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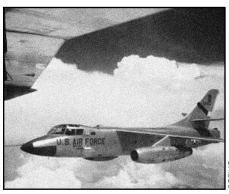
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What Do These People Have In Common?



VVA Kentucky State Council President Darrel Martin and VVA National President John Rowan met with United Auto Workers President Ron Gettelfinger.

THEY'RE A FEW OF THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE UP VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA. THEY'RE VETERANS, AND THEY INVITE YOU TO JOIN THEM.

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Vietnam Veterans of America was granted a congressional charter in 1986 as a nonprofit veterans service organization.

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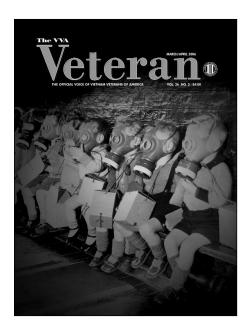
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LETTERS



FIGHTING FOR RIGHT

My hat is off to John Rowan, whom I met about 25 years ago through Gold Star Wives in New York. I like what I just read in his President's Message in the March/April issue, in which he wrote about two issues of interest to retirees and Gold Star Wives—proposed increased fees in the Tricare health care program and the so-called "widows tax." I also like President Rowan's comment regarding grassroots help.

Many thanks for your continued fight for what is right for veterans, widows, and orphans.

> Rose Lee Chair, Legislative Committee Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. Via e-mail

A PLACE OF PEACE

Thank you for your tribute to the Angel Fire memorial in the January/February issue. It's a mere half-hour drive east of Taos, which is a mere hour north of Santa Fe, New Mexico, an easy drive. The chapel is stunning and stands on a hill overlooking a wide valley. Inside is a truly sacred space. It is empty, save for a large candelabra at the foot of which we leave votive candles and mementos. The chapel embodies an emptiness that can never be filled.

And yet it is full of the spirits of those who gave all. And it is in tribute to all who served. It is especially a place of peace for the Invisible Army, the WIA who live with the wounds and the trauma from a war that has been called "the argument without end."

Adele Borman Redondo Beach, California

A LOCATOR SUCCESS

would like to thank you for publishing my Locator message in the May/June 2005

issue. In my message, I said I was looking for Sgt. Robert Skaggs, whom I served with in Vietnam. After 36 years of on-and-off searching, a lot of phone calls, and searching on line, late one evening last July my wife and I pulled into the garage after returning from a Chapter 862 memorial service for one of our members. My daughter came running out and said, "Dad, that guy you have been looking for just called ten minutes ago." I turned to my wife with tears running down my face. I was speechless.

We later talked for over three hours. I found out he lives in Oklahoma. A friend of his had seen the message and put it in his lunch box with a note saying, "I think someone's looking for you." This summer we plan on getting together for the first time in 37 years.

Thanks for your dedication and hard work and the service you provide to all veterans who belong to our fine organization.

Pete Petrosky Industry, Pennsylvania

MEDALING IN WAR

Regarding the expansion of the Vietnam Service Medal, I fully understand and agree that the Vietnam Service Medal should not be expanded to locations to include other than in-country veterans. However, I will submit to you that perhaps those who served during the war outside of the Republic of Vietnam should receive some type of medal or award that indicates that they served during the Vietnam War. It could be called the "Southeast Asia Service" medal.

In World War II, they issued an Asiatic Pacific Campaign medal. The Gulf War had a Southwest Asia Service medal for participation in, or support of, Operation Desert Storm.

This is similar to the issue of Cold War veterans who want a Cold War Service Medal to honor their service.

Rich Palazzo Via e-mail

OUT-COUNTRY VETERANS

would like to respond to the letter, "Not Guam," in the March/April issue. I was stationed on Guam in 1967-68 and 1969 on two bomb teams and drove crew shuttle, working 12-to-14 hour days. The guys I was with were hard working and very proud of what we were doing. Our orders read, "In Direct Support of the Southeast Asia Mission."

continued on page 6

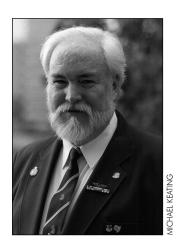
POLICY FOR LETTERS We welcome letters to the editor for publication in *The VVA Veteran*. We are interested in your criticism as well as your praise. Letters may be edited for purposes of clarity or space. Regrettably, because of the volume of mail we receive, we are unable to acknowledge or return unpublished material.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Modest Victories

BY JOHN ROWAN

y President's Message is beginning to feel like a Hollywood sequel, perhaps Scary VA Budget III. For the last several months we have been spending a significant amount of time and effort in lobbying the House and Senate in support of our Legislative Agenda. We have consistently pointed out that we are concerned that there are not enough funds to provide for the health care services and to process the claims for service-connected disability benefits earned by veterans. As usual, we focused on the three main issues: Funding, Accountability, and Outreach. Although it is always hard to judge the effectiveness of one's efforts, we can point to some modest victories.



As of this writing, Congress appears ready to defeat proposals by the Bush administration to raise the fees for veterans' health services, including increased prescription co-pays. Furthermore, thanks to the efforts of House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee Chair John McHugh (R-N.Y.), Department of Defense plans to pass on increased costs of Tricare healthcare coverage to military retirees and their families have been thwarted until December 31, 2007.

These are clearly only temporary victories, however. During my testimony before the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I was drawn into a conversation with Chairman Larry Craig (R-Idaho) regarding his concerns about the long-term viability of providing funding for veterans' health care. Reiterating statements made by one of my predecessors several years ago, Sen. Craig challenged VVA and, in turn, the entire veterans' community to come up with ideas for funding the VA. On VVA's behalf, I gladly accepted the challenge and restated our proposal that Congress create a bipartisan, joint House and Senate commission to review VA funding. This is similar to Rep. McHugh's proposal for a commission to study the funding needs for health care for military retirees and their families.

We've won some battles, but the war is far from over.

As we continue our battles, we will have one less warrior on our side. Rep. Lane Evans (D-Ill.), the ranking member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee and an old friend and life member of VVA, recently announced that he is going to retire at the end of his term. Despite suffering from Parkinson's disease, Lane Evans continued to advance an agenda that acknowledged the contributions of America's veterans. This former Marine lance corporal will be greatly missed, but his contributions will not be forgotten.

THE WAR TAPES

One of the perks of living in New York City is having access to lots of events. Recently, I had the privilege of attending the Tribeca Film Festival, where I saw the premiere of a new documentary, *The War Tapes*, which is reviewed in this issue. While I'm not an art critic, I can tell you that this movie was outstanding. It is an honest look at war from the soldier's perspective. It does not pull any punches, yet it does not attempt to push any particular political agenda. We hope to show it during the Leadership Conference. I hope this will be an added incentive to attend.

After the movie, I joined two local VVA members, Ken Trautman (173rd Abn) and Joe Panzardi (1st Cav), and our wives at a reception for the producers. We had a chance to talk with some of the soldiers who did the filming. Iraq is not Vietnam, but there are some similarities. As is discussed elsewhere in this issue, PTSD is still a problem. The big difference between the new veterans and us is that at least they know what PTSD is. However, that does not mean they handle it any better. Which may be where we come in

VVA will soon launch a new initiative called "Vets Connect." This, we hope, will provide support to all the programs that VVA chapters and state councils have been conducting for new veterans. As we develop this project, one aspect may be to provide a mentoring program to help new veterans deal with PTSD. It amazes me how aware they are of VVA and how grateful they are to Vietnam veterans in general. For that we can be proud.

Keep up the good work.

■

Vietnam Veterans Assistance Fund Report

Veterans Benefits Program Succeeds

BY RANDY BARNES, PRESIDENT, VIETNAM VETERANS ASSISTANCE FUND

or the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005, the Vietnam Veterans of America Veterans Benefits Program (VBP) received a grant of \$20,000 from the Vietnam Veterans Assistance Fund. The purpose of this grant is to reduce the appeals backlog at the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) in Washington. To reduce the backlog, the VBP used the funds to obtain a contract with an additional law firm while expanding its contract with its current law firm.

In 2004, the backlog had reached epic proportions, and the VBP was receiving unwanted interest from the BVA chain of command. To combat the backlog and

appease the BVA, the VBP used the grant funds to the best of its ability. On October 1, 2004, the backlog consisted of 411 claims; the oldest was from February 2003. By using the services of the contract attorneys, the VBP was able to knock these numbers down considerably. By September 30, 2005, the backlog was reduced to 279 claims, with the oldest from February 2004. Although there are still a few lingering claims from 2004 awaiting additional evidence, the VBP is just a few claims away from being in January 2005.

In addition to reducing the backlog and wait dates, the VBP still maintained a high level of excellence. During the period between October 1, 2003, and September 30, 2004, VVA had a success rate before the BVA of 92 percent, the highest of any VSO. During this time, the BVA rendered decisions on 360 claims submitted by VVA.

During the same period from 2004 to 2005, the VVA success rate dropped to 72 percent. However, the success rates dropped for all VSOs. As a result, VVA continued to have the highest success rate before the BVA. Our 72 percent success rate was based on 568 claims submitted by VVA and decided by the BVA. The actual number of claims submitted by VVA was much higher.



Vietnam Veterans Assistance Fund (VVAF) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization founded by Vietnam Veterans of America in 1991. VVAF is organized and operated exclusively for scientific, charitable, and educational purposes. The major objectives are to assist disabled and needy veterans and the widows and orphans of veterans. VVAF is funded primarily by contributions from federal employees and members of the uniformed services who choose to support the organization through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), the federal government's workplace fundraising drive.

> Federal employees may support the work of VVAF by designating 2115 on their CFC pledge forms. All donations are tax-deductible to the donor.

These high numbers of claims and favorable decisions were obtained during a period of flux. Prior to the last fiscal cycle, one VVA appellate attorney resigned; another resigned not long after the cycle began. These results were obtained through the hard work of two new VVA appellate attorneys, one new contract attorney, and one volunteer.

The \$20,000 grant from VVAF made a significant impact on the lives of many disabled veterans and their families.



GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

VVA Leaders Storm The Hill

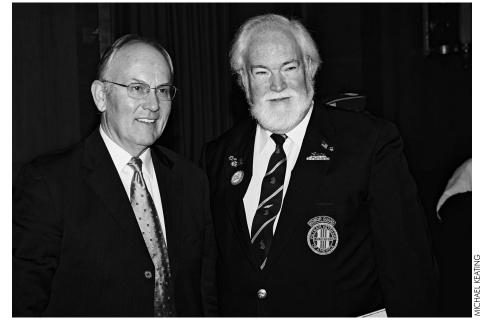
THIS MONTH:

Adjudication Backlog

National Vietnam Veterans Longitudinal Study

New Health Screening Program For Returning Soldiers





In March, VVA President John Rowan testified before the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. Afterward, he chatted privately with Chairman Larry E. Craig (R-Idaho).

BY JOHN A MITERKO, CHAIR, GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, AND THE VVA GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS STAFF

As John Rowan, our National President, noted in his column in the last issue, VVA officers and Government Relations staff are spending a lot of time on Capitol Hill, visiting the offices of members of Congress, talking to them about VVA's 2006 legislative agenda.

Our objective has been to meet with these elected officials and key legislative aides who serve on the Veterans' Affairs, Armed Services, and Appropriations Committees. We focus our conversations on promoting and soliciting support for VVA's highest legislative priorities: a sufficient, reliable, and predictable funding stream for the VA's health care system; accountability on the part of VA managers for using their funds to provide the highest quality of care for veterans who use the VA system; and outreach particularly to the 80 percent or so of our nation's 26 million veterans who don't go near a VA facility, yet who are unaware of the benefits to which they are entitled.

We also seek their support of H.R. 4259, the Veterans' Right to Know Act. If enacted, it should go a long way toward uncovering the truth about the chem-bio testing that may have adversely affected the health of tens of thousands of veterans since the end of the Second World War.

Overall, in the first quarter of the year, we met with 37 Senators or their aides (18 Republicans and 19 Democrats), and 78 Representatives or their aides (40 Republicans and 38 Democrats) a total of 115 legislators. Twelve out of 14 Senate

Veterans' Affairs Committee members were contacted, along with 24 of the 26 House Veterans' Affairs Committee members.

These meetings were facilitated by Carl Tuvin and Jim Kuhn, VVA's special advisers, who use their savvy and years of experience on the Hill to open doors for us.

What are the results of our efforts? While not easy to quantify, we believe we have sensitized the folks with whom we met about the needs of veterans and, of course, our legislative objectives.

In the wake of our meetings, nine additional Representatives have signed on as co-sponsors of H.R. 4259, bringing the total as of this writing to 31 co-sponsors.

CONVERSATION WITH CRAIG

These individual meetings culminated in the presentation of the VVA Legislative Agenda to the House Veterans' Affairs Committee on February 16, and to the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee on March 30.

Sen. Larry Craig (R-Idaho), chair of the Senate Committee, encouraged a giveand-take with John Rowan and the three others on John's panel: George Basher, president of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs; Gerald Harvey, national commander of American Ex-Prisoners of War; and Ed Kemp, AMVETS's national commander.

This session became, to a great extent, a conversation between Sen. Craig and John Rowan, whose recounting of personal anecdotes lent additional credibility and urgency to the veterans' issues being discussed.

Our contingent also met with Democratic leaders in the House of Representatives,

who have come to champion veterans' issues. We expressed to them our concerns and our fears; we received from them assurances that they would continue to fight the good fight to insure that veterans' needs are among their highest priority. Should the Democrats regain control of the House in the November elections, we'll see if their actions match their words.

For whatever positive results that came from all of our meetings, ultimately we need the active support of VVA's membership. Our message needs reinforcement from the grassroots level. To insure the

widest possible distribution of, and support for, the VVA Legislative Agenda, we urge all of you to make a personal effort to contact your Representative and your two Senators and urge them to support the three key points identified at the beginning of this column. For contact information go to the following websites: House of Representatives: http://www.house.gov; U.S. Senate: http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

continued on next page



VVA President John Rowan and his wife, Mariann, met with President George W. Bush on Veterans Day.

LETTERS

continued from page 3

At that time Andersen AFB was one of the biggest forwarding bomb bases in the Western Pacific. We launched operations such as Arc Light, Rolling Thunder, and Linebacker. Missions like these probably keep a lot of boys from coming home in body bags.

I am very offended by the comment, because we were not in Vietnam during the war, we are not entitled to the Vietnam Service Medal, because we received the National Defense Service Medal. Everyone at that time got the medal. Guys like us got nothing: no medals, no thank you, and no respect, especially from in-country vets.

World War II veterans and the support troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan got awards, even though they did not serve in a combat zone. They also receive benefits like membership in VSOs. I think the No. 1 benefit is that they are all called veterans of their wars, unlike the not-incountry veterans of the Vietnam War, who are not considered Vietnam veterans. This really hurts.

Maybe we shouldn't be entitled to the VSM, but it would have been nice to get our own award to recognize us for what we did in support of the ground troops in Nam. I don't think we'll ever have our day, because we have to be accepted by incountry veterans, and I don't ever see this happening. Being accepted would be our award.

Thomas Konieczko Racine, Wisconsin

FATALITIES AT FT. DETRICK

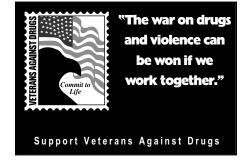
am writing in response to the excellent article in March/April issue, "Cold War Chemical Arms Race" by John Prados.

I am a Vietnam veteran and Army brat. My father was Provost Marshal and chief intelligence officer at Ft. Detrick, Maryland, in the early sixties. The GIs who were used as human guinea pigs for testing various agents there were all volunteers. They were Seventh Day Adventists who were conscientious objectors. Almost none have survived their experience. If they did not die during testing, they died later from side effects of their exposure. Those who died at Ft Detrick were disposed of in the incinerator, I was told.

They may not have been willing to carry a weapon in Vietnam, but they served their country as much or more than those who served in Southeast Asia.

Charles T. Balent Kentwood, Michigan

■



GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

continued from page 5
BUDGET PRIORITIES

ongressional Quarterly noted recently that "President Bush reiterated he will veto spending bills if necessary to restrain spending and stay on track toward cutting the deficit in half by 2009. Bush has made similar statements in the past, but has not exercised a veto because Congress has generally remained within Bush-proposed spending limits."

What's wrong with this statement? We are spending billions and billions of dollars in the attempt to export democracy to Iraq. Many of these billions are supposed to rebuild and enhance the infrastructure in Iraq, as well as to construct schools and clinics and the like. And all of these dollars are in a supplemental appropriation, initiated by the administration and thus far rubber-stamped by Congress.

Does anyone, including the President, think that these supplementals exist in another stratum, one that doesn't affect the looming deficit?

Do any VVA members think that at least some of this money could be better spent on, say, long-term care facilities for veterans? Or for VA clinics in rural areas? Or for additional centers of excellence that would help the VA care for veterans with certain service-connected conditions, such as spinal cord injury, amputation, or blindness? Or for a host of other domestic initiatives that help veterans and their families?



As part of VVA's March lobbying effort, President John Rowan and adviser Carl Tuvin met with Sen. Ken Salazar (D-Colo.).

ATTENTION NAVY VETERANS

When the FY'06 Defense Authorization bill is finally signed, sealed, and delivered, Navy veterans might be interested in this small item: The House version of the bill calls for "cooperative outreach to members and former members of the naval service exposed to environmental factors related to sarcoidosis."

Sarcoidosis is a chronic disease of unknown cause characterized by the enlargement of lymph nodes in many parts of the body and the widespread appearance of granulomas, or grainy tissue, produced in response to infection, inflammation, or the presence of a foreign substance.

This provision would obligate the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs to conduct an outreach program to identify and find seamen who may have increased risk of sarcoidosis as a result of having been exposed to particles resulting from the removal of non-skid coating used on naval ships.

The Senate is expected to go along with this provision.■

Next Issue: much news on Agent Orange Developments in 2006



AVVA/VVA

has designated

the United Spinal Association

as our chosen charity for the coming year.

You may visit their web site at

www.unitedspinal.org to see what amazing work this organization provides, for veterans, for children, for all people with spinal injuries.





MEMBERSHIP AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT

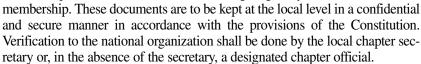
Resolution Update

BY BILL MEEKS, JR., CHAIR

hat follows is a list of the committee's Convention Resolutions and the actions that the committee has taken on each of them.

VERIFICATION AND SECURITY OF DD FORM 214

(M-1-03): requires that all applicants for individual membership in VVA must provide a copy of their DD Form 214 or other acceptable documentation establishing eligibility for



Every new membership application received in the national office is checked to be sure that a DD Form 214 is submitted and that the nature and dates of service conform to the membership-eligibility criteria. The same is done for all new life membership applications, even those from current individual members.

In cases of missing DD Form 214s or those that do not meet the eligibility criteria, the member is contacted. If the issue can't be resolved, the applicant is offered membership in AVVA. The members' DD Form 214s are entered into the database. The chapter roster will show whether there is a DD Form 214 on file with VVA National. This process allows VVA to view each DD Form 214 entered by a click of the mouse.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN VVA'S ORGANIZATIONAL LEVELS

(M-2-03): recognizes that the national office must reply to all communications from state councils and chapters within five working days, and state councils and chapters must reply to all communications from the national office within ten working days. The Membership Director and staff and the Membership Chair and committee respond on a daily basis to all communications pertaining to membership. The Membership Affairs Committee continues to provide a direct avenue for the membership to express their concerns, problems, and ideas to the committee. The Membership Affairs Committee sponsors the "Membership Chairs" talk list and the Membership Affairs Committee Chair is a member of the VVA talk list.

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH AND RETENTION (M-3-03): requires, at all levels in VVA, the development of a master plan to recruit and retain members, using all available resources on a priority basis. The 2003 VVA Membership Survey was conducted to provide statistically valid information pertaining to attitudes, opinions, and demographics of VVA members. The survey data was used to anatomize and facilitate VVA's strategic planning to develop the Membership Development Plan.

The 2003 National Membership Retention and Recruitment Plan includes short and longer term goals (one to three years), incorporating maximum effort coupled with minimum costs to VVA. Since membership development should be viewed as the core process of VVA, the State Council Membership Development Plan is being presented to all state councils to enhance recruitment and retention of members at all levels of VVA.

SUPPORT CREATION OF SOUTHWEST ASIA VETERANS ORGANI-

ZATION (M-5-05): requires VVA to work with the National Gulf War Resource Center to establish a new veterans' organization for Southwest Asia veterans; that VVA provide monetary assistance for this new organization; and, further, that all VVA chapters and state councils be encouraged to assist the formation of local chapters and state councils of the new organization in their areas, thereby creating an adjunct organization that would take our reins when we move

VVA National President John Rowan is conducting discussions with the new NGWRC Executive Director, and a follow-up will be done in June with its full board of directors.

