Vehicle will initially focus on intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) payloads and electronic warfare (EW) systems, while the Large Unmanned Surface Vessel will focus on surface warfare (SUW) and strike missions.”

The message directs the Surface Development Squadron, which was created last year to incorporate new technologies such as the DDG-1000 and Sea Hunter into the force, to examine several areas of consideration. The group is to examine command and control for the platforms, as well as potential challenges with interoperability and communications; examine issues with basing, maintaining and supporting the new platforms; look at what the vessels will need in terms of sensors, computers and various supporting systems; and look at what kind of training and personnel will be will be needed to support unmanned operations. The group is directed to have a first draft by February and a final draft prepared by September of this year. Ultimately the group’s work is intended to help inform acquisition requirements.

The Navy recently emerged from a bruising fight with Congress over its designs for integrating unmanned technology into the surface force. Navy leaders have publicly acknowledged congressional skepticism. In October, the Navy’s top requirements officer told an audience at the Expeditionary Warfare Conference in Annapolis, Maryland, that the platform will be difficult to develop.” I don’t want to be Pollyannaish about this: It’s going to be hard work,” said Vice Adm. Jim Kilby, the deputy chief of naval operations for war-fighting requirements and capabilities. “And when we brief this, we go right to the upper right-hand corner of the difficulty spectrum. “So we have been working with the acquisition community to roll out a test and competence program so we can get something to the war fighter that they’re confident they can use.”

What Congress wants to see is more gradual development and proof of concept before it commits serious funding, Kilby told reporters after his remarks. "What I think they are interested in is 'Block I will have the following capabilities and we're going to test them in the following manner, and you can see the results of that test.’ “ Kilby said. “Then we are going to move on to Block II and Block III. They're interested in us having a ramp-up and build confidence, achieve those capabilities and they can follow that.

“Let’s talk about that first instantiation: Maybe that's going from point A to point B, follow [the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea], not hit anything, follow the rules of the road. Well, that serves a number of purposes from a deception standpoint. And if those platforms can do that, then maybe I can add capability as I prove out that concept.” The message from Fleet Forces Command described the Navy's acquisition strategy as "a rapid, iterative, block approach to further develop, test, and employ new capabilities, aligned with the Surface Capability Evolution Plan,” referencing a document developed inside the office of the chief of naval operations that lays out plans for a future surface force.

Congress approved the two LUSV's the Navy requested, but forbade the service from installing a vertical launching system. Furthermore, lawmakers are withholding funding until the Navy's top acquisitions official briefs them on the path forward for these systems. “Incremental upgrade capability for a vertical launch system may be addressed in future fiscal years,” read the agreement between House and Senate appropriators.

(From DefenseNews / Jan. 1, 2020)
USS Maddox
Where the Vietnam War Began

The United States Navy commissioned the USS Maddox toward the end of World War II as a fast carrier escort for action in the Philippines and South China Sea. An Allen M. Sumner-class destroyer, the Maddox supported carrier raids against Japan and American operations on Okinawa after recovering from a Kamikaze attack earlier in 1945. She would also participate in UN operations during the Korean War, but would gain infamy prior to the Vietnam War in the Gulf of Tonkin.

In early 1964, South Vietnamese forces, trained and supported by American commandos, began conducting raids on strategic North Vietnamese positions, termed Operation Plan (OPLAN) 34A. These raids provoked North Vietnamese forces to engage American Naval ships in the Gulf of Tonkin who had been collecting signal intelligence (SIGINT) for the OPLAN 34A raids.

Shipping out from Taiwan in July 1964

In July of 1964, Maddox shipped out from Taiwan to collect SIGINT as part of her Desoto patrol along the coast of North Vietnam from the Demilitarized Zone up to China. OPLAN 34A raids were being conducted in the area and North Vietnamese naval forces were actively responding to South Vietnamese incursions.

On August 1st, Maddox intercepted SIGINT indicating North Vietnamese patrol torpedo boats were getting underway, potentially to engage the Maddox. With the three North Vietnamese vessels quickly approaching, Maddox’s Captain John J. Herrick ordered warning shots across the bow of the advancing vessels once the aggressors came within 10,000 yards. When addressed, the North Vietnamese responded with torpedoes and 14.5mm machinegun fire. Unable to sail close enough to inflict damage on the Maddox during the 22-minute skirmish, the North Vietnamese retreated to the northwest. American F-8 Crusaders arrived on the scene from carrier Ticonderoga and pursued the North Vietnamese torpedo boats, heavily damaging two of the three while leaving one flaming and dead in the water.

