

STIRRING TRIBUTE

Veterans' advocate Ted Aub remembered in tribute

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By Lisa Reisman

BRANFORD — In the middle of a busy workday last Wednesday, roughly a thousand people turned out to pay their respects to Madison's Theodore "Ted" Aub, who died in late September at the age of 70.

This past Saturday, another 125 gathered on a bright afternoon at Killam's Point in Branford on the occasion of a Take A Vet Fishing event to remember the tireless advocate for veterans and, as volunteer Ray Luhn, a TAVF founding member, put it, "simply one of the very best humans on the planet."

His number came up in the national draft in 1966 for Vietnam, Luhn told the group, but a draft overage canceled his call to serve. "Ted then dedicated his life to taking care of those who served and the families of those who did not return," he said.

Among other roles, he was the Connecticut coordinator of the National League of POW-MIA families, a post he intertwined with Connecticut's POW/MIA Recognition Day during which he arranged the "Missing Man Table," according to VFW Post 12106 Commander Elliott Hastings.

"Ted set an empty table for one, with a white cloth, a glass turned over, and a lit candle as a tribute to those who never came home," Hastings recalled. He performed that ceremony all over the state.

He'd do that in the

morning, Hastings said. "Then he went to the West Haven VA to visit sick veterans or help the vision-impaired play bingo."

When a donation of a wheelchair or a scooter for a disabled veteran would come into the Branford VFW, the longtime owner of A&A Auto Parts on Meadow Street in Branford "picked it up and drove it to the veteran who needed it," Hastings said. "If it wasn't working, he fixed it."

When he heard of a former marine who died, he brought his children gifts at Christmas. Then he started a college fund for the children.

As a member of the CT Welcome Home for Vietnam Veterans' Day committee, the New Haven native helped arrange a lavish event to "finally, after 45 years, acknowledge" their service, Aub said in 2015.

In the belief that the words homeless and veteran should never go together, the father of four and grandfather of five assisted homeless vets as part of the Vet Hunters Project. He also volunteered at CT VA hospitals, working in amputee support services.

"Ted set the bar as a volunteer," Joe Canzanella, assistant chief of volunteer services at the Newington VA, told the group. "He lived by the motto, 'if you can help somebody, help somebody.'"

"Ted would do anything for anybody at anytime," said East Haven's Mike



Lisa Reisman / For Hearst Connecticut Media

The late Ted Aub, of Madison, at Rose Day for the Marine Corps League at Stop & Shop in Branford in early September.

Oliverio, a Vietnam Army veteran, who pledged to fly American flags with three ribbons at Take A Vet Fishing events, where Aub also volunteered.

"One ribbon will say 'POW-MIA,' another will say 'Ted Aub,' and the third will say 'brother,'" Oliverio said, his voice

cracking over the cry of a seagull. "Ted was a brother to all of us."

For more information about Take A Vet Fishing, visit Take A Vet Fishing on Facebook or contact Jeff Buggee at 203-488-7201.

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