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Scott Rutherford (906) 483-3183 email: scottru@chartermi.net Visit the VVRP Website: www.vvrp.org





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VIETNAM 1965 IN LETTERS Sqt. Leo Dubois writes to Don Leta Stirring and Tender

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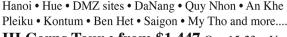


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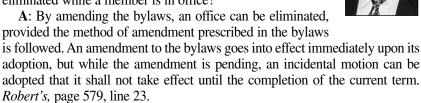
ASK THE PARLIAMENTARIAN

VVA Rules

BY MIKE SWIFT

ot a question about rules? Ask Mike Swift, VVA's Parliamentarian. His answers are based on VVA's parliamentary authority, *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* 10th Edition.

Q: Can an office, such as one of the vice presidents, be eliminated while a member is in office?



Q: Is a motion adopted by a committee valid if an adviser proposed it?

A: In committees, motions need not be seconded, and sometimes, when a proposal is perfectly clear to all present, a vote can be taken without a motion's having been introduced. This is addressed by *Robert's*, page 483, line 10, referring to page 470, line 17.

Q: Sometimes I hear members say they want to make a friendly amendment. Then they say if the maker and seconder accept the amendment, it is adopted. Is this correct?

A: Regardless of whether or not the maker of the main motion "accepts" the amendment, it must be opened to debate and voted on formally. It is handled under the same rules as amendments generally. *Robert's*, page 154, line 30.

Q: Someone told me a motion couldn't be referred to a committee until it is perfected. How much has to be done to a motion before it can be referred to a committee?

A: The subsidiary motion to commit or refer is generally used to send a pending question to a relatively small group of selected persons—a committee—so that the question may be carefully investigated and put into better condition for the assembly to consider. *Robert's*, page 160, line 14. The motion to commit usually should include all necessary details about the committee. *Robert's*, page 163, line 31.

Q: Should the quorum be a percentage of the members or a certain number of members? Why do some chapters and state councils make the quorum a very high percentage of the members?

A: Chapters need a provision in their bylaws establishing a relatively small quorum, considerably less than a majority of the members. Sometimes the specification of a quorum is based on a percentage of the membership; but such a method has the disadvantage of requiring re-computation and may lead to confusion when the secretary, or other officer who is in a position to certify as to the current number of members for purposes of the percentage calculation, is absent. The quorum should be as large a number of members as can reasonably be depended on to be present at any meeting, except in very bad weather. *Robert's*, page 335, line 15.

If you have a question on parliamentary procedure, e-mail it to Mike at parliamentarian@vva.org

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VETERANS BENEFITS UPDATE

Strength Through Partnership

BY DAVID L. HOUPPERT, DIRECTOR, VETERANS BENEFITS

As an organization, VVA is always looking for ways to improve its programs and services while at the same time getting the biggest bang for its buck. An excellent method to accomplish this goal is through mutually beneficial agreements with other organizations. These agreements, cemented by memoranda of understanding (MOU), allow both organizations to share their expertise, services, and resources while reducing costs. For our members and other veterans, this means more resources and better services.

In some ways Vietnam veterans are in greater need of benefits assistance today than they were in previous years. The VA system is better than it was when Vietnam veterans returned home, but it is far from perfect. As Vietnamera veterans age, many are beginning to notice, for the first time, health problems that are directly related to their military service. Others have had service-connected health problems for years but do not know VA benefits are available. Other veterans who already have been awarded service connection are realizing that their conditions are worsening with age. As large numbers of our members retire, they realize that VA healthcare is an absolute must. America's new veterans also need help.

To address these needs, VVA recently entered into an MOU with United Spinal Association (USA). Some veterans may be familiar with this organization. It was previously affiliated with Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association. As a witness to some of the negotiations, I can say it was a pleasure to be involved. We had many strong and knowledgeable players participate from VVA and USA. VVA was represented by John Rowan, National President; Tom Corey, former National President; and Jerry Klein, Chair of the Veterans Benefits Committee. Among those involved from USA were Gerard Kelly, Executive Director; Paul Tobin, Deputy Executive Director; John Herrion, counsel; and Len Selfon, National Service Director and former VVA Director of Veterans Benefits.

Following the negotiations, an MOU was signed and the agreement was ratified without any objections during the January VVA Board of Directors meeting. Now that we have completed the necessary requirements, we have begun two large joint projects. The first is dually accrediting some VVA service representatives and USA national service officers. A qualified service representative is accredited by the General Council of the VA to handle claims against the VA for veterans and their families. Our VVA/USA dually accredited service representatives will be recognized by the VA to handle claims for both organizations. What this means for VVA members is that they soon will have additional service representatives from USA who will be able to help them. Thus far, we are seeking the accreditation of at least twelve USA service officers.

The select twelve are strategically located on the East Coast in regions where we need additional coverage. We expect to expand slowly to other regions of the country. The USA service officers are well trained and very experienced. Most are experts in spinal cord injuries. A few are also able to provide assistance with claims before the Social Security Administration and other federal agencies. We have been fortunate to obtain the services of twelve excellent service representatives at no cost to VVA. This has saved funds for some state councils and local chapters, because they did not need to pay to send candidates to service representative training or provide funding for additional and supporting resources.

Of great interest to our certified service representatives, VVA and USA also are undertaking a joint endeavor to create a website for our service representatives and service officers. This Herculean task is being undertaken by Carol Engle, VVA's Director of IT, and myself in conjunction with Len Selfon and Michael Katsev, Director of IT for USA. Due to USA's assistance, this project also has been started at no additional cost to VVA. USA's assistance will allow us to have our forum operational much more quickly.

This website is titled "Continuing Veterans Benefits Education Forum—A Joint Project of Vietnam Veterans of America and United Spinal Association." It will be available for use by VVA service representatives and USA service officers. Upon completion, this site will be an all-encompassing forum for education, information, and training needed to represent claimants properly before the VA. We will also be providing a talk list and flash e-mails, which will allow us to disseminate important updates. Although the forum is still in its infancy, we are very excited about its future and its positive impact on our members and their families.

Future joint endeavors with USA include dually accrediting additional service representatives and service officers, sharing office space, and working jointly on basic and advanced training courses. To learn more, visit the USA website at www.unitedspinal.org

VVA National, Regional, and State Meetings

 May 2006
 June 2006
 July 2006

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EVENT	DATE	PLACE	CONTACT
Ohio State Council Meeting	May 20, 2006	Columbus, Ohio	Dave Whaley State Council President
Michigan State Council Meeting	May 21, 2006	Lansing, Michigan	Tom Meinhardt State Council President
New Hampshire State Council Meeting	June 2006	Manchester, New Hampshire	Ray Goulet State Council President
Texas State Council Meeting	June 2006	Galveston, Texas	Buster Newberry State Council President
Illinois State Council Meeting	June 2-3, 2006	Holiday Inn Express East Moline, Illinois	Butch Huber State Council President
California State Convention	June 2-4, 2006	Doubletree Hotel San Jose, California	Ken Holybee State Council President
Tennessee State Council Meeting	June 4, 2006	Doubletree Hotel Murfreesboro, Tennessee	James Patterson State Council President
Arizona State Council Meeting	June 9, 2006	Ramada Inn Laughlin, Nevada	Bill Messer State Council President
Virginia State Convention	June 9-11, 2006	Williamsburg, Virginia	Charlie Montgomery State Council President
lowa State Council Meeting	June 11, 2006	Veterans Home Marshalltown, Iowa	Ed Gaudet State Council President
Georgia State Council Meeting	June 16-17, 2006	Macon, Georgia	James Gilmer State Council President
Michigan State Council Meeting	June 16-18, 2006	Holiday Inn Marquette, Michigan	Tom Meinhardt State Council President
New York State Council Meeting	June 16-18, 2006	Treadway Inn Owego, New York	Ned Foote State Council President
North Carolina State Council Meeting	June 17, 2006	Comfort Suite Motel Raleigh, North Carolina	Paul Crowell State Council President
Ohio State Council Meeting	June 23-24, 2006	To Be Announced	Dave Whaley State Council President
Pennsylvania State Council Meeting	June 24-25, 2006	State College, Pennsylvania	Jeff White State Council President
LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE	JULY 11-16, 2006	Hilton Tucson El Conquistador Tucson, Arizona	VVA National Office
North Dakota State Council Picnic	July 21, 22, 23	Dead Horse Creek, Lisbon, North Dakota	701-788-3435 sdakken@polarcomm.com
Massachusetts State Council Meeting	July 22, 2006	Veterans Center Leominster, Massachusetts	Al Cummings State Council President
Virginia State Campout	August 4-6, 2006	Sherando Lake, Virginia	Charlie Montgomery State Council President
Ohio State Council Meeting	August 19, 2006	Columbus, Ohio	Dave Whaley State Council President
California State Council Meeting	August 11-13, 2006	Quality Inn Ashlan Fresno, California	Ken Holybee State Council President
Tennessee State Council Meeting	September 11, 2006	Doubletree Hotel Murfreesboro, Tennessee	James Patterson State Council President
Massachusetts State Council Meeting	September 16, 2006	Veterans Center Leominster, Massachusetts	Al Cummings State Council President
New York State Council Meeting	September 15-17, 2006	Treadway Inn Owego, New York	Ned Foote State Council President
Ohio State Council Meeting	September 23, 2006	Columbus, Ohio	Dave Whaley State Council President

Send additions to the calendar to: Vietnam Veterans of America, Attn: Calendar, 8605 Cameron Street, Suite 400, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3710

REGION 5 REPORT

Preaching Benefits

BY LEVERETT HOBBS, REGION 5 DIRECTOR

First I would like to thank Jack Haigwood from Chapter 649 in Batavia, Ohio, for stepping up and taking over the Buckeye State Council Secretary position. Jack officially took over in February. I have been able to attend meetings in all four states in Region 5. Thanks, Jack, and good luck. I am confident you'll be an asset to the State Council's Board of Directors.



In February, I attended Michigan's State Council meeting

in Lansing. I didn't let anyone know I was coming, so everyone was surprised to see me. My thought was that as a National Board member, I answer to our members. I am not some executive to be coddled, but someone who is available to help bring issues to the national office from the states and information from national to the states. The flow of information needs to go both ways. I spoke about the upcoming Veterans Disability Benefits Commission and urged all who could attend and testify to do so.

I also attended the Buckeye State Council board meeting in February. Jack did a good job during his first meeting as the new Secretary. I again talked about the Benefits Commission and the need to make our presence known. I am happy to report that Ohio State Council President Dave Whaley is in much better health after surgery.

March took me to the Illinois State Council meeting. Butch Huber fined me for no real reason, as he does everyone at his meetings. I attended a service representative training course for chapter coordinators and service reps. I was really impressed with the presentation. They used role play, slide presentation, and question-and-answer periods. I again spoke about the Veterans Benefits Commission's upcoming meeting in Chicago.

I attended the Indiana State Council meeting in March at the old Fort Harrison. They have both a meeting room and a product sales room. It's nice to

continued on page 36

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VETERANS AGAINST DRUGS TASK FORCE REPORT

Lessons Of The Game

BY DAVE SIMMONS, CHAIR

t is a well-known fact among educators, youth counselors, and law enforcement folks that one of the most vulnerable times for adolescents to become involved with illegal drugs and violence is the critical hours between the end of the school day and dinner time when parents arrive home from work. Young people who are involved in positive after-school activities are far less likely to become a part of America's growing drug problems.



In southern West Virginia, two Veterans Against Drugs Programs were developed to work with different segments of the youth population in the Mountain State. One program teaches the Veterans Against Drugs Core Values to students in elementary and middle schools. With the hard work and commitment of members of VVA's Blue-Gray Chapter 628 in Princeton and affiliated AVVA members, this program has become an exciting and successful community service project. It has been featured on the Veterans Against Drugs page of the VVA web site.



The other Veterans Against Drugs Program is the Elite Girls Basketball Club, which was founded in 1988 to help develop girls' basketball in southern West Virginia. Since its founding, more than three hundred girls from five different counties in southern West Virginia and southwestern Virginia have participated. Players are not charged a fee to participate; the club's philosophy is that any girl who wants to play ball should be given the opportunity. Good sportsmanship, fair play, and individual development are stressed—along with winning. These values are re-emphasized and strengthened by the teaching of the Veterans Against Drugs Core Values of Honesty, Integrity, Meaningful Achievement, Camaraderie, Compassion, and Advocacy. The club is a member of the AAU (Amateur Athletic Union) and the YBOA (Youth Basketball of America), and competes in tournaments from West Virginia to Florida.

In 2002, a working relationship was developed between Blue-Gray Chapter and the Vietnam Veterans Assistance Fund to offer the Veterans Against Drugs Program to the Elite Girls Basketball Team and to encourage after-school programs. The team uniforms display the VAD logo. This would not be possible without the help of businessman and coach Kip McPeak. The Athlete's Closet in Bluewell, West Virginia, is one of many local businesses that supports the VAD program.

Over the past several years, participants in the Elite Girls Basketball Club have gone on to play college basketball at King College, Radford University, Concord University, and the University of North Carolina, to name a few. The basketball program keeps young women off the streets and away from drugs. This program stresses the positive aspects of team play, which help prepare young women for the future.

Some of the former players now use the skills they learned to help other youth programs in their communities. Some have gone on to careers in coaching themselves. The majority of the current players who participate in this successful after-school program are honor students.



• 101st Airborne Division In Vietnam, 90 minutes

•9th Infantry Division In Vietnam, 60 minutes

• Air Evacuation Nurse in Vietnam, 35 minutes

Anderson Platoon (1st Cavalry), Vietnam, 60 minutes

• Anti-Submarine Warfare 1960s & 1970s , 85 minutes

• Armed Forces Radio, Television & Newspaper, 55 minutes

•Armored Cavalry 1960s: Germany & Vietnam, 60 minutes

B-52 Stratofortress, 60 minutes
 Band's All Here (USMC Music and History), 90 minutes

• Battle For Hue, 45 minutes

• Battle For Military Region I, 30 minutes

• Coast Guard in Vietnam, 60 minutes

• Bien Hoa Air Base: 1964-1969, 80 minutes

11th Infantry Brigade Aboard USS Weigel, 40 minutes
169th Engineer Btn. In Vietnam, 45 minutes

• 173rd Airborne Brigade (Sky Soldiers) In Vietnam, 60 minutes

199th Light Infantry Brigade In Vietnam 1967-1970, 60 minutes
1st Infantry Division: Vietnam & The 1960s-70s, 102 minutes
1st Marine Division: Hill 510 In Vietnam, 15 minutes

• 430th Tactical Fighter Squadron "Invades" Takhli, RTAFB, 50 minutes • 4th Infantry & 25th Infantry Divisions In Vietnam, 90 minutes

• 600th Photo Squadron In Vietnam & Gun Camera film, 80 minutes

•6th Psychological Printing Operations Btn, Saigon, 1967, 8 minutes

•A Day in Vietnam, 50 minutes
•A-1 Skyraider / Flying Hobos Pleiku, 1st Air Commando 1966, 75 min.
•A-6E Intruder, EA-6 Prowler And A-7 Corsair, 75 minutes
•AC-119 Gunships: AC-119G & 17th SOS/AC-119K & 18th SOS, 100 min.

• Air Force Close Air Support & Forward Air Control Bien Hoa, 100 min. • Dogs of the Vietnam War: Scout, Sentry, Patrol (USAF/USA), 100 min.
• Amphibious Assault: Surface & Helicopter Borne, 55 minutes
• An Khe (Camp Radcliff) Hong Kong Mountain, 75 minutes

• Armored Commando Car (V-100) & Jeep (M-151) & MP Saigon, 30 min.

•Army Artillerymen in Vietnam & Fire Support Bases, 80 minutes

• Army Drill Sergeants 1960s, 30 minutes
• Army in Vietnam 1964, 1965 & 1966, 90 minutes
• Army Training 1960s: Basic School at Fort Ord, California; with

Advanced and Physical Training, 90 minutes

• Attack On Tan Son Nhut Air Base, 1/31/1968-02/24/1968, 60 minutes

• Basic School & Mountain Warfare Training Center (USMC), 45 minutes

• Black Man: Racism In The Air Force In The 1970s, 40 minutes • C-123 Provider & Operation Ranch Hand 1964-1966, 90 minutes

Cam Ranh Bay, Scenes From 1966-1968, 60 minutes

Camp Eagle Vietnam 1971, 30 minutes

Camp Enari: 4th Inf. Div. (Dragon Mountain, Pleiku) 1967-69, 50 min.

• Camp J.J. Carroll, Rock Pile & FSB Charlie One, 1967-1970, 30 minutes

• C-124 Operations in the 1960s, 100 minutes • C-130 Hercules 1950s and 1960s Overview, 120 minutes

• C-47 Skytrain And Lt. Col. Preston S. Flanagan, 25 minutes

• Carrier Pilot Training 1970s: Pensacola, Florida, 60 minutes

• Coast Guard Combat Veterans Reunion 1990s, 120 minutes

• Chu Lai Air Base 1965-1968: Marines, Seabees, Army, 75 minutes

• Combat Infantry Soldier In Vietnam: Life In The Field, 60 minutes

• Crossing The Line: King Neptune Ceremony Over Time, 50 minutes

• C-130 Hercules Operations in Vietnam, 81 minutes

• Air Cavalry: Vietnam (featuring 1st Air Cavalry), 105 minutes

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- Hook, Line & Helo, 30 minutes
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- Huey Helicopter: Training to Vietnam, 115 minutes
- Rescue: Survivor Responsibilities, Improvised Emergency Signals And The Intruders, 70 minutes
- Infantry Rifle Training: Fort Benning Georgia, 1965, 50 minutes Iowa Class Battleships: USS Iowa, USS New Jersey, USS Missouri and
- USS Wisconsin, 120 minutes
- Jolly Green Giants: Recovery & Rescue Service In Vietnam, 70 minutes
- KC-135 Stratotanker Air Refueling, 50 minutes
- Korat RTAB and Camp Friendship 1965-1970, 70 minutes
- Long Binh: 1967-1972, 60 minutes
- •LST Operations In Vietnam, 30 minutes •M-14 & M-16: This Is My Rifle, 75 minutes
- Marine Aviation In Vietnam: 1st MAW, 90 minutes
- •Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego 1969 & 1973, 45 minutes
- Marines 1965 & Ops. Starlite, Piranha & Harvest Moon, 90 minutes
- Marines 1966 With Operations Hastings & Prairie, 70 minutes
- Marines 1967 & Operations Buffalo and Independence, 65 minutes
- Marines 1968 Ops Baxter Gardens & Mameluke Thrust, 80 minutes
- Military Police Story: WWI To Vietnam, 30 minutes
- Minesweeping World War II, Korea & Vietnam, 92 minutes
- Missile Navy, 30 minutes
- Naval Training Center, San Diego (Disestablishment), 60 minutes
- Navy Advisor in Vietnam, 35 minutes
- Navy Frogmen, Underwater Demolition Teams & SEALS, 105 minutes
- New Soldier In Vietnam, 70 minutes
- Nha Trang 1965-1972, 60 minutes • Night Vision Techniques For Vietnam, 30 minutes
- NOT S.O.P. Unusual Films Made By The Military, 120 minutes
- Observation Aircraft 1960s, 70 minutes
- •Ong Bien: Navy Seabee Teams In Vietnam, 18 minutes
- \bullet Operation Blue Light: 61st Air Wing/ 3rd Inf. Brigade , 50 minutes
- Operation Delaware 1968 and Camp Evans, 60 minutes • PACAF (Air Force) Jungle Survival School, Clark AB., 21 min.
- Parachute Rigger 1960s, 30 minutes
- Phan Rang Air Base, 1965-1970, 60 minutes
- Phu Bai Combat Base: Scenes From 1968 Through 1971, 50 minutes
- Phu Cat Air Base, 1966-1968, 70 minutes
- Pltn. 145 (USMC): Vietnam Platoon Returns to Boot Camp, 60 minutes
- President Johnson in Vietnam and "Why Vietnam", 70 minutes
- \bullet Railroad Logistical Support Vietnam: 506th Field Depot, 1967, 45 min.
- Ranger & Recondo Training: Vietnam Era, 60 minutes
- Red Cross 1940s-1960s, 70 minutes
- Saigon Street Scenes, 30 minutes
- Save A Soldier & Dustoffs, 80 minutes
- Scenes From China Beach: In-country R&R, 35 minutes
- Scenes From Dong Ha Air Base In Vietnam, 20 minutes
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- Seabees/Marine Engineers Vietnam, 45 minutes
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- Small Boat Warfare in Vietnam, 90 minutes
 - Smoking Holes: Aircraft Accidents Of The 20th Century, 60 minutes
 - Special Forces In Vietnam, 100 minutes
 - Submarine Training In The 1960s & Pride Runs Deep, 60 minutes
 - Submariners 1960s & The Growler Story WWII, 50 minutes • Tactical Air Reconnaissance Over Vietnam: Alone, Unarmed and
 - Unafraid, 90 minutes
 - Tailhook Association Convention Las Vegas 1968, 30 minutes • Tan Son Nhut Airbase, Vietnam 1965-1968, 60 minutes