Phantom Attack & Gulf of Tonkin Resolution

The Maddox continued her Desoto patrol, now escorted by fellow destroyer USS Turner Joy, with OPLAN 34A raids continuing in the region. The Maddox was on high alert due to the previous attack and new U.S. intelligence revealing that the North Vietnamese government was planning offensive maritime operations in the Gulf of Tonkin. On the morning of August 4, inclement weather and 6-foot waves prevented the Maddox and Turner Joy from relying on their radar systems to gauge enemy positions. A combination of these variables would lead to what had been seen as the phantom attack, which evoked the notorious Gulf of Tonkin resolution.

At 2040 on August 4, Maddox reported she was tracking inbound unidentified vessels. Over the next three hours, the two destroyers would make evasive maneuvers at high speeds while expelling over 200 5-inch shells and 100 3-inch shells at the phantom attackers. F-8 Crusaders would later report that there were no other vessels in the vicinity and the destroyers had most likely been picking up the wave tips on their sonar, already deemed unreliable due to the weather. Captain Herrick later submitted a report to this effect, casting further doubt on the events that had transpired on that day.

Regardless, President Johnson and Defense Secretary McNamara would use these attacks to justify retribution and American intervention on behalf of the South Vietnamese. On August 5th, the USS Ticonderoga would launch a retaliatory attack on a North Vietnamese oil storage facility, marking America’s assumption of a direct role in the Vietnamese conflict.

In the immediate wake of the events that transpired in August of 1963, the USS Maddox quickly became a symbol of North Vietnamese aggression. But as classified documents came to light and time allowed perspective to be shed on these events, the Maddox episode suggested intelligence manipulation and historic counter narratives of the Vietnam War. However, regardless of new interpretations, the USS Maddox remains a naval hallmark in American history and the Cold War.

(Warfare History Network - April 2019)
Robert Garwood - Last Vietnam POW

Garwood was assigned to the U.S. Marine Corps base at Da Nang in South Vietnam as a motor pool driver. The circumstances surrounding his disappearance are in dispute. Garwood claims he was ambushed when he got lost when driving alone in a jeep to pick up an officer. He says his jeep was torched and he was stripped naked.[3] Marine Corps records show on 28 September 1965, Garwood was absent at the 2300 bed check. No unauthorized absence (UA) was reported, since he was thought to have had a "late run." He was reported UA when he failed to appear at formation the next morning.

On 29 September, the Division Provost Marshal was notified of Garwood's absence and an all points bulletin was issued for him and his vehicle. This was repeated for three days with no results. Motor pool personnel searched the areas of Da Nang that Garwood was known to frequent, but nothing was found. On 2 October, the division's Provost Marshal notified the Republic of Vietnam's Military Security Services. Their search efforts also produced no results. Garwood's commanding officer reported to the Commandant, USMC, that in view of Garwood's past record of UA, he believed he had gone UA again and had possibly been taken POW. However, he recommended there be no change in Garwood's status and that he remain UA until evidence proved otherwise.

Two separate South Vietnamese agents eventually reported that the Viet Cong claimed a U.S. serviceman and his jeep had been picked up in the Cam Hai region, about 11.5 miles from the Da Nang Marine Corps base, when the serviceman had become lost. The American had been captured and the jeep burned. However, a ground and aerial search for the burned vehicle produced no results, nor did four platoon search operations on 1 October. Two additional infantry platoons swept the area near Marble Mountain the next morning but also found nothing. On 12 October, the 704th ITC Det (Cl) authorized a 100,000 VND reward for information leading to the recovery of the missing serviceman and additional 2,500 VND for the recovery of the vehicle.

On 3 December 1965, Company I, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines found a document titled Fellow Soldier's Appeal with Garwood's name on it, on a gate near Da Nang. The document recommended that U.S. troops stop fighting in Vietnam and return home. The signature (B. Garwood) may well have been made by a rubber stamp and the English usage suggests it was not written by a native English speaker. A second version of this document was found on 18 July 1966 in the Da Nang area, but it appeared to be on better paper and the signature was at a different angle.

