

VETERANS HELPING VETERANS



McHENRY COUNTY CHAPTER



"The Chapter with a Heart"

February 2009

McHenry County Chapter of ViêtNow
"THE CHAPTER WITH A HEART"

MEETING: General Meetings are open to the public and are held on the **fourth (4) Tuesday of each month** at 7:30 P. M. at the McHenry VFW – 3002 W. Route 120, McHenry.

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**** BOARD OF DIRECTORS ****

PRESIDENT:	Joe Lewis	815-568-8939
VICE-PRESIDENT:	Bobby Jones	847-409-1947
SECRETARY:	Tony Bilus	815-648-2826
TREASURER:	Steve Rucki	847-458-9850
DIRECTORS:	Rick Cross	815-403-3613
	Joe Ferrenti	815-653-4114
	Mike Wisniewski	815-344-5873
	Bill Richards	815-344-9591
	Harry van Beetz	847/516-9722

ADVISORS: All Past Chapter Presidents

****COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS ****

BYLAWS:	Joe Lewis	815-568-8939
CHAPTER PROGRAM		
GRANTS:	Joe Lewis	815-568-8939
CONVENTION:	Joe Lewis	815-568-8939
"JIM TOBER BASKETS":	Rose Lewis	815-568-8939
MEMBERSHIP:	Joe Ferrenti	815-653-4114
NEWSLETTER:	Rose Lewis, Editor	815-568-8939
NOMINATION/ELECTION:	Joe Kersten	815 338-1796
POW/MIA:	Steve Rucki	847-458-9850
PTSD:	Alan Belcher	815-344-0411
CHAPTER VETERAN		
SERVICE OFFICER	Ted Biever	815-338-9292
"RAP" GROUP INFO:	Alan Belcher	815-334-0411
VAC: Delegate:	Joe Kersten	815-338-1796

VETERANS HELPING VETERANS
All Chapter Board Members and Membership

****NATIONAL OFFICERS ****

PRESIDENT:	Rich Sanders (Mary)	DIRECTORS:
VICE-PRESIDENT:	Jim Stepanek (Marcia)	John Davis (Sandy)
SECRETARY:	Darrell Gilgan (Linda)	Gary Eisenhower (Sue)
TREASURER:	Terry Buscher (Linda)	Augie (Katie)
		John Bates (Dawn)

National Office Telephone: 815-227-5100 and E-mail: nationalhq@vietnow.com

EDITORIAL POLICY: The Newsletter Staff will evaluate all articles submitted as to appropriateness and Relevancy. Newsletter items must be submitted to the editorial staff by the Chapter meeting each Month.

Presidents Ramblings for February 2009

Joe Lewis, Your Chapter President

Here's to February everyone. Another month closer to spring and then onward we march into the summer. Yah, ho. It has been a long winter this year for all of us. Nevertheless, we are Midwesterners and we should be use to this kind of weather.

HOLIDAY DINNER - The chapter had a great holiday dinner on February 7. Too bad that those who called in their rsvp didn't make it. We had some real good chicken, Italian beef, Mostaccioli and salad. Rose baked some of those "Butter Braids" we are selling for everyone to sample. Everything was so good. The food, awards, surprises, and the great friends and family who came out to join the chapter that night.

CHAPTER PICNIC - We are making plans to have a late June or early July chapter picnic to install the incoming board and to have some non-business us time. Some food and beverages, games (yea, right), and companionship is on order for this fun time. As we make more detailed plans, we will keep you informed on who, what, and where's.

FLASHBACK TO THE HOLIDAY DINNER - Just a small note about the holiday party that I can't let pass by without commenting on. There was a lot of fun on the plates that Saturday evening. Everyone had a great time and many laughs being shared all evening. It was a treat to see Gary and Sue Eisenhower and Sam and Sandy Veer from Freeport. Also coming out for the night was John and Gail Sorensen and Mike and Pat Carlson.

We listened to stories of days long passed yet very much still a part of our chapter's history. We stuck around until "Joe's" closed up at 10:30 that night. Rose and I listened too many saying to each other how much fun they had and how they had stayed up pass their bedtime. Now that WAS funny. I know that their comments were not intended for us to have overheard. Hearing these comments alone was a tribute to how much we enjoy putting this on each year.

VETERAN'S HAPPINGS AROUND McHENRY COUNTY – So what is the latest around McHenry County as far as veteran issues are concerned? Let us check the barometer and see.