- Tunnel Destruction In Vietnam, 30 minutes
- Tuy Hoa Air Force Base, Vietnam, 40 minutes

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- USS America (CVA-66) 1965-1968, 60 minutes
 USS Bon Homme Richard (CVA-31) 1950s-1960s, 45 minutes
 USS Constellation (CVA-64) 1962-1970, 45 minutes
 USS Coral Sea (CVA-43) 1965-1970, 50 minutes

- USS Enterprise (CVAN-65) 1960-1970s, 90 minutes •USS Enterprise 1969 Fire, 45 minutes
- •USS Forrestal 1967 Fire, 72 minutes
- USS Forrestal: Plat Camera Footage Of 1967 Fire, 60 minutes USS Hancock CV-19: WWII, Korea, Vietnam, 60 minutes

- •USS Independence CVA-62 in Vietnam and the Mediterranean, 90 min. •USS Kitty Hawk, CV-63, 1961-1979, 75 minutes •USS Midway, CV-41/CVB-41/CVA-41, 1945-1970, 60 minutes
- USS Oriskany (CVA-34) Off The Coast Of Vietnam, 40 minutes

- USS Oriskany (CVA-34) Off The Coast Of Vietnam, 40 minutes
 USS Oriskany 1966 Fire, 60 minutes
 USS Randolph 1945-1967 (CV-15, CVA-15, CVS-15), 50 minutes
 USS Ranger CVA/CV-61, 1953-1986, 70 minutes
 USS Ticonderoga (CVA-14) Off The Coast Of Vietnam, 30 minutes
 USS Valley Forge CV-45, LPH-8, 1949-1966, 60 minutes
 U-Tapao (Utapao) Air Base Thailand, 1967-1972, 60 minutes
 Viet Cong at War & VC Mines & Traps, 100 minutes
 Vietnam Crucible: Army 1967-68, 30 minutes
 Vietnam From The Air, 70 minutes

- Vietnam War: Universal Newsreels Of 1967, 76 minutes

- Vung Tau, Vietnam, 60 minutes Weapons Of The Artillerymen 1960s And 1970s, 70 minutes • West Point Academy In The 1960s, 60 minutes
- When The Enemy Is My Prisoner, 30 minutes
- Why Vietnam And A Nation Builds Under Fire, 62 minutes
- •You in Vietnam & For Valor, 40 minutes
- LCM & YFU at Dong Ha, 10 minutes
- •USS Meeker County in 1969, 7 minutes

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• Flamethrowers: Portable And Mechanized, 30 minutes • Fleet Ocean Tugs Featuring USS Papago ATF-160, 40 minutes

• Farewell Ceremony Gen. Westmoreland, June 1968, 18 minutes

• For Drill Instructors Only!, USMC 55 minutes

• Thailand: Where Men Are Free & Soldier in Thailand 1960s, 55 minutes

• Tug And Harbor Masters In Vietnam: 1966-1970, 60 minutes

SHAD/PROJECT 112 TASK FORCE REPORT

Unduly Dangerous

BY JACK ALDERSON, CHAIR

We are very pleased with the excellent articles by John Prados and Richard Currey concerning the 112/SHAD operations in the last issue of *The VVA Veteran*. To these articles I would like to add quotes from page 13 of the Department of Veterans Affairs' 2003 publication, *Health Effects from Chemical, Biological, and Radiological Weapons*:



"Expectations regarding human rights, patients' rights, research ethics, and government accountability have been debated, defined, and established in laws and regulations; these laws and regulations continue to evolve.

"When veterans judge past events by today's standards, some who were (or believe they were) exposed as research subjects to chemical or biological (or radiological) agents feel that they were unwitting 'guinea pigs.'

- "1. In hindsight, some of these experiments now appear to have been unduly dangerous, posing risks that might not withstand ethical review today.
- "2. Current scientific knowledge reveals that the level of risk associated with certain experimental agents was greater than was known at the time of the experiments.
- "3. In addition, contemporary risk assessments consider a more comprehensive list of potential adverse effects (e.g., including psychological ones)."

The above fairly well defines the thoughts of many of us who participated. We are trying to find out the identities of veterans who served in the 112/SHAD program, and the intensity and duration of the exposures to the agents and simulants tested, as well as the decontaminating chemicals that were used. We have been striving, with some success, to insure that a 112/SHAD veteran can receive whatever medical care is needed. I believe that civilians who were exposed during 112/SHAD tests also should be eligible for care.

As John Prados explained in his article, these tests were conducted over a long period of time but were not formalized into the 112/SHAD program until 1962. Health concerns revolve around the toxicity and exposures to the named simulants, trace elements, and decontamination agents. Since they are already in the public domain, we continue to wonder why the Department of Defense continues to keep exposure information classified. This question begs an answer, which is why we support the bill introduced by Reps. Mike Thompson (D-Calif.) and Denny Rehberg (R-Mont.), H.R. 4259, The Veterans Right To Know Act.

As of this writing, 31 Members of Congress have signed on as co-sponsors of H.R. 4259. The Hawaii State Legislature has passed a resolution asking its delegation and others to support this much-needed legislation. Elected officials from the Territory of Guam have indicated their willingness to pass a similar resolution. And, most recently, the California legislature has passed a similar resolution. A state senator in Alaska has indicated a willingness to sponsor a resolution in Juneau.

The interest shown by the legislatures in Hawaii, California, and Alaska exists because we have shown them that some of the 112/SHAD tests took place within their state boundaries. The woefully inadequate "fact sheets" put out by DoD, many of which we believe are rife with errors, acknowledge that the islands of Oahu and Hawaii and the Gerstel River area of Alaska were test sites. The long California coastline was used for 112/SHAD operations, and an article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* indicates at least one civilian casualty is connected to these operations.







GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT

Continuing Resolutions

BY JOHN MITERKO, CHAIR

The 2005 National Convention saw no changes in the Resolutions charged to the Government Affairs Committee. For the complete texts of all Resolutions, go to www.vva.org/OrgDocs/2005Resolutions-fnl.pdf The Government Affairs Committee subsequently met in October and January. During both meetings update reports were given on all of our assigned Resolutions.

G-1-03: VETERANS VOTE! CAMPAIGN TO ENHANCE VETERANS ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION AND CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

Issue: Due to the service and sacrifice of veterans who served during the Vietnam War, Vietnam Veterans of America has a special responsibility to encourage its members, all veterans, and all American citizens to exercise their civic responsibility to vote, to participate more fully in the political and electoral processes at all levels, and to produce educational and informational materials to facilitate the same. VVA has developed and distributed to our membership and provided educational support for VVA's comprehensive Veterans Vote! Campaign program to facilitate the participation of VVA members and all veterans in our nation's political and electoral processes. This resolution amends G-1-95, G-4-95, G-1-97, G-4-97, G-1-99, G-4-99, G-1-01 and G-4-01.

Status: Government Relations and Public Relations staffs and committees will work together to update the Veterans Vote! Program during the 2006 election season.

G-2-95: LEGISLATIVE COORDINATOR NETWORK

Issue: It is critically important to Vietnam Veterans of America's mission and objectives to coordinate national legislative and administrative advocacy efforts directly with Vietnam Veterans of America's state councils; and to help state councils in establishing and maintaining effective and efficient local and state legislative and administrative advocacy programs. Using state councils, rather than individual chapters, enhances the efficiency and productivity of VVA's federal grassroots network. The work of state council legislative coordinators also is essential to effective local and state VVA legislative and administrative advocacy efforts.

Status: The Government Relations staff has worked to expand the legislative coordinator network at each of the state councils to insure that the national organization can effectively organize and coordinate federal legislative and administrative advocacy activities at the state level. Using an e-mail network of state legislative coordinators, correspondence and all other written and oral communications from the national office on federal issues has been communicated to the state council legislative coordinators, state council presidents, regional directors, and any other interested parties on a regular basis. In 2005, approximately 197 Legislative Alerts were sent out from Government Relations through the Legislative Coordinator network to our members at the grassroots level.

Unfortunately, the vast majority of communications is one way: from VVA national to the states, with very little feedback coming from the grassroots to the national office, resulting in ineffective interaction between VVA national and the states. Attempts have been made to have each state council assign a legislative liaison. This has not yet happened. Government Relations staff has been sending out Legislative Alerts to those on the GR e-mail list, but this does not constitute a legislative network. Since open two-way communications is essential for VVA as an advocacy organization, the need for an improved Legislative Coordinator network will continue to be a top priority for the Government Affairs Committee. CSCP will be asked for ideas and support on how to improve the network.

G-3-95: VVA SUPPORT FOR THE NATIONAL GULF WAR RESOURCE CENTER

Issue: A growing national veterans' service organization, the National Gulf War Resource Center (NGWRC), was formed to work on issues relevant to veterans of this war. The commonalities shared by VVA and the NGWRC make us logical allies. VVA's support of the NGWRC can help both organizations fulfill their missions. The parallels between the Gulf War veteran movement and that of the Vietnam veteran generation go far beyond the health problems associated with environmental exposures. They have found the need to establish a single-generation veterans' organization because their overall and specialized needs were not being adequately met. VVA provides the NGWRC with office space and related resources. In addition, VVA provides Persian Gulf veterans with access to VVA service representatives on a resource-available basis.

continued on page 15

HOMELESS VETERANS TASK FORCE REPORT

The Bobby J Award

BY SANDY MILLER, CHAIR

The Bobby J Award will be presented to a formerly homeless veteran who has exemplified commitment, embraced change, and provided inspiration to brother and sister veterans.

"Bobby J" was a formerly homeless veteran in recovery, living in a transitional residence, who exhibited great courage in his battles with addiction and Agent Orange-related cancer. "Bobby J" never gave up the fight. He had embarked on a renewed life of recovery and had accepted his impending



death with dignity. In keeping with the traditions of 12-step programs, we will not reveal his last name. "Bobby J" died in December 2001.

Nominees must meet the following criteria:

- 1. Must have been homeless, as defined in the McKinney-Vento Act
- 2. Must have completed a homeless domiciliary or transitional program.
- 3. Must have obtained and maintained housing in the community for at least one year.
- 4. Must be nominated by a VVA chapter, state council, national committee or task force chair, national officer, or Board member.

Nomination packets must contain:

- 1. A copy of the individual's DD-214
- 2. Proof of program completion
- 3. A written nomination letter, not more than 500 words, on chapter, state council, or VVA letterhead, for those nominations from national committee or task force chairs, National Board of Directors, or national officers.

Completed nomination packets should be sent to: Sandra Miller, HVTF Chair, P.O. Box 557, Douglassville, PA 19518.

The Homeless Veterans Task Force Chair will provide copies of the nominating essays to the members of the task force. The selection committee will be comprised of the President of Vietnam Veterans of America and the members of the National Homeless Veterans Task Force. Nominations will be accepted until May 15.

The Homeless Veterans Task Force will present life memberships in VVA to honorees who are Vietnam veterans. Otherwise, honorees will receive life membership in AVVA. Along with the membership, the HVTF will provide a certificate of recognition.

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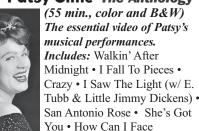
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Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America

The Fourth Meeting

BY MARY MILLER, AVVA NATIONAL PRESIDENT

uffalo, Tucson, Nashville, Tucson. This summer marks our fourth Biennial Meeting and elections. We have a busy schedule at Tucson, but we will have time to see the sights on Thursday and Saturday afternoons. AVVA's fundraisers this summer will be on the Putting Green (behind the hotel pool) on Wednesday evening. If it can be arranged, we will also have GI Joes again. The money raised from these two fun activities, as well as from our product sales table, will support AVVA and all its projects.

We hope that each VVA state council and VVA chapter, as well as all AVVA members, will support our Project Friendship. The national project benefits the United Spinal Association, an organization that does a lot of work with spina bifida patients. All of us know that spina bifida can be caused by exposure to Agent Orange. The local Project Friendship in Tucson will be TIHAN, a group that helps sufferers of HIV/AIDS.

Every two years when AVVA has its elections, each state has one vote. When the corporation was formed in Orlando in 1999, those who were making the initial decisions for the corporation wanted only one vote per state so that all states had equal representation. That opinion has not changed. Our Biennial Meeting will be held on Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning, finishing up with our luncheon when the newly elected Board of Directors will be sworn in.

Across the nation AVVA members are working alongside VVA members to support our returning military. Members are welcoming home veterans and supporting their families here at home. Symposiums are being held in nearly every state to help veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan understand PTSD, find employment, and cope with disabilities resulting from the action they saw. We all play a part in this, and each one of us counts toward helping veterans and their families.

The 2006 AVVA Awards

BY JUDY BOLIO, AWARDS CHAIR

s the Chair of the Awards Committee, I am disappointed not to see more nominees for the 2006 AVVA Fellowship Award, and the Chapel of the Four Chaplains' Legion of Honor Award, Humanitarian Award, and Bronze Medallion.

The Fellowship Award is AVVA's highest honor, recognizing members for the work they have done. These are members who are always there when they are needed, come to all of the associated Chapter or State meetings, volunteer at VA hospitals, or donate time to veterans' homes. They are the members who work to help those who are victims of hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and take the time to feed, cloth, and shelter the homeless.

The Chapel of Four Chaplains Legion of Honor Award is an AVVA-sponsored award that honors the good works of people who serve their communities, places of worship, and civil, fraternal, and veterans' service organizations. Chapter Representatives, AVVA State Representatives, and State Presidents, or members of the AVVA National Board of Directors may nominate two worthy individuals. VVA Chapter and State Council Presidents or members of the VVA National Board of Directors also may nominate two worthy individuals for induction. Anyone who is a previous recipient of this award may also nominate a prospective recipient.

The Humanitarian Award of the Chapel of Four Chaplains is an honor for which only the AVVA National President, a member of the National of Directors, a State Representative, or the VVA National President, a member of the National Board of Directors, or a State Council President may nominate a worthy individual. The award recognizes selfless, sacrificial service. The service rendered must go far beyond that which is normally required in the course of human experience.

Only the AVVA or VVA National President or a member of the National Board of Directors may nominate an individual for the Bronze Medallion. The nominator must describe the nominee's contribution to world peace, the well-being of humankind, or to inter-faith and inter-ethnic tolerance. The efforts must go greatly above and beyond that which is normally required in the course of the human experience, as well alter it in a positive way.

Election Report

BY KATHY ANDRAS, AVVA ELECTION CHAIR

y now elections for your AVVA Chapter Representative should be over. Remember to notify your State Representative about the outcome of your elections. June 11, 2006, is the registration deadline for candidates and delegates. The election will be held on Thursday July 13, 2006, at the AVVA biennial meeting in Tucson. There will be no registration at the convention.

At press time, the following candidates had announced their candidacy:

President, Mary Miller
Vice President, Elaine Simmons
Treasurer, Sonja Holybee
Secretary, Patsy Varnell
Region 3, Nancy Nix
Region 7, Kathy Andras

If you are planning to run for a position within AVVA, now is the time to submit your paper work. This is a very important election. Mark your calendars for the Biennial Meeting in Tucson. Your participation in our organization is essential.

Better Chance Scholarship

BY JUDY VARGO

n 1998, AVVA established the Better Chance Scholarship Fund as a way to improve the lives of veterans and their families through education. The program targets students who want to go to college but cannot afford the escalating costs. Typically, one \$1,000 and two \$500 scholarships are awarded.

A candidate either must be an AVVA or VVA member, or the spouse, child, or grandchild of a KIA or MIA Vietnam veteran. Interested? Visit the AVVA website, www.avva.org for details.



AVVA Project Friendship

VVA/VVA has designated the United Spinal Association its charity for 2006. You may visit the group's web site, www.unitedspinal.org to see what amazing work this organization does for veterans, for children, and for all people with spinal injuries.

In addition, we have selected the Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network (TIHAN), a non-profit group that works with people with AIDS, as our local charity to work with. Many veterans have contracted AIDS; some, unfortunately, have passed the virus to family members. TIHAN's wish list includes: personal-care products, paper products, socks, greeting cards, gift cards, candles, and cash.

Please be generous.■

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

continued from page 12

VVA leaders and the NGWRC collaborate on government relations advocacy with Congress and agencies of the federal government. VVA also provides support and guidance for the NGWRC's own advocacy efforts.

Status: VVA support for NGWRC continues as it has in the past in providing material, monetary, and personnel support, and especially in actively advocating legislation for the NGWRC on Capitol Hill. As VVA provided support to NGWRC, we also benefited from the media savvy and contacts of NGWRC executive director, Steve Robinson. Unfortunately, he has moved on to a new position.

G-4-97 and V-15-95: EXTENSION OF VIETNAM CONFLICT ENDING DATE AND ELIGIBILITY FOR VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL

Issue: Congress has declared March 28, 1973, as the official termination date of the Vietnam Conflict pursuant to the Vietnam Disengagement Act of 1975. Only those who served prior to this date are eligible for an award of the Vietnam Service Medal and to be considered Vietnam veterans. Many service members who served in Vietnam and the contiguous waters and airspace after March 28, 1973, were involved in operations such as Eagle Pull and Frequent Wind up until May 15, 1975, when the crew of the USS Mayaguez was rescued. These service members were exposed to combat or were at imminent risk of hostile action. There were 85 service members killed in action from March 28, 1973, to May 15, 1975, and 20 were killed during the Mayaguez rescue. All these service members' names are inscribed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Status: VVA has been working to urge the President of the United States by executive order to extend the eligibility date for an award of the Vietnam Service Medal or an appropriate Expeditionary Medal to May 30, 1975, and to work with Congress to amend the Vietnam Disengagement Act of 1975 to extend the ending date for the Vietnam Conflict, as well as the Vietnam era, to May 30, 1975. The rationale for extending the dates of eligibility for the Vietnam Service Medal needs to be brought to the Senate Armed Services Committee. Changing the dates requires legislation, which in turn requires several co-sponsors, none of whom have been identified or stepped forward. Darrol Brown (Director, Region 9) has volunteered to work with the Government Relations staff to make this happen.

G-5-03: VET CENTER ELIGIBILITY FOR VIETNAM-ERA VETERANS

Issue: VVA urges that eligibility under PL 104-275 should be extended to permit Vietnam-era veterans to remain eligible for Vet Center services. Additionally, Vet Center services should be expanded to

include further resources for veterans' computer training and equipment, women readjustment services, assistance with Section 8 housing relocation, and transportation reimbursement for necessary services required by non-service-connected but seriously disabled veterans.

Status: This program was shut down to Vietnam-era veterans effective December 31, 2005. To extend the deadline, it will be necessary to work with Rep. Lane Evans (D-Ill.) and Senators Larry E. Craig (R-Idaho) and Daniel Akaka (D-Hawaii). Alan Gibson (VVA Board of Directors member; Chair, VVA EtaBO Committee; and Missouri State Council President) volunteered to work with GR staff on this project.

G-7-99: SERVICE CONNECTION FOR HEPATITIS C

Issue: Thousands of veterans, perhaps as many as 20,000, contend that they suffer from hepatitis C and the secondary effect of such disease, especially dysfunction of the liver and pancreas. Many veterans are suffering from hepatitis C but are unable to prove a service connection. A presumptive type of statute for service connection for hepatitis C would greatly reduce the burden of proof and allow these veterans to be compensated for hepatitis C, unless it is clearly and affirmatively established that the hepatitis C was acquired post-service.

Status: Because there is no clear-cut service-connection for hepatitis C, it is difficult to make a case for declaring it presumptive to service during the Vietnam era. Government Relations staff continues to work with VA staff to insure that the most effective, state-of-the-art treatment for this potentially fatal disease is provided by the VA Medical Centers.

G-9-03: AWARDING OF THE COMBAT MEDEVAC BADGE

Issue: Awarding of the Combat Medevac Badge (CMB) to medics who were assigned to Air Ambulance Units during the Vietnam War. Until recently, most Vietnam veterans, including Dustoff pilots, assumed that medics assigned to Dustoff were awarded the CMB. We have learned that this was not done due to the way the regulation was written in 1945. In Vietnam, Dustoff crews flew more than 400,000 missions and carried more than 900.000 patients. There are more than 200 aero medical crewmembers' names on The Wall, including more than 50 Dustoff medics. VVA supports the efforts of veterans and veterans service organizations who seek to change the regulations that have prevented the issuance of the Combat Medevac Badge to aero medical crew members from the Vietnam War.

Status: Jeff White (Pennsylvania State Council President), Bob Johnston (Chair, POW/MIA Committee) and Cliff Hayes (District 5 Director, Buckeye State Council) have volunteered to take the lead in defining the course of action required to resurrect this issue.

MINORITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT

Immigration: Personal Values

BY JERRY YAMAMOTO, CHAIR

This is a time when our members are going to be affected by stressful events involving immigrants and people from minority cultures. Let's practice our very best communication skills in our conversations among our members and others and when representing VVA. In order to have better sensitivity among us, I recommend each of us take stock of and understand our personal value systems in order to understand those of people who are different culturally and ethnically.



Making jokes that demean members of other ethnic groups or cultures makes us look less worthy.

2006 ANNUAL DIVERSITY AWARD

The Minority Affairs Committee will be presenting its inaugural Diversity Award to a deserving recipient at this year's National Leadership Conference in Tucson. Please submit completed paperwork by the June 1 deadline to Francisco Ivarra, Diversity Award chair, about any persons or organizations that you feel have made significant contributions to the advancement of diversity and to VVA's mission statement. Details about the award nomination process and selection criteria were published in the previous issue of *The VVA Veteran*. If you need a copy of the award nomination and criteria letter, please contact me at my e-mail address, **JYamamoto@vva.org**

ASIAN-AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER ROUNDTABLE

The VVA board-sponsored Asian-American Pacific Islander Veteran Roundtable was held March 17 in Los Angeles. Although attendance was affected by a significant rain storm and massive traffic pileup near the roundtable site, attendees were able to meet with representatives from the VA Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Health Administration, National Cemetery Administration, and Gardena Vet Center to discuss their benefits and services available to them and their families.

There was great rapport between the reps and the attendees. Also attending were the Executive Officer and a board member of the White House Initiative on Asian-American Pacific Islanders, state and county veterans affairs officials, and David Chung, a representative of the VA Center For Minority Veterans. Chapters 53 of Redondo Beach, California, and 446 of Pasadena provided assistance to the Roundtable.



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* Federal law <u>prohibits</u> the payment of attorney fees by the veteran for assistance with any VA claim prior to a final, negative Board of Veterans Appeals decision.



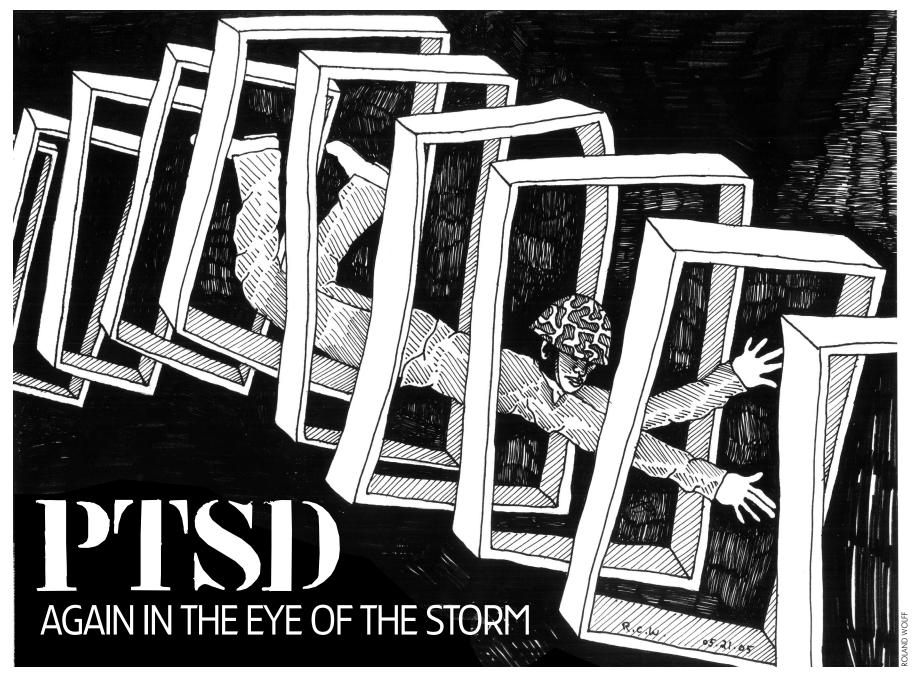
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Air Force History Support Office	MINORITY VETERANS
Defense Manpower Data Center	American G.I. Forum (Hispanic veterans)
Marine Corps Historical Center	Center For Veterans Issues, Ltd
Maryland State Archives, Vietnam War Collection	Navajo Nation Council Veterans
National Archives of the United States, Military Records	National Association for Black Veterans
Naval Historical Center	
	POW/MIA
Vietnam Center, Texas Tech University	Department of Defense, POW/MIA Affairs
Vietnam Archive, Texas Tech Library	Fax
Vietnam War Collection, Connelly Library, La Salle University	National League of Families of American Prisoners & Missing in Southeast Asia703-465-7432 24-hour update hotline
	Fax
U.S. Army Center of Military History	Website
William Joiner Center	Task Force Omega, Inc
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OF VIETNAM VETERANS	WA National POW/MIA Committee
Gold Star Mothers	National Alliance of Families
Gold Star Wives	PTSD
National Birth Defects Registrywww.birthdefects.org/research	Dr. Alfonso Batres, Director, VA Readjustment Counseling Service202-273-8967
Sons and Daughters In Touch	Fax
Team of Advocates for Special Kids (assistance in seeking needed	National Center For PTSD, Behavioral Science Division
educational, medical, or support services—AOCAP grant)	Boston VA Medical Center
Wilderness Inquiry (outdoor adventures for people for all ages	
and ability levels—AOCAP grant)	VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIALS
	Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund
in the Twin Cities, MN	The Wall That Heals
CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES	In Memory Memorial Plaque Project members.aol.com/vietwarmem/plaque.htm The Moving Wall—Vietnam Combat Veterans LTD
Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs	
House Committee on Veterans Affairs	The Virtual Wall
Bipartisan Veterans' Health-care Coalition	Vietnam Womens Memorial Foundation, Inc (formerly "Project")
Contact: Stewart Lewack, Office of Rep. Peter DeFazio202-225-6416	
Congressional Rural Health-care Coalition	VVA MBNA Credit Card
Vietnam-era Veterans in Congress	Veterans Collectibles 800-NAM-VETS
Fax	Fax
	Website
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS	WA Life and Health Insurance Programs
VA Regional Office (benefits)	WA Checks & Labels
Office of the Secretary	VVA CHAPTER-RELATED PROJECTS
Office of the Inspector General	Reflections print (WA Chapter 172)
Hotline for DC Metropolitan area800-488-8244	Toll free
Office of the National Cemetery System800-697-6947	e-mail
Arlington National Cemetery (general funeral information)	
Board of Veterans Appeals	WOMEN VETERANS
VA Central Office (main switchboard)	Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation
Government Life Insurance	vielnam vvomens Memoriai Foundation, inc (tormeny Froject)
Personnel Locator	OTHER
Persian Gulf Veterans Hotline	National Vietnam Veterans Art Museum
	New York State Department of Labor-Veterans Programs (national referrals) . 800-342-3358
OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES	Order of the Silver Rose
Army Review Board Agency (ABCMR)	Persian Gulf Veterans Hotline
Department of Defense	Point Man International Ministries
DoL Vets	U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims
Office of Management and Budget-Veterans Affairs	National Organizations for Vets Advocates (attorneys)
Office of Personnel Management	USO
Veterans Hiring Preferencewww.opm.gov/veterans	
Small Business Administration-Office of Veterans Affairs	ON THE INTERNET
HOMFLECC	Army Worldwide Locator
HOMELESS	WA National Office on the World Wide Web
Department of Housing and Urban Development	National Birth Defects Registry
Veteran Resource Center	National Conference of Viet Nam Veteran Ministers www.birindelects.org/lesearch
TDD	Advocacy and Intelligence Index for POW/MIAwww.aiipowmia.com
National Coalition for the Homeless	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairswww.va.gov
National Coalition for Homeless Veterans800-VET-HELP	National Assoc. of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA) www.nasdva.com
	OPM Veterans Hiring Preference
HUMANITARIAN	Uniformed Services Family Health Plan (USFHP)www.usfhp.com
American Red Cross	U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims
Army Emergency Relief	Children of Vietnam Vets
	The Delta Raiders
Gulf War Resource Center	Sons and Daughters In Touch
National Marrow Donor Program	The Center For Womens Veterans
Operation Smile	
INCARCERATED	Please inform us if any of the above numbers, e-mail addresses, or web sites have been changed or are no longer in service. If you do not see information on the list that you think would be helpful to Vietnam veterans
Federal Bureau of Prisons	and their families, please call The VVA Veteran at 301-585-4000.



BY BARBARA T. DREYFUSS

ven while the military's own studies are showing that one-third of Iraqi War veterans are seeking mental health services during their first year home, the legitimacy of veterans' claims that they suffer from Post-traumatic Stress Disorder is under the gun. Questions are being raised in Congress, at the Department of Veterans Affairs, and by a small number of vocal academics, whose views are not shared by most PTSD experts, about whether there even is such a thing as PTSD and if there is, whether those claiming to suffer from it actually do.

"There are some folks out there who say we see a lot of guys claiming to be ill and they are doing it just to get benefits," says Jeff Schrade, a spokesman for the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. Congress is hearing this from "within the VA," he said, and this is prompting interest from committee chair Sen. Larry E. Craig (R-Idaho) about how PTSD is diagnosed and treated. "There's a vocal group of folks who are quite adamant about this issue and think it's a waste of money," Schrade adds.

Why, more than a quarter century after PTSD was officially recognized and defined by the psychiatric community, is it being called into question? One key reason is that Washington policymakers face a budget crisis and the cost of treating and paying disability compensation to veterans with PTSD is high and is likely to get higher, given the increasing numbers of newer veterans seeking mental health services.

VA officials and Congress are "concerned about money," says Dr. Sally Satel, one of the most vocal PTSD skeptics. But, said Satel, they "can't say it too

loudly." Instead, officials rely on people like Satel, a former VA psychiatrist who is now a resident scholar at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, to wage a campaign to discredit PTSD as a diagnosis and portray veterans who suffer from it as looking for easy disability benefits that provide an incentive for staying sick rather than getting well. The implication is sick veterans are welfare cheats.

since the invasion of Iraq, Satel has written several newspaper articles questioning PTSD and those who are diagnosed with it; has been skeptical about the generally well-regarded Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Study; has testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Committee about PTSD; and

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The 1984 National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Study

BY TOM BERGER

In 1984, the VA initiated a large-scale survey of the psychiatric and sociomedical components of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans. This study, commonly referred to as the National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Study (NVVRS), indicated that some 15.2 percent of all male and 8.5 percent of all Vietnam theater veterans were current PTSD cases—that is, they had PTSD at some time during the six months preceding their interviews.

Rates for those exposed to high levels of war-zone stress were dramatically higher—a four-fold difference for men and seven-fold for women—than rates for those with low-to-moderate stress exposure. Rates of lifetime prevalence of PTSD were 30.9 percent among male and 26.9 among female Vietnam theater veterans. Comparisons of current and lifetime prevalence rates indicate that 49.2 percent of male and 31.6 percent of female theater veterans who had PTSD still had it at the time of their interview.

The NVVRS was a landmark investigation in which a national random sample of Vietnam theater and era veterans who served between August 1964 and May 1975 provided definitive information about the prevalence and etiology of PTSD and other mental-health readjustment problems.

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AGAIN IN THE EYE OF THE STORM

Continued from previous page

has organized a recent seminar, "Soldiers, Psyche, and the Department of Veterans Affairs: What Are the Lessons of Vietnam?", at the American Enterprise Institute with speakers partial to her views. The announcement for the event spoke of how care provided by the VA "played a role in many veterans becoming chronic psychiatric patients," regressive treatment "involving the incessant retelling of war stories with insufficient emphasis on practical problem-solving," and how "generous Veterans Affairs entitlements for chronic PTSD may have created financial incentives for veterans to claim psychological disorders and reduced the motivation to recover."

Faced with enormous budget deficits, Republican chairs of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees are raising concerns about hikes in disability spending. Sen. Craig called the jump in disability payments "stunning increases that are going to require a reality check from Congress." PTSD sufferers make up one-fifth of all veterans receiving compensation. While no one denies that a veteran missing legs or arms has a disability, PTSD is less visible and easier to question.

There is also concern that the number of veterans with PTSD who receive disability compensation is growing faster than other disability cases. In 1999, about 122,000 veterans received disability compensation for PTSD and over 90,000 were veterans of the Vietnam period. By late 2004, over 161,000 veterans of the Vietnam period were getting disability compensation for PTSD, and the total number of veterans being compensated for PTSD was nearly 218,000. From 1999 to 2004, there was an 80 percent jump in the number of veterans being paid benefits for PTSD, while overall veterans receiving disability grew 12 percent. Vietnam veterans constituted most of the 80 percent jump. At the same time, according to a report last year by the VA Inspector General, PTSD disability payments rose from \$1.7 billion to \$4.3 billion. Veterans receiving disability compensation for PTSD are becoming increasingly expensive and most of them are veterans of the Vietnam era. Efforts to con-



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trol the cost of PTSD would affect not only Vietnam veterans, but also the newer veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan who are starting to apply for VA benefits. Some of them are the sons and daughters of Vietnam veterans.

udget issues are not the only thing driving this debate, claim former VA officials. There is concern that military recruitment efforts could be significantly hindered if people see the psychological toll of combat. Some are worried "about the publicity the psychological effects of the war is getting," says Dr. Susan Mather, a former top VA official who retired in January as its chief public health officer. "They already have a recruitment problem . . . the parents of these youth, if they think their children will come back from the military experience changed forever-which they undoubtedly will be; not only changed but disabled by the experience, mentally as well as physically—they are going to be a lot less anxious to have these kids join up. And there's a feeling that if this gets too much publicity and appears to be too widespread, it will hurt recruitment."

Given the dozens of news articles that have appeared about combat veterans from Iraq or Afghanistan who have reported mental health problems or symptoms of PTSD since their return, the concern about publicity is understandable. One recent example is the news that the young, grim, battleweary, helmeted Marine photographed in Fallujah in 2004, with a cigarette dangling from his lips, who instantly became known as "Marlboro Man" when the famous photo flashed around the world, now has PTSD and is no longer a Marine.

While budget costs and recruitment are key concerns driving the new debate, recent changes in the VA's culture have made the agency more receptive to skepticism about PTSD. In the past, VA headquarters was staffed in large part by civilians who had spent years in the field working with veterans and seeing first-hand the psychological toll of war. They were sympathetic to veterans suffering from PTSD. But the high cost of living in Washington and the heated political atmosphere now pervading the agency have made it difficult to bring in people from regional VA centers,

Readjustment Study (continued from previous page)

Only through the NVVRS has the American public and medical community become aware of the high rates of current and lifetime PTSD and of the long-term consequences of high-stress war-zone combat exposure. In addition, because of its unique scope, the NVVRS has had a large impact on VA policies, health care delivery, and service planning. Because the study clearly demonstrated high rates of PTSD and strong evidence for the persistence of this disease, it was generally accepted that the VA would pursue a follow-up or longitudinal study of the original participants in this seminal research project.

In 2000, the VA solicited proposals for non-VA contractual assistance to conduct a longitudinal study of the physical and mental health status of a population of Vietnam-era veterans originally assessed in the NVVRS. In fact, congressional legislation (PL 106-419) mandated a report on the longitudinal study by October 2004. But the initial contract expired without meeting this goal because an I.G. audit showed that VA planning, contracting, and project management practices were not carried out.

A longitudinal follow-up to the NVVRS is necessary. But the VA failed to meet the letter of the law, and there has been no effort to build upon the resources accumulated from this unique and comprehensive study of Vietnam veterans in a cost-efficient and scientifically compelling manner. More important, however, is the fact that such a longitudinal study could provide clues about which VA health care services are effective and about ways to reach veterans who receive either inadequate services or none at all. This has important consequences for America's current and future veterans.

say VA insiders. Instead, VA ranks are increasingly filled by retired military.

Some of these ex-military personnel are uncomfortable with mental illness and question whether it is as real as physical disability. Their view, say other VA officials, is that troubled veterans need to "suck it up" and deal with their psychological problems. As in a war zone, they just need to get back on the line. Steeped in this mentality, they are easily swayed by arguments that many receiving PTSD benefits are faking it or not admitting they are getting better for fear of losing their payments. Indeed, some VA officials believe some veterans "are lying" about PTSD,

Budget issues are not the only thing driving this debate. There is concern that military recruitment efforts could be significantly hindered if people see the psychological toll of combat. "They already have a recruitment problem and there's a feeling that if this gets too much publicity and appears to be too widespread, it will hurt recruitment."

Matt Friedman, executive director of the National Center on PTSD, told a public meeting in February.

With many officials skeptical about the diagnosis and concerned about budget and recruitment issues, VA last year used a government report questioning how PTSD is diagnosed as an excuse to announce it would review all PTSD cases granted 100 percent disability since 1999. The VA was responding to an Inspector General's report that had found 25 percent of PTSD claims reviewed did not have adequate proof the veteran was actually exposed to significant stress, a precondition for PTSD diagnosis. After veterans' groups, including VVA, protested that this was just an excuse to cut benefits, as well as action by members of Congress, the VA backed off. In November came the announcement that the VA wouldn't audit claims. VA said that rather than showing evidence veterans committed fraud, the lack of data underscored problems in how staff review claims.

These events could have led the VA to focus on improving the consistency of claims processing by hiring more staff or initiating better training programs. Instead, a few days after ending the audit, the VA began a total reassessment of PTSD, including how it is defined, diagnosed, and compensated.

Former VA officials and staffers on Capitol Hill believe this review was initiated to support changing the definition of PTSD, with the aim of decreasing the number of people diagnosed with it. They also see it as part of an effort to change the benefits structure in order to reduce compensation.

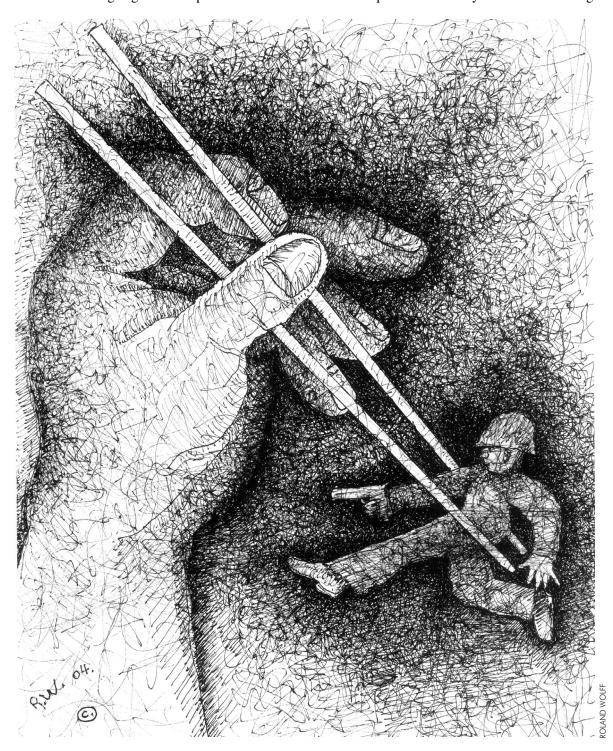
To give the imprimatur of objectivity to this, the VA asked the Institute of Medicine (IOM), an independent group of prominent medical experts, to do the work and provided a \$1.3 million contract for the study. IOM was asked to assess the criteria for diagnosing PTSD, determine the validity of screening procedures, and judge the efficacy of current treatment. The report is expected in June. A second study, due in December, will recommend proposals for structuring compensation.

The emphasis is not better treatment, says former VA official Mather, but disability payments. "I don't think the IOM is going to come up with better treat-

ans with PTSD has grown so quickly." He says that congressmen responsible for veterans' affairs have raised questions about the consistency and accuracy of VA's determination of benefits.

The VA could have asked its internal PTSD experts to do this assessment. Its National Center for PTSD is one of the premier authorities on PTSD. The VA also has a Special Committee on PTSD composed of VA physicians who are PTSD experts.

But both are replete with people who have spent years working with PTSD veterans and firmly believe it is a real disorder that should be compensated. "PTSD has proven to be a very useful and valid diag-



ment programs," she said. Rather, the creators of the review hope they will redefine PTSD to narrow its scope, which would be a more politically acceptable way to cut spending. "I think those folks who are interested in how much it's costing would like to find a way to define it differently because they don't want to appear hard-hearted," said Mather.

"This is happening in a context where the Secretary and the Veterans Disability Benefits Commission are looking at compensation for all health conditions, including for PTSD," admits Dr. Toni Zeiss, VA's deputy chief of mental health services.

Ron Aument, deputy undersecretary for benefits at the VA, denies that the VA wants to reduce benefits but admits "there is concern that the number of veternosis after 25 years," Mathew Friedman, the National Center for PTSD's executive director, told the IOM committee at its first public meeting.

