



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kemp Hannon

Richard A. Olson

KEMP HANNON May 15, 2017

| ISSUE: **VETERANS HALL OF FAME**



Mr. Olson enlisted in the USNR at Freeport Long Island in 1965, and began basic training at Great Lakes Naval Training facility in August of that year.

After completing basic training, Mr. Olson was assigned to the USS Reeves DLG24, a guided missile frigate stationed in Long Beach, California. In May 1966, the Reeves received orders, and got underway for Japan and a two-year non-rotated tour with the seventh Fleet.

Mr. Olson was assigned Quartermaster duties aboard the Reeves, which entailed upkeep of navigational charts and equipment and standing deck watches on the bridge while underway. Arriving at her new homeport of Yokosuka in June, she departed shortly thereafter and anchored in Da Nang Harbor, Republic of Viet Nam.

July 1966 began a tour of duty off the embattled coast. For the next two years, the Reeves regularly sailed south from Japan for combat air-sea rescue (CSAR) tours off Vietnam, compiling a total of 493 days underway, 312 of which were in the Gulf of Tonkin. During her tour of duty as an SAR ship, they recovered many pilots whose aircrafts were damaged from enemy fire while on a bombing mission and unable to return to their carrier.

These rescues were accomplished by both Helo recovery as well as Long Boat (lifeboat). The Reeves was the first naval vessel to pick up political escapees from the embattled country who made their way to the ship via the traditional "basket boat" fishing boat.

Mr. Olson's military obligation ended in June 1967 at the rank of Petty Officer QM3. Now, 49 years later, he joined an organization that supports our brave men and women who are actively engaged in the war on global terrorism.

Mr. Olson is current President of Adopt a Battalion, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the support of these troops serving in Afghanistan, Kuwait and Iraq. Adopt a Battalion was started in 2004 by Jack Parker to support his son, then Major Timothy Parker, USMC deployed in Iraq during the Desert Storm conflict. Jack Parker and members of the Knights of Columbus in Massapequa Park began sending care boxes to these soldiers to supplement them with much needed items that the government did not supply them. Last year the group shipped 1,971 boxes at a cost of over \$17,000.00. This year, the goal is to send at least 2,000 boxes.