- Oh yes, the Veterans Assistance Commission of McHenry County will be changing from door to door pick up to pick up points come March sometime. There will be three such points in three cities. These will be at the Woodstock VFW, the McHenry VFW, and in Crystal Lake at the municipal parking lot just down from the downtown train station. If you live in any other city, they might have alternative travel for you or you might have to find your own way to the pick up point.
- The Veterans Assistance Commission is seeking volunteers to help riders get to the pick up points. If anyone wants to become a volunteer, call the VAC office to set up screening, classes, what they need of you.
- Jim Masella asked if ViêtNow could help with the fundraiser for the Ghilardi Family. This is the family whose mom and son died in an accident. The mother Linda helped us one time at the gate in Peterson Park. The fundraiser will be Saturday February 28, 2009 at the Wool Street Grill and Sports Bar in Cary. The address is 800 Feinberg Court, Cary, Illinois. It would be appreciated if you could make it. They could use our support. There will be four bands, silent auction, raffles, and free appetizers. So go on out and have a good time.

CHAPTER PROGRAM GRANTS FROM NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS – For the last few years the ViêtNow national headquarters has had a Grant Program that was set up to provide chapters with grants to help fund their internal chapter programs. Due to the sign of the times, economy, grants to each chapter will be limited to a total of \$500.00 maximum per chapter. In years past, this was the maximum per grant and a chapter could put in multiple grants each chapter could submit. (Our chapter has put in for and received up to seven grants at one time.)

In order to keep up with some of the programs we have, we will change gears on how to fund the work. If you have, any ideas besides hiring a telemarketer, come on out to your chapter meeting and let's discuss your idea. We have tried dances with no success. Maybe your idea is what we need to raise these funds.

WHAT WAS THAT – Do you know how many national presidents ViêtNow has had in 29 years?

Answer - Four! Nick Parnell, Lamont Gaston, Ed Rogers, Ed Dixon, Ed Banach, and Rich Sanders.

Stand Tall, and Be Proud
You are the Best of your Generation, You are ViêtNow

Cruising the Mediterranean

By Tony Bilus 02/01/2009

Disclaimer: The opinions and ideas presented below and criticisms, actual or perceived, are those of the author and in no way reflect the views of VietNow, McHenry County VietNow Chapter, their officers, or members. The author wishes to present his observations and in no way is intent on belittling, insulting, or ridiculing any one person or person's sensibilities. Please take everything presented herein with a grain of salt.

A visit to Pompeii/Herculeum is equivalent to a visit of a cemetery. Here lie the remains of people that were caught by surprise, though it should not have been so, by a downfall of volcanic ash and hot lava stones. Unlike the rowdy, noisy, bustling tourist crowds at the ruins of the Roman forum in Rome, the tourist visitors at Pompeii assume a more somber, pensive and reverential air about them. It is reminiscent of a ceremonial function at a cemetery as opposed to a curiosity driven evaluation of buildings and streets. It is, after all, a place where people got buried, although it was not planned.

Though tourists are driven by curiosity, the crowds are almost silent throughout the visit as they view, in awe, the slices of almost 2000 year old Roman life uncovered by the archeologists. Because the people of Pompeii/Herculeum were caught by surprise when Mount Vesuvius erupted, they were going about their daily lives and activities, without much concern, until the violent eruption buried them in tons of ash. It is an archeologist's and historian's dream to find and uncover evidence of what people did, what they ate and how they lived. Pompeii presents them with all the evidence and proof needed to recreate that period of time. The frescoes found in some of the buildings paint idyllic scenes of day to day life. The bakeries and eateries contain grains and food offerings that reflect the culinary and dietary customs of the day. The bath houses display some erotic scenes that may disturb some people's sensibilities. In those days there were many graffiti artists who left their irreverent marks on many walls. Pompeii is a veritable smorgasbord to an archeologist, historian.

Imagine that day, August 24th; in the year 79 of the Common Era, if you were a Roman worshiping the pagan gods, you would have wondered why god Vulcan unleashed all the powers of Hades upon you. If you were

Jewish you would have believed that Yahweh was visiting his punishment upon Pompeii and Herculeum as He did on Sodom and Gomorrah. The Christians would have thought that the "End of Days" was upon them, since a few years earlier the temple in Jerusalem was demolished by an act of war and occupation – prophetic Armageddon, now the return of Christ was nigh. For all those who were not able to escape the cities, it was the End of Days, if they were able to find cover or shelter, it was temporary, because the protoplasmic explosions, as witnessed by Pliny the Younger, who saw his uncle Pliny the Elder, succumb to a protoplasmic blast. Pliny the Elder, managed to escape the initial onslaught of volcanic activity; he decided to return to the city for additional observations, he was after all the chronicler, historian of the day, when he met his doom.