When asked why the National Center couldn't have performed the IOM analysis, AEI's Sally Satel said derisively, "They have a vested interest" in it. "They are the experts," agreed Mather, referring to the National Center, but "I think there is sometimes a feeling that the Center is also an advocate for PTSD." As advocates, they would not be likely to go along with those who want to reduce the number of people getting compensated for PTSD by changing the criteria for its diagnosis.

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AGAIN IN THE EYE OF THE STORM

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recent study illustrated how the psychological toll of the war in Iraq can change depending on how PTSD is defined. The study, in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, reported as few as 12 percent or as many as 20 percent of returning Iraqi war veterans had PTSD, depending on how the screen for PTSD is used.

For 26 years, mental health practitioners and researchers and many state and federal programs, including the VA, have relied on the American Psychiatric Association to define and diagnose PTSD. The APA publishes its *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual*, which has explicit criteria defining PTSD, is used throughout the medical profession, and is incorporated into 650 state and federal regulations. APA is now revising its 1994 edition. Although it won't be ready until 2011, the APA has already convened an international research conference to assess existing scientific knowledge and to suggest further research. But VA's Zeiss says the department cannot wait for APA to complete its work.

This has raised concerns at APA. "My concern is that they not attempt to establish their own diagnostic criteria for PTSD," said Darrel Regier, the APA's director of research. Regier said that would be interpreted as "the VA is doing this to alter the prevalence rates and the liability rates they have with PTSD." There is, he warns, "a history in psychiatry of political misuse of diagnosis."

In addition to defining PTSD, IOM was asked to look at how compensation relates to diagnosis, how long payments should last, and what evidence should be used to prove disability. During the IOM's first public meeting on the PTSD study, AEI's Satel raised a number of questions about PTSD compensation. So did Harvard professor Richard McNally, a psychologist, whose recent book, *Remembering Trauma*, applied clinical research findings on memory to the debate about repressed memories of childhood sexual abuse, and received a glowing review from Satel, who expanded the review with a discussion of PTSD.

First, Satel and McNally raised the specter of fraud and questioned current rules allowing VA claims raters to accept a veteran's testimony as proof that he experienced a traumatic event that caused his disability. Satel was most blunt, charging, "That's life: People cheat."

Second, both claim that cases of delayed onset of PTSD "are rare to nonexistent," as McNally has written. Satel proposed to the IOM that veterans not be permitted to apply for PTSD disability more than five years after the event triggering their illness.

Third, Satel also argued that PTSD is an acute—not a chronic—disease and only rarely should there be a "need to give long-term disability." PTSD is "easier to treat early on," she says. In fact, she argues that long-term disability is a disincentive to people getting well because they don't want to lose benefits. She derides disability compensation as a "retirement plan" for people who cannot get good jobs.

McNally referenced a few small, questionable studies and Satel presented her comments as opinion without citing any data. Their charges were strongly refuted by the National Center's Friedman, who cited many studies confirming delayed onset of PTSD and others showing the validity of veterans' self-reports of stress incidents. A new study not yet published by a Columbia University professor also was presented at

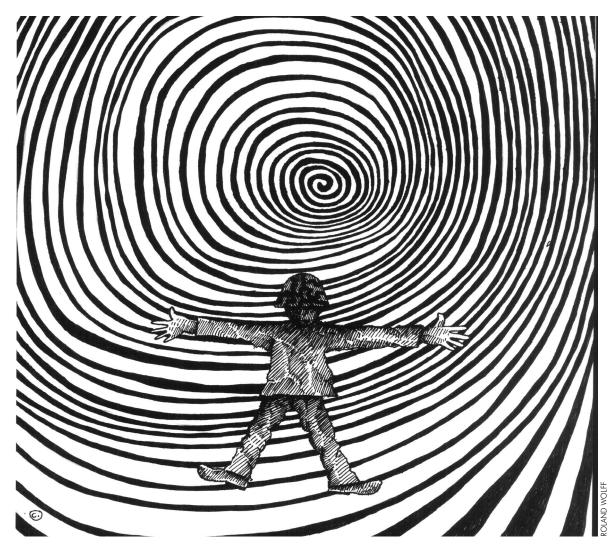
the meeting confirming the validity of self-reports. Friedman also cited studies showing that mental health utilization is actually higher for people given disability than for those who apply and are turned down. They "are not taking the money and running," said Friedman.

Still, some at VA believe that even if veterans continue treatment, compensation payments can affect a person's desire to get well. VA officials have been grappling for years with how compensation can be structured so that ill veterans can focus on getting better without fear of losing benefits. But unlike many who are raising this issue to set a limit on benefits, others would like to see a large infusion of money to improve treatment and training.

Dick McCormick, former chair of VA's Committee on Serious Mental Illness, proposes enough money to insure state-of-the-art treatment nationally and a hefty initial payment to make sure veterans get therapy and vocational training. "Then I would have continuation of the money contingent on continuing to try to stay happening with veterans benefits noted there is intense pressure to cut the budget and they will be watching how Congress reacts to the IOM reports "with raised skepticism." IOM has a strong record of not acting with political bias or limiting benefits for the sake of saving money, said one staffer, but "we're very worried about what Congress will do with these results."

Even VA officials say the key to how the IOM report affects benefits will rest with Congress, which determines the compensation system. VA's Aument agrees that "there certainly are a lot of broad public policy questions here," but wants VA to stay away from making these kinds of decisions. "Some of those questions are best left to the public policymakers such as Sen. Craig."

Craig's Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee will hold hearings this year and next on these issues, promises a committee spokesman. So will the House Veterans' Affairs Committee. Its chair, Rep. Steve Buyer (R-Ind.), who last year replaced long-



in treatment." He says he would rather err in giving someone who doesn't deserve compensation the money rather than not giving it to someone who does.

Despite the motives for initiating the IOM reports, it's unclear whether they will satisfy those who asked for them. IOM committee members did not respond kindly to Satel, asking many tough and somewhat angry questions about her opinions. Several members also were upset when they found that the panel would be discussing diagnostic criteria for PTSD but no one from the American Psychiatric Association had been invited to comment. They raised their concerns with committee staff, who quickly invited APA's research director.

hatever the IOM reports say, the bigger question is how Congress will use them. Some Capitol Hill staffers concerned about what is

time veterans' advocate Rep. Chris Smith (R-N.J.) after Smith was ousted by the House Republican leadership, says on his committee web site that the prevalence of PTSD in returning troops and the ability of the VA to care for them will be a major focus of his committee this year. But his committee will look at not just treatment but the way VA "goes to diagnose, validate, and compensate" PTSD patients.

Veterans will have a major fight over the coming months to maintain adequate funding for treatment, diagnosis, and support for those suffering from serious mental trauma. While that is going on, veterans' advocates worry that the campaign being waged to discredit PTSD will further reinforce the stigma that exists about acknowledging psychological problems. This could keep more veterans from getting the care they need and deserve. That just could be what the PTSD critics want.

The Truths of War

THE WAR TAPES • COMMITMENT AND SACRIFICE

BY RICHARD CURREY

new documentary film, *The War Tapes*, premiered in late April at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York. Word of mouth from the military and veterans' communities, as well as glowing reviews, led to a surprise for festival organizers: Tickets were in very short supply by the day of the premiere. As the lights went down in the 900-seat Tribeca Performance Space, there was standing room only.

Yet it was not so long ago, according to *The War Tapes* director Deborah Scranton, that nobody much wanted to finance a documentary about a National Guard unit in Iraq. She and her production partners initially drew only lukewarm reactions. More than one potential backer suggested that we have been, and continue to be, inundated by news and images of the war in Iraq, and a film treatment would be unlikely to find an audience.

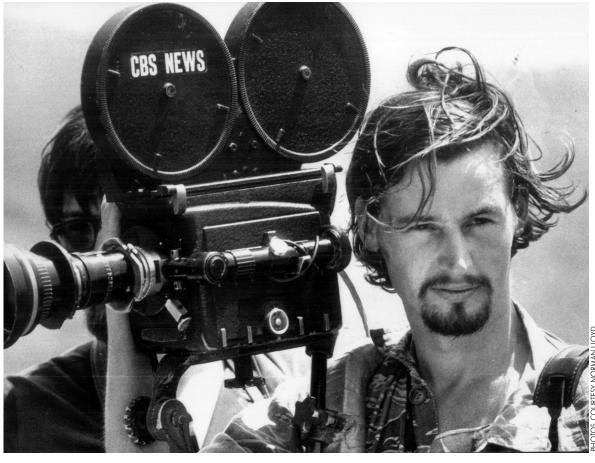
This sentiment will strike a chord among Vietnam veterans who recall how the distinctive imagery of the Vietnam War was engraved on the consciousness of virtually every American, yet Vietnam stories in film and print were rejected by publishers and film producers for years after the war. The reasons were similar to those heard by Scranton: Americans were exhausted by the war, we had seen all we could bear, there were no new stories to tell.

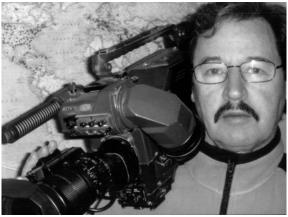
ne of the people who recorded some of that quintessential imagery of the Vietnam War is former CBS combat photographer Norman Lloyd. As the nation allegedly wearied of the Vietnam War, Lloyd's stunning footage from his time with an infantry platoon in Cambodia disappeared into the vaults of CBS. Some of it was destroyed; some remains unaccounted for. But like Deborah Scranton, he knew that an important story still needed to be told, which led to his campaign to recover his own film and use it in creating the documentary film Commitment and Sacrifice. Lloyd's film joins The War Tapes in offering powerful reminders of the moral predicament of the warriors who fight, and the ordeal of families and loved ones living with the mix of pride and anxiety that marks their burden.

Commitment and Sacrifice is still in post-production and has not yet been released. The War Tapes is in contention for several more major film festivals before it reaches hometown movie theatres, television screens, or DVD rental. Readers can watch Marc Leepson's "Arts of War" column in these pages for ongoing news about both films. But know this: Both are must-see films for the veterans community.

BRAVO 5/7: VIETNAM & IRAQ

ommitment and Sacrifice follows the 1st Platoon from Bravo Co., 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, on a punishing combat operation in Cambodia in the spring of 1970. After a reunion of those soldiers in 2004, we return to the





"Those were the days when you lugged a big camera and shot actual film," he said.
No video, nothing digital.
Combat photographers were all a lot more careful back then, more conservative about how much film we exposed."

Norman Lloyd (above in 1971 and left in 2005) has put together an extraordinary documentary film, Commitment and Sacrifice, which is centered on footage he shot following Bravo Company of the 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment in Cambodia in 1970 and a reunion of the soldiers in 2004.

same unit (reactivated 30 years later for service in the Middle East) on the ground in Iraq with another set of young men, the newest members of Bravo 5/7, facing similar doubts and challenges to their older counterparts

Meanwhile, *The War Tapes* tracks Charlie Company, 3/172 Infantry (MOUNTAIN) Regiment of the New Hampshire National Guard on harrowing convoy security missions in the Sunni Triangle. We follow the unit before, during, and after its tour, and also join family members and loved ones at home while their men are in Iraq.

While *Commitment and Sacrifice* hinges on the recovered Vietnam War combat photography of Norman Lloyd as well as Lloyd's more recent filming in Iraq, *The War Tapes* uses another technique. Director Scranton received permission for several soldiers to serve as the actual filmmakers. They would carry the cameras (on their vests or helmets or mounted on weapons or in their Humvees) and film their days and nights, recording the world and events around them. As they did so, Scranton and her crew filmed the soldiers' families and loved ones at home: a mother, a wife, and a girlfriend.

Norman Lloyd said he was "only a little older than the soldiers he hooked up with" when he rappelled out

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The Truths of War

Continued from previous page

of a chopper hovering above the jungle floor in Cambodia on May 17, 1970. "Those were the days when you lugged a big camera and shot actual film," he said. No video, nothing digital. Combat photographers were all a lot more careful back then, more conservative about how much film we exposed."

Lloyd was a rookie cameraman when he arrived in Cambodia, and he assumed that if he wanted to get good shots of "the action," he needed to be up front, not too far behind the point. "We walked into an ambush, and I hit the ground. There was dirt flying and tree limbs falling and deafening noise. It was chaos. Terrifying chaos. I kept trying to get up, to get my camera in position, but the firefight was so intense, it was impossible. I began to understand what these guys were experiencing what they were going through."

A key event in *Commitment and Sacrifice* is the taking of Shakey's Hill (named for a much-loved soldier nicknamed "Shakey," who was killed in the initial assault on the hill). Lloyd's camera seems to be afloat, swept along by the 1st Platoon as it made its way up the slope, taking and inflicting casualties in a running firefight, culminating in a final push to overrun a machine gun emplacement at the summit.

Lloyd intercuts his original combat footage with contemporary interviews, as surviving members of the 1st Platoon tell the story. As they relate the story of the battle, Lloyd cuts back to his 1970 footage, and we see them again, 34 years ago, exhausted, mudsmeared, and determined. The effect is powerful and poignant.

Commitment and Sacrifice follows Bravo Company to the end of its Vietnam tour. The men of the 1st Platoon scattered, not seeing each other again until a 2004 reunion at the Texas ranch of one of the platoon members. Lloyd and his camera were there, and it was, as such events are, tinged by a sense of remembrance and quiet sadness and the joy seen among men who together shared the most intense experience of their lives.



Deborah Scranton (above) conceived and directed the outstanding documentary, The War Tapes, in which she received permission to have five members of Charlie Co., 3/172nd Infantry, carry video cameras as they went about their often-hazardous duties in Iraq.

And precisely where a more standard Vietnam War story might end, Norman Lloyd takes the story of Bravo Company forward, through its reactivation and into Iraq.

SOLDIERS WITH VIDEO CAMERAS

here was nothing initially easy, Deborah Scranton said, about "convincing the powers that be in the New Hampshire National Guard to let me put video cameras in the hands of soldiers. The key throughout has been mutual trust."

With a green light from the unit public affairs officer, Scranton credits trust-building for establishing the necessary rapport that ultimately helped create the extraordinary documentary storytelling we see in *The War Tapes*. "The guys pelted me with questions at

first," she said. "What were my politics? Would I twist their words? I promised these guys that we would tell their story, no matter where it took us. And that's what we did."

Several volunteers were interested in participating, and Scranton finally settled on five men to serve as the movie's "soldiers with cameras." Each man was issued a Sony video camera and a stack of blank tapes. She communicated with each through a combination of e-mail, instant messaging, downloaded clips, and the actual footage itself, sent back at regular intervals from Iraq. Eventually there would be 800 hours of raw footage.

The War Tapes chronicles harsh realities. This is combat dictated by insurgents firing from the cover of roadside houses, of the randomness of IEDs and rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs). This is, like Vietnam, a war without front lines or an easily identified enemy, and none of the soldier-cameramen avert their lenses no matter the moment or its horror.

Strangely, however, one of the most powerful moments in the film is not chasing down insurgents or images of charred corpses after an IED attack. It is instead a few moments with soldier-cameraman Specialist Michael Moriarty as he walks, alone, through a backlot filled with the wreckage of vehicles exploded by IEDs and RPGs. As Moriarty trains his camera on the twisted frames and burned-out hulks, he wonders who lost their lives in these catastrophes. "Somebody's husband," he muses quietly. "Somebody's brother, somebody's son." It is a potent and lyrical image of the costs of war.

"I stayed out of Iraq precisely because I wanted this story to be uncluttered by me," Scranton said. "I didn't want my ideas intruding. If I were in-theatre, I'd be the 'director,' shaping the story, even if unconsciously. What I wanted and what I think we've achieved is for me to get out of the way and let the soldiers be the storytellers, let the movie be an expression of their energies, their feelings, their truths not mine."

arly reviews of *The War Tapes* agree that Scranton and her soldier-collaborators achieved their goal. Writing in the *New York Times*, film critic Stephen Holden praised *The War Tapes* as offer-

ing "a stronger taste of the Iraq war experience than any film I can remember... it is fascinating to observe how a prevailing cynicism about the war doesn't undercut the deeply felt patriotism of these men... Once encountered, you will never forget these [soldiers] or their loved ones. They are the bedrock of who we are as a nation."

That bedrock quality is apparent in Norman Lloyd's film as well, certainly among the veterans of Bravo Company who, in a kind of unintended symmetry of tradition, symbolically hand off responsibility to the men who serve in the same unit, 35 years later, in another war, in another part of the world.

he screening of *The War Tapes* incited some volatile exchanges between audience members, and between audience members and words spoken on-screen. It struck me that, no less than in the Vietnam years, we are a passionate people, sometimes passionately divided by our beliefs, always intense in our feelings about what constitutes the right thing to do about perceived or actual threats to our national security. But Michael Moriarty, on stage for a post-screening Q&A, took the mike and spoke powerfully to the notion of division. "You look at the guys standing up here," he said. "We served together. We might not always share the same political opinions, but let there be no doubt about this: We are brothers. We would do anything for each other."

This same quality of a potent kinship forged by service also hovers in the words of the veterans of

Scranton credits
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matter where it took us.
And that's what we did."

Bravo Company in *Commitment and Sacrifice*. It is the arc of tradition that links these two movies, deepens the impact of each, and makes each so important for veterans and for all concerned Americans. Our warriors, now and throughout our history, have been windows on the crucial events of our times, and they also carry the spirit of those times, sometimes in ways

they don't understand. They might be conflicted or confused by the events they witness or participate in. They may be marked by grief and the entity we now know as PTSD, yet they are buoyed by common purpose and lasting friendship, fueled by integrity and loyalty.

This is the real story told in *The War Tapes* and Commitment and Sacrifice. Both films eloquently remind us that if we are to have any hope of understanding ourselves and our history we can never stop listening to the stories of soldiers and their families, the stories hidden behind the news reports and dispatches and official statements, under the details of troop strength and deployments and the order of battle. Both these remarkable films speak of the deepest truths of war, commitment, love, and loyalty for two conflicts that indelibly mark two generations, using two different filmmaking techniques representative of the technical potentials of two eras. Yet these films achieve an accuracy and integrity that is as hard-won as it is essential, and brings home insights and understandings that we, as a nation, continue to need.

"If my film can help and heal, for even one veteran, nothing would please me more," Norman Lloyd said. "The key is connection, which brings hope and possibility. If my work serves this goal in any way, then I've succeeded."

"We leave our warriors isolated far too often," said Deborah Scranton. "It's time to change that, to bridge the gap. We must have compassion for our warriors. They did the job we asked of them. Perhaps, through empathy, we can learn to do a better job with the healing."

Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America



A parallel organization of Vietnam Veterans of America, working side by side for the betterment of Vietnam-era veterans, their families, and others.

Our Mission is to advance the work of Vietnam Veterans of America through cooperative projects and programs. We wish to facilitate, enhance, and improve communication with our members and the general public and continue legislative efforts to insure the rights of, and benefits for, all veterans. Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America is dedicated to the aggressive advancement of realistic goals with integrity and in the spirit of unity reflecting our commitment to Vietnam Veterans of America, all veterans, their families, and communities.

Won't you join us?

			tion for AVVA embership Affairs, P.O. Box 64732, I	-)		
Name				Sex	Date of B	Birth	
Address			City			State	Zip
Home Phon	ne ()		Affilia	ted with WA Chapter #			
	□ Individual Member — 1 year @ \$20 □ Individual Member — 3 years @ \$50			☐ Payment Plan — \$50 down select age group: ☐ ages 49 an ☐ ages 61-65	d under (\$250)	,	
◆ Payment	Method: ☐ Check ☐ Money Order	□ Visa □ MasterCard	◆ Card Number	Exp.	. Date	Signature	



WOULD YOU SEARCH YOUR MEMORY FOR A WAR CASUALTY? WOULD YOU LOOK BACK TO A TIME LONG AGO?

What is the Veterans Initiative?

A humanitarian, veteran-to-veteran effort to help gain more information about American POW/MIAs still unaccounted for by providing information about Vietnam's war casualties to the Vietnamese Veterans Association.

What kind of information is needed?

Letters, diaries, photos, other personal items taken from dead or captured Vietcong or NVA regulars, or topographic or hand-drawn maps of burial sites.

How can I help?

Please complete this form to the best of your ability, and send this and any other information you may have to VVA, c/o Veterans Initiative. Please provide as much detail as possible. Originals or readable copies are acceptable, as are anonymous submissions. All information will be kept strictly confidential.

If you know other Vietnam veterans who may have information, please copy this form and send it to them. Please send all Veterans Initiative information to VVA by registered mail, FedEx, or UPS.

Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. c/o Veterans Initiative 8605 Cameron Street, Suite 400 Silver Spring, MD 20910-3710 301-585-4000

THE VETERANS INITIATIVE NEEDS YOUR HELP

VETERANS INITIATIVE INFORMATION FORM

(please print)	Today's date
Your name	Phone number(s)
Address	
City	State Zip
Description of item	
Location of incident	Date of incident
Province	VC or NVA unit
District or nearest village	U.S. unit
Map coordinates	Military Region
Name(s) of VC or NVA, if known	
If grave site, number of remains	
Other relevant information (attach additional pages as necessary)	
Where did you learn of the Veterans Initiative? (Check the most appropriate box)	
\Box The VVA Veteran newspaper \Box A VVA member \Box A VVA chapter	☐ Local media ☐ Other



My hand-written note simply said, in Vietnamese, "old war photos." They discussed my request for a minute, then scurried into the back room and emerged with a duffel bag full of old black and white photos of the South Vietnamese Army.

SNAPSHOT

CollectingWar Photos inVietnam

BY STEVE HOUSE

've been back to Vietnam seven times. I've traveled there to work on humanitarian projects, including a lot of time working with international library projects. Libraries in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia have brought me face to face with veterans from the Vietnam War and the other Southeast Asian wars that followed ours. I've enjoyed seeing the new prosperity in Vietnam and the enthusiasm of the people of Vietnam as they look forward to better days.

But I'm also a collector. When in Vietnam, I keep a sharp eye out for war artifacts, books in English on the war, and war photographs. If I have extra cash, I hire an interpreter to help me—a real interpreter, not just a taxi driver. Drivers may know how to get around town and good places to eat, but you need a good translator for more complicated needs.

Perhaps the most important tool, however, is a simple notebook. I stay alert for people with good English skills. Often, those people are your hotel clerks. I have them write down what I'm looking for in Vietnamese. Before I hire a motorcycle driver or a cab, I show the driver my list. If he seems to understand, I trust him to take me where I can find what I'm looking for.

In Saigon, the destination is usually the open-air markets.

The open-air markets have just about everything. One area will have all kinds of fruits, flowers, fish, pork, beef, and chicken. It smells both sweet and rotten, and it hits you all at once. I can't spend much time there. I'll walk through other areas, with vendors selling cloth and motorcycle parts. All of a sudden I'll be standing in front of a stand that has military uniforms, packs, canteens, pistol belts, and—if I'm lucky—war photos and old books about the war. It's time to get comfortable and start my search in earnest. It's slow but pleasurable work and requires lots of time to sort through piles of stuff to find what you want.

Sometimes I hit those shops that are not quite upscale, more a cross between legitimate antique shop and junk shop. At one such shop in District One of Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) in the downtown tourist area,

I found what I was looking for. I showed the shop owner my hand-written note. It simply said, in Vietnamese, "old war photos." The proprietor looked at it. Someone came out of a back room, and they discussed my request for a minute.

Then they both scurried into the back room and emerged with a duffel bag full of old black and white photos of the South Vietnamese Army. As I looked through them, I searched for those that were recognizable or distinctive in some way: a familiar location, recognizable unit patches, weapons. I even found some military funeral photographs.

The shop owner was happy to provide what he had as long as I had the money to pay. You can negotiate

and I do. A word of caution on negotiating: Sometimes you can find yourself arguing as a matter of pride. If your bartering is over a dollar or two, let the shop owner have his price. That's better than losing something you want. If this is a one-time trip, you will regret not making the purchase.

These old war photos are very rare in the United States. In fact, they're nearly impossible to find. To me, a photograph truly is worth a thousand words. Looking at these photos, I find myself saying, "I remember that." Good or bad, the memories are ours. If you look real hard, you may find something important to you: a feeling of pride and the clarity that comes with survival.





BY MARGARET WOJCIECHOWICZ

rior to admission into the PTSD Unit at the Lyons VA Medical Center, I found myself in denial," said Herb Worthington. "Not that I had PTSD, but rather that this program would be able to help me. Once accepted into the program, I realized it wasn't just Vietnam veterans who had problems. During my stay, we had with us two Gulf War vets, three Iraqi Freedom vets, and one from the Somalia conflict. In our trauma sessions, we learned that although we were different, war still affected us the same."

Now in its 23rd year, the program offers an inpatient, 45-day program open to all veterans. VVA chapters in New Jersey, including Chapters 800, 779, 327, 688, and 452, have been actively involved in the program. Members visit to chat, build camaraderie, and bring food. Chapter 800 members hand out beaded necklaces they've assembled in the service-ribbon colors of the veterans' different wars.

It's a tough program, but one overseen by a staff recognized as both compassionate and competent. "As with any program," Worthington said, "you get what you put into it. The program has answered many haunting questions that I have kept bottled up for years, but I also realize there will never be a complete cure for PTSD. I am faced with adverse conditions daily that I now realize trigger hostile responses. But now I know what to look for and how to deal with many of them."

Integral to the program and a requisite for graduation is a visit to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. During the course of the program, each group must decide upon, design, and build a tribute to be left at *The Wall*. After the piece is made, early one morning everyone boards a bus for the long drive to Washington.

Emotions run high. Each group invents its own ceremony at *The Wall*. On February 15, the bus pulled up and parked on Constitution Avenue. The men got out, carrying a 2-1/2' by 3' plaque. Then, two by two, they fell in behind the plaque and marched quietly to the apex of the memorial. Other visitors silently made way for the procession. Then Worthington, president of the unit, announced, "We are the PTSD Group from Lyons VAMC. We consist of Gulf War, Iraqi Freedom, Somalia, and Vietnam veterans who have come to honor those listed on *The Wall*."

Ricky Loften, the group's chaplain, read a prayer. An Iraqi War veteran said that the veterans of the other wars were honored to be attending; honored, too, to have the opportunity to pay tribute to all those whose names were inscribed on *The Wall*. He called the group to attention, called about-face, and gave the order to salute.



The younger veterans have no memorial to visit their brothers and sisters, so they embraced *The Wall* and thanked us for being there.

hile many had dreaded the trip, most said they were glad they went. They were glad, too, for the support of the other members of the group. Some cried. The younger veterans have no memorial to visit their brothers and sisters, so they embraced *The Wall* and thanked us for being there.

Coming to the end of the program, an Iraqi Freedom veteran named Vince said, "Vietnam veterans welcomed me during my 45-day stay. They were truly interested in learning about my experiences and in helping me get through what I needed to get through. They were always there for me."

A PRISONER'S STORY

POW JOHN FER VISITS TERMINAL ISLAND FEDERAL CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION

BY MATT DAVISON



John Fei

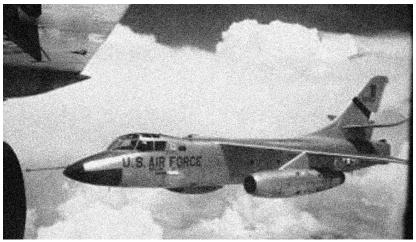
Ithough I had been inside the Federal Correctional Institution at Terminal Island in Southern California many times, it was always during the day. Coming into the institution at night is surreal, kind of like going to a night baseball game. You can see clear across the north yard to where men play handball and basketball, and you can see men move about in their lit cells. The chaplain met us at the front entrance and escorted John and I into the prison chapel, where chairs had been set out. A podium and microphone were in place. Veterans incarcerated lined up to

sign in for the evening's presentation. Sixty veterans attended.

It was February 4, 1967, when Captain John Fer and six other airmen were dispatched in a Douglas EB66C Skywarrior over North Vietnam. About 40 miles from the China border, in Bac Thai Province, the aircraft was hit by two missiles from a mobile tracking station, breaking the aircraft in half. Three of the airmen, including Fer, were captured. The remains of two others later were recovered; and one remains missing. Bleeding from shrapnel wounds and dressed only in shorts and undershirt, Fer at first feared that the prevailing winds had taken him into China, from which he would never emerge. Fortunately, that was not the case.



A North Vietnamese woman keeps a gun trained on an downed U.S. Air Force pilot after his plane was shot down near Hanoi, 1967.



EING

Fer was surrounded by crowds of people waving aged rifles. He was marched by the militia along paths lined with peasants holding sickles. Chants of "war criminal" and "air pirate" filled the air for three hours until a truck arrived with John's navigator inside. Both men were taken to Hanoi. It was February, and it was cold.

Forty-five minutes after touch down, Fer was surrounded by crowds of people waving aged rifles. Marched by the militia along paths lined with peasants holding sickles, he came to a building—the village head man's house in which a picture of Uncle Ho hung. Fer breathed a sigh of relief; he was not in China. Chants of "war criminal" and "air pirate" filled the air for three hours until a truck arrived with John's navigator inside. Both men were taken to Hanoi. It was February, and it was cold.

An interrogator they called the "Eagle" came into the room where Fer sat waiting. The Eagle asked John what his unit was. John responded with name, rank, and service number. He was smacked in the face. The Eagle asked a second time for John's unit. Again, John replied with his name, rank, and service number. Again, he was smacked in the face, only harder this time.

After a third attempt by the Eagle failed, Fer was handcuffed and his arms stretched out behind him and strapped so that all circulation was cut off. The Eagle left the room, and John called out, "Okay, I'll tell you the unit." The Eagle returned, untied Fer, and the circulation rushed back.

"What was your unit?"

"I can't tell you that."

Fer was back in the straps again. He learned that the key to avoiding painful torture was to give false information. But you had to remember what information you gave because the interrogators took notes.

B-52 bombing runs from Guam frightened the North Vietnamese captors and provided some breathing space for Fer and the other POWs. While in isolation, he began a prayer ritual. From a small piece of rope, he formed a rosary, which became part of an early morning ritual of pacing five steps up and back while praying, exercising, and praying again.

continued on next page

A PRISONER'S STORY

Continued from previous page

For the North Vietnamese, isolation was key to breaking down allegiance to your country. For the POWs, communications was instrumental in maintaining their sanity. A 5x5 alphabet matrix was developed, in which prisoners communicated by tapping on the walls. If the message was understood, the recipient tapped twice; if not, he tapped several times. It was a simple, yet ingenious way to communicate. On Sundays, camp-wide church services began with a tap on the wall signaling individual recitation of the Lord's Prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance while facing east toward the United States. Before sleep, tapping would spell out "Good Night, God Bless You" (actually spelled out "GN, GBU").

Another key to remaining sane was mental exercises. Learning aerodynamics or a foreign language were great ways to maximize quiet time. One POW memorized the 350 names of his fellow POWs alphabetically. Fer learned Spanish, French, German, and Russian during his stay.

Feeding the spirit was also vital. Each religious denomination had a chaplain. John McCain was the Presbyterian chaplain. Every Sunday, church services opened with a prayer, reading of memorized scriptures, and hymns that were written by a POW.

In six years, Fer was allowed only four letters. No packages or photos were given to him. A solid spiritual life, faith in God, and exercise kept him in balance. In 1973, it was all over.

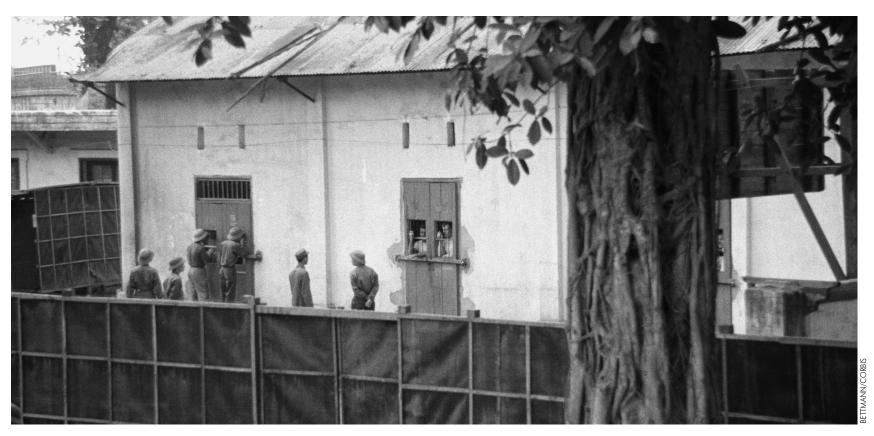
n speaking to his audience at Terminal Island, Fer reminded them that they had a lot in common. They had served this nation, accepted their fate, and would move forward in their lives. He reminded them that we are all sacred, made in God's image.

The question of one-on-one psychological tactics was raised, and Fer said interrogators tried to pit one POW against another. After a grilling took place, the interrogated POW would tap out the questions to other POWs so they could prepare their responses. Asked if the survivors held reunions, Fer replied that they are held every five years. Many are held in Southern California, but they are also held in Washington, D.C., in a Vietnamese restaurant. What did he miss most during his captivity? The sound of children's laughter. Fer later became an elementary school teacher, surrounded by the laughter of children every day.

Fer admonished his audience of veterans incarcerated to assert their own individuality, stay strong in the face of adversity, and find the balance between the spiritual and the intellectual in their lives. He urged the men not to get caught up in self-pity and to realize that many are far worse off than they.

He recalled a moment that he refers to as a miracle, when he was bound in such a way that he thought of himself as a basketball. He remembers a guard picking him up like a basketball and tossing him into the corner of the room. In excruciating pain, John said a prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary. When he finished, the guard returned, untied him, and left the room.

he veterans incarcerated called Fer a hero, something he quickly dismissed. All sixty men came up for handshakes, hugs, or autographs. One of the prisoners asked if Fer would lead them in prayer, which he did without hesitation.





The Federal Correctional Facility at Terminal Island, California.

Above: North Vietnamese prison guards interrogate American prisoners of war through their cell doors.

Fer admonished his audience of veterans incarcerated to assert their own individuality, stay strong in the face of adversity, and find the balance between the spiritual and the intellectual in their lives. He urged the men not to get caught up in self-pity and to realize that many are far worse off than they.

JULY IN TUCSON

DESERT DELIGHT



Leadership Conference Hosts. Tucson Chapter 106, the host chapter for the 2006 Leadership Conference, held its chapter meeting and awards banquet April 27. Attendees included: front row: Dave Croteau, Joe Luke, Aaron Possien, Rose Anderson, Tina St.Germaine, Alan Carr, Ron Dellosa and Jimmy Miller; middle row: Wil Taylor, Dennis St.Germaine, Maggie Luke, Frank Thompson, Betty Slaybaugh, Paul McComb, Frank Martinez, Jonel Garcia-Brown; back row: Dennis Robinson, Bill Fort, Dan Geyer, Art Jackson, Paul Hetrick, Gail Skinner, Dennis Castret, Gerard Berume, Les Corrie, Steve Stencel and Sarge Rodriguez.

BY DENNIS ST. GERMAINE PRESIDENT, VVA CHAPTER 106

Welcome Home. And welcome to Tucson from VVA Chapter 106. We are proud that VVA has chosen our home once again as the location for the National Leadership Conference.

I am writing this in March, looking out my den window past the palm tree at the desert. It is cool, sunny, and looks to be a perfect day. In fact, three out of our four seasons are mild and subtle when compared to the rest of the United States.

However, those three subtle seasons are not what you'll experience during the conference. July is not a subtle month. It is hot outside. If Tucson is lucky, we will be inconvenienced, and it will rain a lot, for July is also when the yearly monsoons begin—if they do begin.

July is also when two large groups of people simply vanish from the community. Students from the University of Arizona—40,000 strong during the school year—and our winter visitors from the northern climes. Traffic is easier to deal with, and when the evening cools after sundown, you can visit superb restaurants and entertainment venues throughout our community.

Plan outdoor activities for early morning to avoid the heat. It is a time when golfers tee off and hikers hit the trail. If you do participate in outdoor activities while you are here, be sure to carry plenty of water, apply sun screen, and wear a hat. Don't hike alone, and watch for snakes—even on the golf course.

Speaking of golf, bring your clubs and participate in the tournament sponsored by the Arizona

State Council to benefit the Mike Nash Scholarship Program. It will take place on Tuesday, July 11.

For those who want a little casino action, both the Tohono O'Odham and Pasqua Yaqui tribes have full casinos. They are across Tucson from the Hilton El Conquistador, but it's not a bad drive by car.

There are several sites of interest for veterans in Tucson, including the Pima Air Museum, one of the finest collections of vintage and significant American aircraft in the country. Once again, it is a drive across the city, but worth the trip.

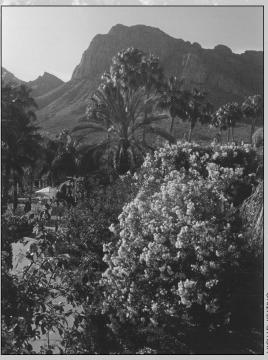
I am proud to say that Southern Arizona honors its veterans. A place that I consider sacred exists right in the center of the University of Arizona. The UA Veterans Memorial Student Union is dedicated to deceased veterans of all wars, but especially those entombed in the USS *Arizona* during the attack on Pearl Harbor. The bell that rings on the quarter hour at the UA is the *Arizona*'s bell, luckily saved from a Naval salvage yard by a UA alumn. There is a display of USS *Arizona* memorabilia, as well as brass plaques with the names of war dead from all the wars of the 20th century.

Another place set aside to honor veterans is Veterans' Memorial Interchange, an overpass that routes city traffic over an industrial area and the railroad. The sides of the bridge are brightly decorated with Stars and Stripes.

The UA also boasts several museums: The UA Museum of Art, the Center for Creative Photography, and the Arizona State Museum, with its phenomenal collections devoted to Southwest archeology.

If you have the time and transportation, a visit to Fort Huachuca, about 90 miles south of Tucson, is worth the ride. Fort Huachuca has four museums chronicling U.S. Army activity in these parts from the Buffalo Soldiers—black soldiers who fought the Apaches—through World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. Some of the buildings still in use date from the Buffalo Soldier era.

If it rains while you are here, enjoy it. Walk outside afterwards and breathe deeply. The smell of the desert after a rain is simply the best.
■



AICHAEL KE

2006 VVA National Leadership Conference

ucson

July 11-16, 2006

TUESDAY, July 11

Mike Nash Memorial Golf Tournament VVA National Board of **Directors Meeting** Conference of State Council **Presidents Meeting** VVA Conference & AVVA Registration

WEDNESDAY, July 12

VVA Opening Ceremonies VVA Presidents Luncheon AVVA Biennial Meeting 9 VVA Leadership Seminars Welcome Reception Caribbean Night in the Desert AV VA fundraiser

THURSDAY, July 13

AVVA Biennial Meeting continues AVVA Luncheon 6 VVA Leadership Seminars Free afternoon to explore Tucson and surrounding area

FRIDAY, July 14

AVVA BOD meeting VVA Awards Luncheon 12 VVA Leadership Seminars **AVVA Seminars** Chuck Wagon Cookout and Entertainment

SATURDAY, July 15

3 Leadership Seminars Closing Ceremonies



THIS BOX FOR STAFF USE ONLY									
CHECK NUMBER	AMOUNT	FINANCE DEPT APPROVAL							
OTHER NAMES									

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA National Leadership Conference July 11-16, 2006

Hilton El Conquistador Golf & Tennis Resort Tucson, Arizona

Pre-registration ends June 9, 2006. Please do not mail your registration form after this date. Registrations received after June 9 will be returned to sender. You then must register on-site at the Conference in Tucson.

ast Name	First Name	_ Middle Initial	Membership #
Address			
City	State		Zip Code
Day phone	Evening phone _		
-ax number	E-mail address _		

rax number E-mail address		
Registration and Event Fees		
	Before June 9, 2006	On-site registration
VVA REGISTRATION Does not include meal functions; each must be purchased separately	\$85	\$110
AVVA REGISTRATION Does not include meal functions or any VVA Seminars; each must be purchased separately		\$40
PRESIDENTS LUNCHEON Wednesday, July 12 (Restricted to chapter and state council presidents)		\$20
AVVA LUNCHEON Thursday, July 13		\$20
VVA AWARDS LUNCHEON Friday, July 14		\$25
CHUCK WAGON COOKOUT Friday, July 14		\$40
	TOTAL:	

Payment Method						
Check enclosed (P	ayable to VIETNAM VETE	RANS OF AMERICA)	Money order end	closed Mastercard	V/SA DUC	AMERICAN DOCUMENTAL
Card Number					Expiration Date	
Signature	After June 9, 2006, no refunds wi	ll he made for cancellation of r	egistration. Any refunds ori	or to June 9 will incur a \$1	5 service charge	
		a so made to: Surfee flation of t	ogiocación. / any rotatico pri	or to carro o will inloar a pr	o corrido chargo.	

Mail this form and full payment to:

Conference Registration • Vietnam Veterans of America • P.O. Box 64619 • Baltimore, MD 21264-4306

Fill out the information below as you want your name badge to appear. ONLY ONE LETTER OR SPACE PER BOX																		
Name																		
Chapter/State Council																		
City & State																		
Title/Position (optional)																		

ARTS OF WAR

Patrick Fries' New Vietnam War Documentary, An Ocean Away





An Ocean Away tells the story of the life, death, and recovery of the remains of Marine Lt. Donald Matocha (above), who died on Dong Ha Mountain in 1968. The film follows Matocha's two sisters and his former recon platoon members back to the spot where he died (left). The effort was put in motion when former NVA soldier Nguyen Van Loc (below left, embracing former Marine Nickie Smith) came forward with information on where Matocha was buried.