Based on these, on 17 December 1965 Garwood's status was changed from "missing" to "presumed captured".

On 15 July 1968, a Marine Corps reconnaissance team named Dublin City operating in the vicinity of Troui Mountain near Phu Bai engaged a Viet Cong unit. According to contemporaneous debriefing notes, now declassified, four members of Dublin City reported that one of the VC fighters was a Caucasian, who was shot during the action and yelled to his VC comrades "Help me!!" in English. The "white VC" was described as 20–25 years old, with brown hair, 5' 6" tall, "round eyes", and speaking very distinct English. Because they were outnumbered, Dublin City broke off contact with the enemy but were followed. In a subsequent firefight a few minutes later, PFC C.G. Brown was killed. In September, 2011, 43 years later, President Obama awarded one team-member of Dublin City, James Wilkins, a Silver Star for heroism on that day. Following receipt of the Silver Star, he recalled the white VC incident and stated "Myself and three other Marines looked at about 200 photos of guys who were missing in action. All of us were positive it was Bob Garwood, who apparently had defected and was helping the VC."

Garwood says he saw other U.S. prisoners of war after 1973 and says he himself had been held prisoner for 14 years, though there are inconsistencies. Many former POWs claim to have seen Garwood apparently collaborating with the enemy.

In June 1992, a U.S. task force examined the sites where Garwood claimed to have seen live U.S. prisoners. They interviewed nearby residents and met with Vietnamese officials. The task force reported that "no evidence could be found to suggest that there are, or ever were, any live U.S. POWs" in those areas.

The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) investigated Garwood's claim that he saw live U.S. POWs after 1973 at a "motel-shaped masonry building" in North Vietnam. The DIA reported it could not locate any masonry structures at the indicated location. Senator Bob Smith requested that the DIA search again. After a second search produced no results, Smith initiated a personal search with ABC News, Garwood, and Bill Hendon. The group traveled to Vietnam in 1993. Following Garwood's directions, they reported they had found a building exactly as Garwood had described it. The Vietnamese government and a former head of the DIA POW/MIA office disputed the finding, stating the structure had not existed when Garwood was a POW. Some independent investigators claim that Garwood represented an embarrassment to the U.S. government at the highest level for leaving live POWs behind and therefore did everything possible to discredit him. (February 5, 1981 - "On This Day in History & Wikepedia")
Marine Math
(Courtesy of Tom Heiser)

The Korean War, in which the US Marine Corps fought and won some of its most brutal battles, was not without its gallows humor.

During one such conflict an ROK (Republic of Korea) commander, whose unit was fighting along with the Marines, called legendary Marine General Chesty Puller, to report a major Chinese attack in his sector.

"How many Chinese are attacking you?" asked Puller.

"Many, many, many, many, many Chinese!" replied the excited Korean Officer.

General Puller asked for another count and got the same answer, "Many, many, many, many Chinese!"

"Dammit!" swore Puller, "Put my Marine Liaison Officer on the radio."

In a minute, an American voice came over the air: "Yes Sir?"

"Lieutenant," growled Chesty, "Exactly how many Chinese you got up there?"

"General, we've got a whole shitload of Chinese up here!

"Thank God!" exclaimed Puller, "At least there's someone up there who knows how to count!"

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Location, Location, Location!
(Courtesy of Gary Schoenborn)
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Computer Security

FOR MY SECURITY ALL MY PASSWORDS ARE PROTECTED BY AMNESIA!

Another Young Soldier
Army - 1970 - Vietnam

There Is a Reason!

I remember a friend telling me about a journey he was making from Point A to Point B on a freeway one day, and he was in a great hurry. There was a section of the freeway that had not yet been completed. It seemed to him that they'd been working on it an awfully long time and as he looked at it on his approach, it appeared that the only thing left to do was paint the lines. He reasoned that if he could get around the huge “Road Closed” signs and head on down the brand-new freeway, he wouldn’t need lines - he’d be the only car on the road.

He managed that; he maneuvered his car around the signs and headed down the freeway, whipping along feeling very clever.

But alas! As he got a couple of miles farther there was a section of overpass that had not yet been finished, and he had to make a U-turn and go all the way back.

Obviously he wasn’t the only driver who had ever tried this very good idea. On the flip side of the huge “Road Closed” sign was this hand-lettered message: “Welcome back, stupid!”
Upcoming Events / Articles

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