Today, we know a little more about volcanoes than they did in those days; we know that "Mother Nature" and "Mother Earth" are unpredictable and undiscerning. Violent storms, forest fires, earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes and volcanic eruptions wreak havoc upon people and are happening on a regular basis. God may have a hand in these in a way, but we know that these activities can take place anytime and anywhere. And we live with the fact that we will all encounter our own "End of Days" eventually. Our lives are but a drop in this vast ocean of existence, we are here today and are gone tomorrow.

Thus we reverently walked past plaster encased cadavers, on cobble stone roads. We saw the frescoes and visited the residential and bath houses that have been excavated to date. The excavations continue and soon more information will be gleaned about those days from the newer diggings. It is hard to visualize the devastation caused by Mount Vesuvius since it appears quite distant from this location. Mount Vesuvius has erupted several times again, a few times, even recently, in my own lifetime; but these eruptions were mild in comparison to that day.

That evening we embarked our cruise ship in the port of Naples and set out to sea for our trip to Barcelona. We would spend two nights and a day at sea, our cruise coming to an end. The return trip to Barcelona, gave us time to absorb all that we have seen and where we had been. We departed Barcelona and visited places in France, Italy, Turkey and Greece; we walked in and saw medieval cities, ancient ruins, modern cities built upon and around ancient ruins. We walked in and saw ancient temples and newer old churches and mosques with their

minarets. We walked on the rim of a dormant volcano, a volcano, which erupted some 3500 years ago and may have played a part in the liberation of the Hebrew nation from Egyptian slavery. A volcano that erupted and is believed to be the cause of a highly advanced civilization's vanishing from the face of the earth. We walked in and saw ruins of once active and bustling cities, that are still and barren today. We walked in and saw the oldest continually inhabited city in all of Europe and possibly the world, as new discoveries are made. We walked in and saw a slice of ancient life in a city buried by volcanic activity and partially excavated today.

As we pondered about our experiences, we prepared to disembark the ship as soon as it pulled into the port in Barcelona. We prepared our luggage the night before so that upon arrival the luggage would be unloaded for us to pick it up in port and be able to make our flights home. The luggage was there when we disembarked; the taxi was there when we were ready to travel to the airport. We arrived at the airport in what appeared to be "plenty of time", only to find extremely long lines at the passenger check-in. We took up our place in a slow moving line and waited for our turn for check-in. It appeared to us that at the rate the lines were moving, we would not make our flight from Barcelona to Madrid, where we would have to transfer to another plane. The lines were moving so slowly, several people passed out and fainted while waiting. We finally reached the check-in agent, received our boarding passes, checked our luggage and barely made our flight. This of course did not bode well.

Our return flights were uneventful and several hours later we were prepared to land at O'Hare airport. The landing and arrival were smooth and upon exiting the plane and going to luggage claim area we discovered that our luggage did not make the flight with us. We would have to go home without our luggage, without the clothes, without the souvenirs of our trip. The airline promised to deliver the luggage to us as soon as the luggage arrives. Without luggage, we cleared customs easily and soon left the airport on our way home.

It was good to be back in the USA, this is where our hearts and souls reside. It is great to visit exotic places, but there's calm and reassurance in the familiar and beloved. After all we are Americans and America still is the greatest country in the entire world.

We arrived home that Sunday and upon entering our house, Sherry called out Peanut's name. She had missed the little dog during our trip and was eager to reconnect

with him. Mr. Peanut, as I call him, appeared to be still upset by the fact that he was left behind and alone, he did not appear to grasp the concept that we have returned and cautiously emerged, from under his hiding place, to reassure him self that he was not just dreaming and that he did hear Sherry's voice. After a few moments of investigative stares he was reinvigorated, excited and reanimated, he jumped into Sherry's lap. All was forgiven, he was content to be with Sherry and the "abandonment" issue was forgotten.

Our luggage did, finally, arrive and was delivered to us at one thirty in the morning on Tuesday.

Thank you, Tony B.



☺ BREAKFAST WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS ☺

**February 22, 2009 (SUNDAY)
@ VAUGHAN' RESTRAUANT
ROUTE 47
WOODSTOCK, IL
9 AM**

"SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT"

JOE FERRENTI
IS OUR NEW MEMBERSHIP CHAIRPERSON

PLEASE WISH JOE "WELL"
☺ WE LOVE YOU JOE!!! ☺

PLEASE PAY YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2009 – 2010
\$15 YEARLY
\$150 LIFE MEMBERSHIP

DUE BY JUNE 30, 2009

☺ THANK YOU ! ☺

PLEASE PAY AT THE NEXT MEETING OR MAIL TO:

**ATTENTION: JOE FERRENTI
MCHENRY COUNTY VIETNOW
PO BOX 998
MCHENRY IL 60050**

McHenry County Chapter of VietNow is having TWO Fund-Raisers
Our Chapter needs to raise funds for our 2009 Jim Tober Christmas Baskets.
This year we will deliver 40-45 baskets to Veteran and Needy families throughout McHenry County.