BY MARC LEEPSON

Arines, as even us former Army guys know, do not leave anyone behind on the battlefield, except, that is, under the most extreme, life-and-death circumstances. That's what happened in April 1968, when Marine Lt. Donald Matocha led his ten-man recon patrol, part of the 3rd Marine Division's D Company, 3rd Recon Battalion, out of Camp Carroll near the DMZ and into a hornet's nest of NVA troops three-fourths of the way up Dong Ma Mountain.

Matocha, 23, and the other members of the unit, which called itself Team Dallas Girl, came under withering NVA fire near the top of the mountain on the morning of April 5. Several team members were wounded and Matocha was killed. A Marine CH-4 helicopter, piloted by Ron Gatewood, came to the team's rescue. Taking constant fire, Gatewood and his crew miraculously managed to haul each surviving team member to safety one at a time.

The helicopter took more than 2,000 NVA rounds before limping off to safety. The surviving Marines vowed to return to the mountain to retrieve their young lieutenant's remains and did so the next day. But the NVA again drove off the Marines before they could complete their mission. Scores were killed or wounded in the aborted recovery effort, including one of

the Dallas Girl team members, Nickie Smith, who lost a leg.

Matocha was listed MIA, but even though American recovery teams knew the area in which he fell, efforts to find his remains had come to nothing. Then, in 1996, in the spirit of VVA's Veterans Initiative, a former NVA soldier named Nguyen Van Loc stepped forward to report that he had buried Matocha in 1968, and he led a JPAC team to the spot. In March 2004, Matocha's body was recovered based on Nguyen Van Loc's information. His remains were positively identified through dental records at JPAC's Central Identification Laboratory at Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii. The remains were returned to Matocha's hometown of

Smithville, Texas, and he was given a full military funeral in September 2004.

Why did Nguyen Van Loc come forward? "As a fellow soldier, I felt that helping [Matocha's family] was the honorable thing," he says in Patrick Fries' top-notch documentary, An Ocean Away, which had its broadcast debut on the Military Channel, February 9. VVA honored Fries with the President's Award for Excellence in the Arts in 2004 for his documentary In the Shadow of the Blade. The producer-director has followed that up with a stirring film that tells Matocha and his team's story by following two of his sisters (Loretta Matocha Eiben and Linda Matocha Masur),

continued on next page

ARTS OF WAR

Continued from previous page

several of his team members, and the former helicopter pilot Ron Gatewood back to Vietnam.

It all makes for a gripping story, told without a narrator. The team members—Andre Boersma, Smith, Leslie Goebel, Michael Kornezos, Charles Suchoki, and Stan Sellers (the corpsman)—Gatewood, and Matocha's two sisters tell the tale very well. And, as he did in *Blade*, Fries and his crew provide many beautiful landscape images, along with evocative wartime footage.

It looks like—although it was not certain at press time—that Discovery Communications, the parent of the Military Channel, will release the documentary on DVD. To find out—and for more info on the film, go to to www.arrowheadfilms.com

com

ON STAGE

The noted playwright John Patrick Shanley's *Defiance*, a hard-hitting drama set in 1971 at Camp Lejeune, opened February 28 for a limited run off Broadway at New York's City Center Stage I Theatre. The play, which deals with the draft, race relations, and the Vietnam War, received critical and popular acclaim, and its run was extended three times, through June 4. Shanley, who won the Pulitzer Prize and a Tony Award in 2005 for his play *Doubt*, served in the Marine Corps from 1970-72, spending the bulk of his tour at Camp Lejeune.



Joe Galloway, a 2001 recipient of VVA's President's Award for Excellence in the Arts, ends his 41-year journalism career covering military matters.

The actress, writer, producer, and activist Jude Narita brought her one-woman show, *Walk the Mountain*, off Broadway to New York's 59E59 Theaters for a limited engagement in March and April. The show told the war stories of a group of Vietnamese and Cambodian women. The words come from interviews with the women; the show includes photographs and film clips.

"Elegantly directed by her daughter Darling Narita, Ms. Narita's understated performance allows characters to speak through her without affect or manufactured emotion," said *New York Times* reviewer Laura Weinert. "Vietnam is often portrayed through American eyes here, so it is refreshing to be offered a different view."

IN CONFERENCE

If he current battle is going well," Robert S. McNamara said to President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965, after LBJ asked his Secretary of Defense for a sit rep in Vietnam. Those words came from a secretly recorded conversation. It was played by Timothy Naftali, who directs the Presidential Recordings Program at the University of Virginia, on March 10 at opening day of the two-day "Vietnam and the Presidency" conference at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library in Boston.

The event, sponsored by the National Archives and the nation's 12 presidential libraries, brought a stellar constellation of Vietnam War scholars, policymakers, and participants to Boston. The list included Henry Kissinger, Alexander Haig, Sen. Chuck Hagel, Dan Rather, Frances

March. The exhibit, a partnership with Chicago's National Vietnam Veterans Art Museum and the Library and Museum at Fort Sam Houston, contained works that focused on the American Civil War and the Vietnam War. The latter is considered to be the conflict that launched the modern era of military medicine. Among the works on exhibit were two paintings—"Thousand Yard Stare" and "A Nurse and Child"—by former Vietnam War nurse Helen White.

Radio First Termer, the pirate FM radio station that operated in South Vietnam in 1971, now has its own multimedia web site. It contains sound clips from the original broadcasts, along with material that will be used on a planned 35th anniversary show to be broadcast live from Saigon. The host of Radio First Termer, Dave Rabbit, provided a decidedly counter-cultural contrast to the Pentagon-produced AFVN. Rabbit played Jimi Hendrix and other non-



Dave Rabbitt, the man behind Radio First Termer, a countercultural pirate operation he operated in South Vietnam in 1971.

FitzGerald, George Herring, and David Halberstam. After saying that things were going "well" in Vietnam, McNamara went on to tell LBJ that the "problem" in 1965 "is that it's not producing the conditions that will almost certainly win for us." He did not attend.

The Vietnam Center at Texas Tech University's 2006 conference, held March 17-18, focused on reflections and reassessments of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam. Among those on hand in Lubbock for the event: the historians Lewis Sorely and Philip Beidler and former ARVN Lt. Gen. Lu Lan. The center's extensive Vietnam War archive, which continues to grow rapidly, received a unique donation in January: four fully furbished Vietnam War-era helicopters, an AH-1 Cobra Gunship, a UH-1 Huey, an OH-58 observation helicopter, and a TH-55 training helicopter. The birds were the gift of former Huey pilot and author Chuck Carlock.

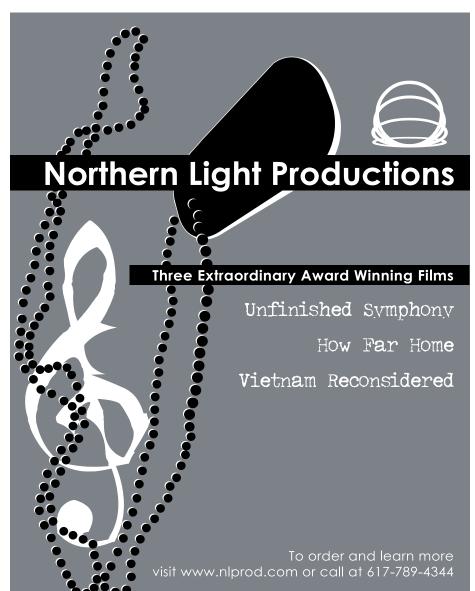
IN BRIEF

The Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine at the Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science in North Chicago presented an art exhibit titled *The Medics* in February and

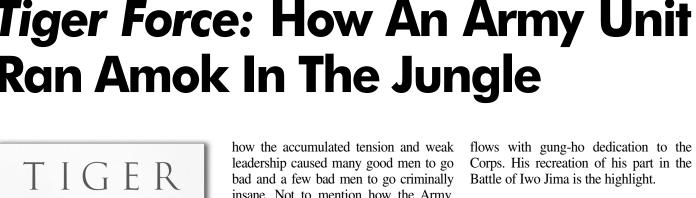
AFVN rock music, and offered off-beat, often-raunchy newscasts. To take it all in, go to http://www.radiofirsttermer.com.vn

The National Purple Heart Hall of Honor Museum is looking for Purple Heart recipients who would be willing to share their stories for the facility's exhibitions and archives. That includes families of deceased Purple Heart recipients. The museum, which is under construction, will be located at the New Windsor Cantonment State Historic Site in Vails Gate, New York. If you would like to share your Purple Heart story, contact the National Purple Heart Hall of Fame, P.O. Box 207, Vails Gate, NY 12584; phone, 845-561-1765. And tell them you read about it in *The VVA Veteran*.

Joe Galloway, the veteran journalist, former Vietnam War correspondent, and co-author (with Gen. Hal Moore) of We Were Soldiers Once and Young, announced in March that after 41 years of covering military matters, he was taking a permanent leave from his job at Knight Ridder's Washington, D.C., bureau. Galloway, 64, who received VVA's President's Award for Excellence in the Arts at the 2001 National Convention, will continue to write a weekly column from his home in Corpus Christi, Texas, and is planning a second book with Gen. Moore.■



Tiger Force: How An Army Unit Ran Amok In The Jungle



In the end, though, I am glad that I read this book. While it made for painful reading, it was heartening to learn that more than a few Tigers rebelled against the madness and that CID investigator Gustav Apsey fought great odds to bring the details of the story to light—even though his valiant efforts ultimately were suppressed by the Pentagon.



SEMPER FI TALES

MICHAEL SALLAH and MITCH WEISS

REVIEWS BY MARC LEEPSON

n 2002, three reporters for the *Toledo*

Blade, acting on a tip, began investigat-

ing the activities of one of the Vietnam

War's most celebrated American units,

Tiger Force, the 101st Airborne Division's

1st Battalion, 327th Infantry platoon, that

was put together by then-Maj. David

Hackworth in 1966 to specialize in high-

risk, potentially high-reward recon work.

The reporters—Michael Sallah, Mitch

Weiss, and John Mahr—were not investi-

gating the Tigers under Hackworth; they

looked into allegations that the 45-man unit

committed a series of brutal atrocities against

Vietnamese civilians during a seven-month

period beginning in May 1967 after

Hackworth left. The Army later investi-

months digging into the story. They inter-

viewed former Tiger Force troopers, fer-

reted out official records, and trekked

to Vietnam to talk to eyewitnesses there.

The four-day series of articles they wrote,

"Buried Secrets, Brutal Truths," won a

Pulitzer Prize for investigative reporting in

2004. It is the basis for Sallah and Weiss's new and disturbing book, Tiger Force:

A True Story of Men and War (Little,

into enemy territory for days on end and

Sallah, Weiss, and Mahr spent eight

gated but never prosecuted.

early 6,000 American Marines and 21,000 Japanese soldiers died and more than 17,000 Americans were wounded in the vicious fighting that took place on Iwo Jima in February and March of 1945. Twenty-two Marines who fought there were awarded the Medal of Honor. That includes Jack Lucas, who tells his life story with D.K. Drum in Indestructible: The Unforgettable Story of a Marine Hero at Iwo Jima (Da Capo, 208 pp., \$22.95).

Lucas finagled his way into the Marines at age 14. He was an undisciplined 17-yearold PFC when he threw his body on top of two live grenades hurled at his four-man squad. Lucas thereby saved the three other Marines' lives. Although severely wounded, he lived to tell the tale. Lucas offers his warts-and-all life story—which includes a stint as an Army airborne trooper during the Vietnam era—in a narrative that over-

* * * ★ FOREWORD BY SENATOR BOB DOLE INDESTRUCTIBLE THE UNFORGETTABLE STORY OF A MARINE HERO AT THE BATTLE OF IWO JIMA

insane. Not to mention how the Army, after a four-and-a-half-year investigation (from 1971-75), decided not to charge anyone for what obviously were heinous war crimes.

arry Smith's The Few and the Proud:

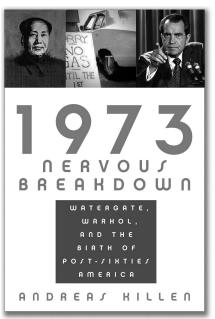
■ Marine Corps Drill Instructors in Their Own Words (Norton, \$26.95, 352 pp.) is more a series of interviews with copious quotes than an oral history. This readable compilation succeeds admirably in tracing the history of training recruits in the Marine Corps since World War II. Smith lets former Marines, most of them present or former DIs, do most of the talking. He fills in the blanks with concise essays on boot camp nuts and bolts.

Several famous former Marines are featured, including R. Lee Ermey, the actor who portrayed the D.I. in Full Metal Jacket; former New York City Mayor David Dinkins, who put in 13 months in the Corps in 1945-46; and photographer Eddie Adams, who honed his trade as a Marine Corps combat photographer in the Korean War and is best known for his photograph of ARVN Gen. Loan shooting a VC prisoner on the streets of Saigon during Tet '68, for which he won the Pulitzer Prize.

onald J. Drez and Douglas Brinkley's Voices of Courage: The Battle for Khe Sanh, Vietnam (Bullfinch Press, 186 pp., \$35) is a profusely illustrated recounting of that famed Vietnam War encounter. Drez and Brinkley pay tribute to the U.S. Marines who stuck it out and prevailed during that particularly perilous siege. Drez, a Vietnam veteran, is associate director of the Theodore Roosevelt Center for American Civilization at Tulane University. Brinkley, a noted historian and author, is the Roosevelt Center's director and a Tulane history professor. The book also contains two 60-minute audio CDs with first-person testimonies from Marines who fought at Khe Sanh.

haplain Ray W. Stubbe, who served at Khe Sanh and co-wrote (with John Prados) the seminal book on the experience, Valley of Decision (1991), has put together Battalion of Kings (Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc., 469 pp., paper), a tribute to the Marines who fell at Khe Sanh. The heart of the book is a long list of individual, personalized tributes (including poems, memoirs, and letters) for each of the Americans who perished. The book has been sent gratis to military archives, libraries, the families of those who were killed at Khe Sanh, and to those who made significant contributions to the research that





went into compiling this impressive volume. For more information, contact Khe Sanh Veterans at TEIC1448@aol.com

NERVOUS OUTSIDE THE SERVICE

he Vietnam War years, as all of us who lived through them know only too well, were turbulent times in this nation

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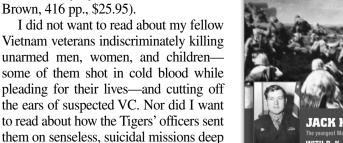
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When our loved one went to war, it was their mission. When they returned it was our mission. A story of PTSD - a family issue. Available online and at your local book store Paperback \$20.99 E-mail: mkschneski@yahoo.com

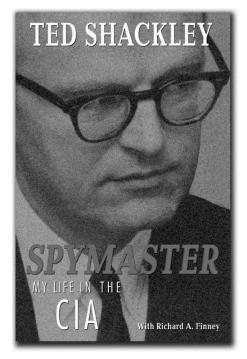


Continued from previous page

and in Vietnam-especially for those of us who were caught up in the era's Big Events. I'd always thought that the wildest year of the era was 1968, when the American troop commitment to Vietnam was at its zenith, the antiwar movement began picking up serious steam, the massive riots erupted in Chicago at the Democratic National Convention, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Bobby Kennedy were assassinated, and racial tensions soared. That was the year, pundits proclaimed, that the United States suffered a collective nervous break-

Andreas Killen uses that attention-getting metaphor in the title of his new book on another year in the Vietnam War era, 1973 Nervous Breakdown: Watergate, Warhol, and the Birth of Post-Sixties America (Bloomsbury, 312 pp., \$24.95). Killen, a City College of New York history professor, ranges far and wide in this engaging account of the year in which the Supreme Court handed down the Roe v. Wade decision, the Senate Watergate hearings hit the airwaves, the Paris Peace Accords were signed, and the last American combat troops left Vietnam.

Killen, in fact, devotes a detailed chapter to Operation Homecoming and his analysis of the political impact of the POW situation that year and into the future. He also deals briefly, but very accurately, with Vietnam veterans' homecoming in general. "After World War II, a grateful government had invited veterans to participate in that miracle of social engineering, the G.I. Bill, which helped turn millions of Americans into homeowners for the first time," Killen notes. "Most Vietnam veterans, however, returned to find no such gratitude awaiting them for their role in the nation's first-ever military defeat."



SPIES LIKE THEM

ed Shackley earned the nickname "Blond Ghost" while running the CIA's so-called secret war in Laos from 1966-68 and then (1968-72) serving as the company's Saigon station chief. The controversial, eccentric, rabidly anti-communist Shackley, the subject of a 1994 biography by David Corn, provides his version of his 28-year CIA career in Spymaster: My Life in the CIA (Potomac Books, 336 pp., \$27.95) written with Richard A. Finney. Shackley, who died in 2002 (the book came out last year), provides lots of insidebaseball stuff about what he experienced in Laos and Vietnam but shines little revealing light on the crucial intelligence activities he was intimately involved in.

n A Bright, Shining Lie Neil Sheehan called Ed Lansdale "the founding physician at the birth of South Vietnam." That's an apt description of the legendary CIA operative who came to Vietnam for the first time in 1954, helped put Ngo Dinh Diem in power, helped solidify the nascent Republic of South Vietnam, and then had a hand in influencing Vietnam War policy in country and in Washington until the end of American involvement. Lansdale is the basis for the character of Col. Hillendale in The Ugly American and likely was the inspiration for Graham Greene's Alden Pyle in The Quiet American.

ansdale, the subject of a weak 1998 **L**biography (*Edward Lansdale: The* Unquiet American), is more or less the subject of Jonathan Nashel's Edward Lansdale's Cold War (University of Massachusetts Press, 320 pp., \$80, hardcover; \$24.95, paper). Nashel, an Indiana University history professor, looks at Lansdale in connection with the political and cultural trappings of the

Jonathan Nashel

Cold War. His assessment of Lansdale's work in Vietnam is not positive.

Nashel writes of Lansdale's "utter failure to grasp the political nature of the Vietnamese revolution," for example, and his "blindness toward the multiple strengths of the communists" and his "unflagging efforts to impose democratic ideals on a series of corrupt and authoritarian South Vietnamese governments whose leaders' relationship to democracy was at best of secondary concern to them."

NONFICTION IN BRIEF

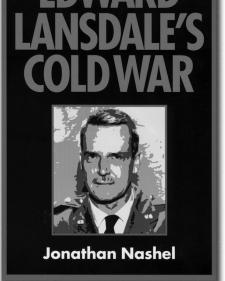
The Library of Congress's American Folklife Center has collected more than 40,000 stories from American veterans in its Veterans History Project. Thirty-seven of them, from veterans from World War I to the war in Iraq, are contained in Forever a Soldier: Stories of Wartime Service (National Geographic, 330 pp., \$26). This volume, the second in a series, is edited by Tom Weiner, the historian of the project, who relates the veterans' stories effectively and evocatively in the third person using extensive quotes.

The volume contains the stories of seven Vietnam veterans: former medic Richard DeLeon, recon scout Philip Randazzo, nurses Julia Grabner Haskell and Carolyn Hisako Tanaka, former POWs Roger Dean Ingvalson and John McCain, and Army paratrooper Denton Winslow Crocker, Jr., who was killed in action in 1966. Crocker's story is told, heartbreakingly, by his parents and through his letters home.

eith Nolan is one of the most accomplished chroniclers of Vietnam War military history. In his ten previous books-including Battle for Hue, Death Valley, and Operation Buffalo—Nolan uses a deft combination of interviews with participants and research into official records to come up with incisive, readable battle narratives. Nolan continues to use his excellent M.O. to good effect in his latest book, House to House: Playing the Enemy's Game in Saigon, May 1968 (Zenith Press, 352 pp., \$24.95). This time Nolan recreates the fighting that took place between the Army's 9th Infantry Division and several VC regiments who were holed up in Saigon three months after Tet '68.

amie Howren and Taylor Baldwin J Kiland's Open Doors: Vietnam POWs Thirty Years Later (Potomac Books, 192 pp., \$19.95, paper) is based on the traveling museum exhibit the two put together in 2002 containing Howren's photographs and Kiland's words illuminating the lives of thirty former American POWs. Their handsomely produced paperback book includes the photos and stories of, among others, Everett Alvarez, Bud Day, Jeremiah Denton, James Stockdale, and Orson Swindle.

odie Lind Talley, who teaches history at Georgia State University, has put together a book, Beyond the Wall: The Making of the Welcome Home Events for the Vietnam Veterans (A Talley Publication, un-paginated, paper), that gives the back story of the July 4, 1987, Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans tribute that was held at the Capital Center outside Washington, D.C., and broadcast on HBO. Talley's mother, Joey, was the event's guiding hand, serving as executive producer. For more info, go to http://tinyurl.com/zmuas or e-mail atlantahistory@Comcast.net■



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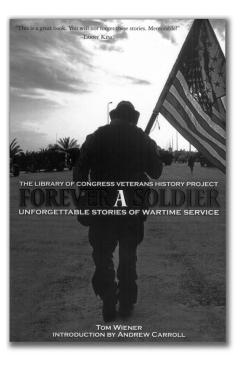
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MEMBERSHIP NOTES

IN SERVICE

Delaware County, Pennsylvania, **Chapter 67** is hard at work planning for its role in the 13th annual Philadelphia Stand Down, which will be held September 8-10. The chapter expects to work with 300-600 homeless veterans during those three days, providing them with a range of assistance. The chapter needs volunteers, who will be given on-the-job training for the 24/7 operation—the largest homeless veterans stand down in the country.

