



Dear Veterans and Friends of the BVA,

AS WE ENTER INTO THE HOLIDAY SEASON, we are closing our inaugural year. It's hard to know where our journey will take us. However, we can look back on a year of some distinction. Not only have we revived a sense of *Espirit d' Corps* among those who have served and shared similar experiences, but we also have begun a number of worthwhile endeavors.

I would like to thank a number of people who have contributed to making our mission a success.

With the great support of Mike Bebon and Laboratory management, the birth of the BVA has helped restore to this site, patriotic observances and a rekindled sense of veterans pride.

A smart salute to the committee chair of our local Adopt-a-Platoon initiative, Ken Erickson! Ken, along with Mike Paquette, Maria Beckman, Joanne Rula, Janet Sikora, Denise Rodgers, and Joyce Fortunato have done an incredible job with this effort and to date, were successful in sending over 1.5 tons of assorted care packages to our men and women serving overseas in places like Iraq and Afghanistan. This was not an easy undertaking yet was accomplished with great aplomb. Our troops can take a little comfort in the knowledge that they are being remembered. It is noteworthy that the leaders of the national Adopt-a-Platoon organization in St. Louis view BNL as our Nation's leading participant and contributors with this cause!

With the quiet determination of people like Scott Bradley, a new effort is underfoot. Scott, along with Paul Ribaud, John McCaffrey, A.J. Temprosa, Gary Jorgensen, Gary Gottlieb, Louie Nieves, Dennis Ryan, Dave Peter, Dave Dono, Joe Devoe, Chuck Schuster, Joe Pagano, Bruce Laakmann, Chuck LaSalla and Pat Zocolli have answered a new call by partnering with the Suffolk County United Veterans (SCUV) organization to help out fellow veterans who, through circumstances, have found themselves homeless. This dynamic team will work along side these proud veterans to provide much needed repair to the residences they are living in. By working together, skill sets possessed by the BVA members would be shared to the residents enabling them to become more self-sufficient.

Our fellow veterans in the Safeguards & Security Division have also been busy with a cause very near and dear by working with the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind of Smithtown. This organization has been working closely with Brian Buckheit, Dave Peter, John Amabile and members of our military. Two Black Labrador retrievers, Boe & Budge, trained as guide dogs, have been enlisted for the mission of easing combat stress for U.S. soldiers at medical units in the Iraq cities of Tikrit and Mosul. You may have read a recent article in Newsday. This is a new program and we are very excited to have a role in this campaign.

I would like to acknowledge Jane Koropsak for her thoughtfulness by initiating a Holiday card campaign to our military personnel convalescing in the Northport VA Medical Center and to Joanne Rula whose computer skills and kindness have provided us with a very professional web page. Thank you very much ladies!

Of course we would not be as successful if it weren't for other wonderful people who have supported us – our Friends of the BVA. I can assure you that this list is long and distinguished and although your name does not appear, your continued acts of generosity are very much appreciated.

Many thanks to our new friends in and out of the Laboratory who have collected items at their facilities and brought them to us for distribution. The Quogue Fire Department coordinated by Ed Shea, the Middle Island Fire Department Rescue Company 4 Ambulance Officers coordinated through Marcel Rosenfeld, the West Sayville Coast Guard Auxiliary via Bill Goetz, the Air Flotilla Coast Guard Auxiliary at Islip-McArthur via Ted Blank (ex Marine), Verizon's Mike Todd and Tony Romano via Chris Carter and her Aunt Cissy, and to Barbara Lade and Carol Kramer.

I would like to offer a special acknowledgement to our fellow BNL employees who have loved ones serving;

John Bruce, Gretchen Cisco, Tom Daniels, Bill Denehan, Don Dunningan, Joyce & Joe Fortunato, Joe Gadbois, Bridget & Rich Geib, Rob Gerry, Ronald Grzybowski, Debbie & Chris Johnson, Cindy McQuilken, Mike Paquette, Frank Pomaro, Janet & Bob Sikora, Al Vestal, and Tom Walters.

Lastly, to my fellow officers of the BVA who have provided me with clear and immeasurable guidance.

In closing, I would like to wish each of you a peaceful and restful Holiday Season and a Safe, Happy & Healthy New Year.

Very respectfully,

Don Farnam
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