CHICAGO BEARS FOOTBALL (laser autographed) RAFFLE

Starts now and ends on 04.28.09
Winning ticket will be drawn at the April 28th McHenry County Chapter of VietNow Meeting
(Winner need not to be present)
Tickets are \$1.00 per ticket or Six tickets for \$5.00
(Case comes with the football)



The Chicago Bears names on the football are: REX GROSSMAN, ROBBIE GOULD, DEVIN HESTER, MIKE BROWN, NATHAN VASHER, CHARLES TILLMAN, JASON MCKIE, DANIEAL MANNING, BRIAN URLACHER, LANCE BRIGGS, OLIN KREUTZ, ROBERTO GARZA, PARTICK MANNELLY, CHRIS WILLIAMS, JOHN TAIT, RASHIED DAVIS, GREG OLSEN, MARTY BOOKER, TOMMIE HARRIS, HUNTER HILLENMEYER, ADEWALE OGUNLEYE, and MARK ANDERSON.

The other fundraiser the Chapter is holding is selling **BUTTER BRAID PASTRIES.**

These pastries are to die for...they are out of the world.

They are worth the price...**Each pastry cost \$11.**

These are the BEST!!!! They melt in your mouth....(see picture below) All you do is let them raise for 8 - 10 hours covered in plastic (they come to you frozen) - put them on a greased cookie sheet (TAKE OFF THE PLASTIC) - set oven at 325 degrees and bake until golden brown. Let it cool off and put frosting on top (each pastry comes with a packet of frosting).



Butter Braid Flavors: Raspberry, Cherry,, Apple, Cinnamon, Cream Cheese and Bavarian Cream Filled
Butter Braid Pastries - \$11 each

This fund-raiser will start now and run until March 28, 2009.
Delivery will be on April 6 & 7th, a couple of days before Easter.

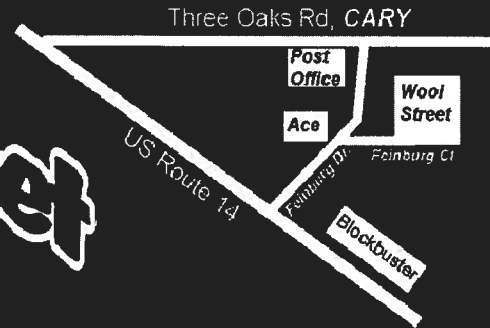
Please contact Rose or Joe Lewis at 815-568-8939 (home) or send us an email at jrl5130@sbcglobal.net if you want to buy raffle tickets or order a pastry.

The Chapter's goal is to sell 150 pastries and sell A LOT of tickets. ALL profits from these fundraisers will be used entirely to support the "Jim Tober" Christmas Basket Program.

**CHARITY
BENEFIT**

Wool Street

Grill & Sports Bar



800 Feinberg Court, Cary, IL 847.462.9665 www.woolstreetgrill.com

PRESENTS the...

GHILARDI FAMILY

*CLOSE FRIENDS
OF JIM & DEB
MASELLA -*

FUNDRAISER
CHAPTER MEMBERS.
IN LOVING MEMORY OF

LINDA GHILARDI & BUDDY JET

SAT, FEBRUARY 28th 7pm

FREE APPETIZERS • FREE LIVE BANDS • CASH BAR

- **AXE GRINDER**
- **WILL KRUGER**



- **MY BIG BEAUTIFUL**
- **RAMPAGE**

- **SILENT AUCTION**
- **RAFFLES**

Special Thanks to all our friends at:
Guitar Center, Harley Davidson of McHenry, Omaha Steaks,
La Los Mexican Restaurants, and many others....



McHenry County Chapter
P.O. Box 998 McHenry, IL 60051

postage

Next Meeting
Tuesday, February 24, 2009
@ 7:30 pm

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY



McHenry County Chapter ViệtNow Membership Application

DATE _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____
NAME _____ PHONE () _____
ADDRESS _____ CITY/STATE/ZIP _____
SERVICE BRANCH _____ DATES OF DUTY (1957-CURRENT) _____

_____ I am a veteran and want to be a **FULL MEMBER OF ViệtNow**

_____ I am not a veteran but want to be an **ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF ViệtNow**

Enclosed is my check for _____

**Memberships are \$15 annually renewable June 30th.
Veterans must enclose a copy of their DD214 form.
Send with check payable to: McHenry County Chapter of ViệtNow
PO Box 998, McHenry, IL 60051**

For a sum of ten (10) times the yearly dues , one can become a LIFE MEMBER