One of VVA's smallest chapters, 797 in **Lewisburg, Tennessee**, also is one of the organization's most active on the community-service level. The chapter supports the Eagleville Medical Clinic with Christmas gifts and food for the veterans who use the facility. The chapter also has a standing order that no Boy Scout from the local troop will miss summer camp because of lack of funds. In 2006 the chapter helped three Boy Scouts attend camp.

Western New York Chapter 77 in **Tonawanda** worked with Shea's Performing Arts Center in Buffalo on a series of workshops on March 25 designed to introduce high school students to the political and emotional climate of the Vietnam War era. Students were asked to conduct interviews as part of the program with Vietnam veterans about their experiences before, during, and after the Vietnam War. The program was part of the chapter's educational outreach to provide students with firsthand accounts of the war from those who served. The workshops also included studying the music and plot of Twyla Tharp's Movin' Out, the Vietnam War-heavy music and dance theater piece that was presented at Shea's April 18-23.

Tuolumne County, California, Chapter 391 in 2005 donated more than \$6,900 to area charities. Among other things, the chapter sponsors a Cub Scout Pack, a Boy Scout Troop, and a girl's softball team, supplied twelve Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners to needy veterans and senior citizens, helped provide holiday gift baskets to hospitalized veterans, and sponsored a Sea Scout Ship. The chapter also provided donations to the local VA Medical Center's PTSD support group and flu shot clinic, and awarded \$3,000 in scholarships to local students.

Bob Burgess, a life member of **Connecticut Greater Hartford Chapter 120**, has donated more than a dozen new jackets to the Hartford Vet Center in the last twelve months. He also donates bags of groceries to needy veterans who visit the center. Chapter member Patty Dumin



Members of Central Pennsylvania Chapter 791 in Lewistown celebrated the dedication of Pennsylvania's Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway, near Lewistown, in grand fashion.

Center. She also donated a red, white, and blue afghan that was raffled off at a recent chapter event.

Members of Western Massachusetts Chapter One-Eleven showed their VVA colors by marching for the 21st year in the Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Parade, which was held March 19. The chapter led the Vietnam veterans' contingent of marchers in the parade, the largest in the area.

Union County Chapter 688 in Westfield, New Jersey, in February held its eleventh annual celebration of Hospitalized Veterans Month. As it has done in previous years, the chapter invited the patients and staff from the Lyons VA Medical Center's PTSD unit to join them at chapter headquarters. After a brief chapter meeting, the guests were treated to dinner, including home-baked desserts. "It's hard to say who enjoys the evening more, the guests or chapter and AVVA members," said chapter President John Ferry. The chapter also pays monthly visits to the PTSD unit.

Members of Nassau County, New York, Chapter 82 make monthly visits to patients at the Northport VA Medical Center Hospital. The visits take place on the secis among a group of women that has knit- ond Sunday of the month, from 12:30 to ted many hats for the veterans at the 2:00 p.m. Members join patients in play-Rocky Hill Veterans Home and the Vet ing Bingo and sharing coffee and donuts.

Patients receive donated toiletry items and gift certificates for the Northport PX.

Welcome home to the newest chapter in Georgia, Dawson County Chapter 970, which received its charter on November 17. The chapter's 26 members started organizing last August, and its first group event took place on Veterans Day when members took part in the first-ever Veterans Day parade in Dawsonville. "The parade certainly helped in the recruiting effort," said chapter Interim President Wayne Watkins. "Many of our new members had never had the Welcome Home recognition that many of us have experienced. It was healing for many of them."

AVVA member Pat Jones of **Redwood** Empire Chapter 223 in Santa Rosa, California, who works as a site representative at homeless shelters, was honored as Sonoma County Volunteer of the Year in 2005 for her work at the Veterans Service Office. She recently reached the milestone of processing her hundredth claim.

Don Souder, a member of **Somers Point**, New Jersey, Chapter 228 who lives in Egg Harbor Township, was instrumental in lobbying nearby Hamilton Township to have its streets named after the township's war dead. He is now working on starting

continued on page 36

G.I., Call Home

wow many cell phones do you have sitting around the house after changing plans, carriers, and features? Now you can put those dust collectors to good use by donating them to Cell Phones for Soldiers, a non-profit organization that will take your discarded cell phones and sell them to a company that recycles them. The money from the phone sales is used to buy pre-paid calling cards for American military personnel, allowing them to use a phone say, at the Burger King in Baghdad or the KFC in Kandahar.

Cell Phones for Soldiers is the brainchild of teenagers Brittany and Robbie Bergquist of Norwell, Mass., who heard about an American soldier who ran up a huge phone bill calling home from Iraq. For additional information on how your chapter can set up a cell phone collection point, go to www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com

All submissions to "Membership Notes" are read; regrettably, not all can be included. To increase the likelihood of your news item being printed, include "after-action" reports in your newsletter, or send a letter with your project results to: Membership Notes, The VVA Veteran, Vietnam Veterans of America, 8605 Cameron Street, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3710

the same project in Egg Harbor, as well as other municipalities in Atlantic County. He has a list of 26 county residents who died in the Vietnam War and is tracking down the names of local KIAs from the Korean War and World Wars I and II.

Mike Demske, the president of Manitowoc, Wisconsin, Chapter 731, while attending the Feb. 21-22 meeting of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs and the Wisconsin Veterans Salute to the Legislature, presented a check from the chapter for three new buses for the Wisconsin Veterans Homes at Union Grove and King. "Everyone involved with the fundraiser for the buses thanked me several times for our donation," he said. "There were quite a number of state senators and assemblymen there, and everyone I talked to was very supportive of our issues."

Appleton, Wisconsin, Chapter 351 charters two local scout units: Boy Scout Troop 57 and Cub Scout Pack 3157. Chapter President Bernie Ver Haagh recently presented two new Troop 57 Eagle Scouts with chapter certificates at the Eagle Court of Honor Program. Ver Haagh and chapter members Brian and Amy Jahn and Leon Meidam attended the Pack 3157 Gold and Blue Banquet and helped post the colors.

Pat Pudetti, the secretary of **Rochester**, New York, Chapter 20, coordinated the chapter's participation in a recent Special Olympics dinner. Chapter members Jack Prinzing and his son, Ralph Pascale, Rosemary Rossi Williams, Dick Oleksyn, Kathy Ryan and her husband, Steve Mortimer, Missy Swald-Camman, and Chapter President Nelson Peck pitched in to help check in those who attended the dinner. They also sold raffle tickets.

The Merced, California, Chapter 691 Color Guard posted the colors March 23 at the opening of the "What's Going On: California and the Vietnam War" traveling exhibit at the Merced Courthouse Museum. After a 21-gun salute, the playing of "Taps," and dance routines by a local Hmong dance troupe, Chapter President Ed Mentz gave a presentation about his war and postwar experiences. His grandson, Scott, who recently returned from a tour of duty in Iraq, was presented with a certificate of appreciation by a representative of U.S. Rep. Dennis Cardoza.

The Chattanooga, Tennessee, Chapter **203** Funeral Honor Guard performed 125 military funeral honors in 2005. Five mem-

REGION 5 REPORT

continued from page 10

go to Indianapolis. I have brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles, and cousins all around.

On April 11, I traveled to Chicago for the much-anticipated Veterans Benefits Commission Town Hall Meeting.

Region 5 attended and gave testimony. Although it was my birthday, I would not have wanted to be anywhere else because of the need for veterans to continue to receive the benefits they earned. This will have an effect on us and on all veterans.

I thank all who attended, whether they testified or not. The support for our veterans means a lot. Keep up the good work in Region 5. ■



Iowa Chapters 776, 299, and 669 created this "Welcome Home" banner that hangs in the Quad City Airport to greet returning service personnel.

bers of the all-volunteer Honor Guard—Skip Broome, Neil Shull, James McLain, Michael Seay, and Cecil Rice—recently graduated from the Military Funeral Honors School and were presented with certificates and insignia at the chapter's March meeting.

The Syracuse, New York, Chapter 103 Hot Dog Cart is up and running in the heart of downtown Syracuse, between police headquarters and the Onondaga County Courthouse. The chapter was the beneficiary of special legislation by the City of Syracuse Common Council to secure that high-traffic spot. The 700-pound, stainless steel cart was custom built by a chapter member. The chapter also has purchased a custom trailer to haul and safeguard the cart.

TROOP SUPPORT

Members of Bettendorf, Iowa, Gateway Chapter 776 paid for a large banner that was hung in the Quad City Airport in March to greet returning service personnel. "Welcome Home," the banner, which features an eagle, the flag, and the VVA logo, proclaims. "Thank you for your service to America." The banner was the brainchild of Chapter 776's Lyle Peterson and also had the support of Quad Cities Chapter 299 in Rock Island, Illinois, and Moline, Illinois, Chapter 669.

The tailors of **Chapter 616** at the Mansfield, Ohio, Correctional Institution make clothing for disabled service personnel returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan. Chapter members specialize in making clothing that will fit over the metal halos that go around injured arms and legs.

Racine, Wisconsin, Chapter 767 has Representatives from all four states in been actively involved in its C.A.R.E. Package program. The chapter recently sent some 650 pounds of items to troops in Iraq. The program, which is now in its third year, has sent more than five tons of supplies. On March 4 the chapter took part in the 14th annual Thoughts for Food Concert, which raises money and food items for the local food pantry.

Ann Arbor, Michigan, Chapter 310 holds a packing party about once a month for its Support the Troops program. To date, the chapter has sent 593 packages and more than 1,800 cards and letters to troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. That represents postage of more than \$10,000. The value of the packages, the chapter estimates, is some \$30,000. On February 4, chapter members distributed packages of underwear to every patient at the Ann Arbor VA Medical Center.

New York City Chapter 126 President Joe Graham presented \$500 U.S. Savings Bonds at the chapter's annual Christmas party to Loriana Tejeda and Miranda Tejeda, the daughters of a Marine from New York City who lost his life in Iraq. Graham has asked the New York City Council to enact legislation giving children of U.S. service personnel killed in combat free tuition at the city-run colleges. The chapter will buy two bricks, at \$250 each, from the Fallen Heroes Fund, an organization that supports seriously wounded Iraq war veterans, and is in the process of constructing a new facility.

MEMORIALS

Marquette County, Michigan, Chapter 380 donated \$1,000 to help fund the Upper Peninsula Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The memorial will honor Upper Peninsula, Michigan, veterans who served in the Vietnam War. It will consist of a wall made of granite similar to that used in the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., and will be located atop Pine Mountain Ski Jump in Iron Mountain, Michigan. The memorial is slated to be dedicated on July 1.

South Bay Chapter 53 in Redondo Beach, California, recently donated \$253 to the city of Hermosa Beach for the upkeep of its Veterans Memorial. The chapter has been intimately involved with the memorial since its beginnings and continues to clean it monthly. The chapter also donated McDonald's gift certificates worth \$153 to orthopedic patients at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. The gift certificates were delivered by chapter President Jerry Yamamoto, a member of the VVA National Board of Directors, and by Chapter 446 member Tim Forrest, a member of the VVA Finance Committee, while attending the January Board meeting at VVA National headquarters in nearby Silver Spring, Maryland.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Baltimore Chapter 451 has sponsored several scholarships for the last 15 years, awarding them to hundreds of Baltimorearea students. The Thomas Dolan Memorial Scholarship and the Katherine Mannion Memorial Scholarship, \$500 each, go to undergraduate students at institutions of higher learning in the area. The awards are based on a one-page letter describing the student's background and area of studies, relationship to a veteran, and what a veteran means to the student. Students at the University of Baltimore are eligible for the David Adey Veterans Scholarship and students at Morgan State University may apply for the VVA Vernon Z. Johns Scholarship. These scholarships, also \$500 each, go to undergraduates who are children or grandchildren of Vietnam veter-

Big Sky Chapter 334 in Billings, Montana, and its AVVA members recently awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to Katrina Valkenburg of Billings, who will be attending the University of Wyoming in Laramie in the fall. Her mother, Linda, recently retired after serving for 31 years in the Naval Reserve.



Marquette County, Michigan, Chapter 380 donated \$1,000 to help fund the Upper Peninsula Vietnam Veterans Memorial slated to be built at Iron Mountain, Michigan.

LOCATOR

A VVA STAFF REPORT

The Locator is intended to help veterans find former fellow servicemembers. We do not run items for those seeking employment, selling merchandise, or "personal" ads. Nor do we run notices for children searching for absent parents. VVA does not guarantee the accuracy of any information, nor does VVA endorse any group, individual, or cause cited herein.

FYI FROM THE VA

As a federal agency, according to the Privacy Act, the Department of Veterans Affairs is obliged to protect the privacy of veterans' personal information. Therefore, the VA cannot release personal information about a veteran from its records system without the person's permission. The VA can, however, forward a message to the veteran, providing the veteran has filed a claim with VA and the agency has an address on record.

Please write your message and place it in an unsealed, stamped envelope. Also include a note to VA explaining whom you are trying to reach and add as much identifying information as you can. Place all of this in another envelope addressed to the nearest U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office (you can find the addresses at www.vba.va.gov/ro/ro_inter.htm or in the blue pages of the telephone book).

If the veteran is in the VA records, the message will be sealed and the envelope sent to the address the VA has on file for the veteran. It is then up to the veteran to contact the letter-writer. If you have any questions, you can reach the regional VA office at 800-827-1000. This process is designed to protect the privacy of veterans as required by law.

Message from the UK trying to find Sgt. Bobby L. Jones, who served in Vietnam 1967-1968. I believe he was from California and had a burning desire to buy a Pontiac Le Mans. If anyone has any information, please contact: Janis Shawashi, janis.danielle.shawashi@hmps.gsi.gov.uk

Looking for anyone who served with the 3rd Engineer Bn., 3rd Marine Div., 1371 Combat Engineers. My husband died in 2001 with Agent Orange-related illness. Contact: mooremar3@aol.com

Seeking contact with anyone who served aboard U.S.S Tanner (AGS-15) sound boat crews in Vietnam. Contact: Noel M. Switzer, P.O. Box 615, Fort Monmouth, NJ 07703; Liam@catlo.com

Trying to find two guys from an attack of Aug. 20, 1968. I was known as "Frenchie" back at CAP 2-4-3 at the time. Details are vague: LCpl. Hall and a **blond "surfer dude"** from California, first name Steve. I was also with Bravo 1/7 from Feb 28, 1968-July 1, 1968, on Operation Worth and Operation Mameluke Thrust, and would love to connect with a machine gunner named Morgan from Machine Gun Squad Bravo 1/7. Contact: Wilfred F. "Wil" Lirette, 12 Northampton Place, Coto de Caza, CA 92678; 949-589-1998 (office); 949-636-1209 (cell); **electrwil@cox.net**

Does anyone out there have information about the Wildflecken Veterans
Association? Contact: Robert L. Yancy,
8300 Wren Place, Laurel Hill, NC; 910462-3833; www.wildfleckenveterans.com

Seeking anyone who served with **3rd MAF CAP Unit, Delta 1 and Delta 3,** USMC, 1967-68. Also looking for **Sgt. Parker**. Contact: Victor M. Forget, Jr., 217 Douglas Pike, N. Smithfield, RI 02896, 401-765-7722.

Searching for James Parker Briggett, who served with me at the Navy Barracks in Norfolk in 1965 and also with Naval Reserve, Winston-Salem, N.C. Last known address on New Walkertown Road in Winston-Salem. Contact: Wilbert Andrew Allen, Sr., 209 Clayton St., Winston-Salem, NC 27105.

Trying to find **Capt. Kramer** (possibly spelled Cramer), CO, **A Co., 1st Bn, 27th Inf., 25th Inf. Div.**, Cu Chi, October 1967. Contact: Tom Sachs, 7320 Deer Rd., Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494; 715-423-8445.

Looking for Jerry L. Daniels from Yuma, Arizona. Jerry did three tours in Vietnam. Last known info: SEALs SCUBA instructor in San Diego. I saw him last in 1976 in Los Angeles; he was then a sergeant. Contact: Phillip A. Terry, P.O. Box 15731, Lenexa, KS 66285; majterry508@yahoo.com

Seeking anyone who was ever flown off a Navy ship to any landbase in Vietnam without written TDY orders. Contact: Mike Caulfield, P.O. Box 1586, Helena, MT 59624; mtkaka@yahoo.com

In search of anyone who was in **64th QM**, **47th Trans**. Co. Would love to hear in particular from Dave Flower, Steve Bailey, Cliff Chapman, or Dan Irgram. Contact: Richard T. ("Dick") Morgan, 12522 Lisa Dr., NE, Cumberland, MD 21502; 301-777-1746.

Need to locate physicians who saw me at **Tan Son Nhut Air Base**, Dec. 1971. Handwritten signatures on medical records look like "J. R. Ditzler" and "Thomas A. Merriel" or possibly "Thomas A. Merrine." I was Capt. Kathryn Wilson at the time. Contact: Kathryn Wilson Disbrow, 1485 State Rt. 14, Penn Yan, NY 14527; **kathydisbrow@keukahousing.org**

Looking for my good friends **Douglas Paul George** (originally from Pittsburgh or Chicago) and **John Bauer** from Germantown, Tenn. We served together in **527th MP Co.**, Long Binh Plantation, January-March1973. Contact: Gary Michael Fredenburg, 840 McKinley Parkway, Buffalo, NY 14220; 716-827-7145.

Did you serve with me in **India Co.,** 3rd Bn., 7th Marine Reg., 1st MARDIV at Hill 10? Need confirmation on an all-night fight, heavy casualties on both sides, perimeter overrun. Need help with VA claim. Contact: Michael Biancofiori, 2423 Ernst, Franklin Park, IL 60131, 847-815-9025.

Need help with PTSD claim. Urgently seeking **Ed Frost, Jay Frost,** (from Detroit), and **Dick Kensinger** (from Johnstown, Pa.). Must discuss service with **C Co, 158th Av. Bn., 101st Airborne**, Camp Eagle, Phu Bai, Nov. 1970-May 1971. Contact: Bruce D. Hedrick, 4708 Venable Ave., Apt. 3, Charleston, WV 25304; 304-542-0743.

Seeking anybody who served with the **"Vung Tau Vultures," 611th Trans. Co.,** 1962-64. Contact: Dallas R. Doughty, PSC-89 Box 7000, APO AE 09822.

Would love to hear from anybody who served with **Col. Howard K. Hostler**. He was a major on his first tour, a colonel on his second. Col. Hostler died two years ago and I'm seeking to confirm info for his son. Contact: Dwight Lorenz, 14223 N. Tumblebrook Way, Sun City, AZ 85351-2351; 623-444-2438; **lorassoc@cox.net**

Searching for anybody who served with me in Co. D, 1/6, 198th Light Infantry Bgde., Americal Div., RVN 1967-68. Contact: Hockless Bryant, 1401 NW 103 St., Apt. 232, Miami, FL 33147; 305-694-9607.

Would enjoy communicating with any past members of the **540th Trans. Co** based at Qui Nhon between March 1968-March 1969. Contact: William B. Shelton, 6321 Covered Bridge Rd., Gladys, VA 24554; 434-283-4489.

I was with HHC 3rd Brigade (Security Platoon), 1st Cav Div., January-June 1969. Looking for Leo Foreman, Johnson, Logan, Royality, Griffin or anyone who served with me. Contact: Donald E. Smith, 45 Nelson Rd., Dexter, ME 04930; 207-924-5357.

Looking for Leffler, Morgan, Smith, Wilson, or anybody else who was at Red Catcher Training Center, 199th Infantry, Feb.-Oct. 1968. Contact: Gary Raines, 920 Chiquita St., Denton, TX 76205; 214-662-3082.

Robert Lee Whitt, where are you? We were stationed with Charlie Co., 1st Bn., 54th Inf. in Bamberg, Germany, 1966-67. In October 1967 you went to a river patrol unit in RVN, me to a mechanized infantry unit. You attended my wedding on our way to Nam. Contact: Duane Shaw, 44 Ramble Creek Dr., Cotati, CA 94931; 707-793-8420.

Looking for **James R. Shaver** who served in Vietnam 1969-70. I have important news for you. Contact: John P. Davidson, 45 Palatine, #334, Irving, CA 92612; 714-392-4049.

Seeking anyone who served with the **Army 58 CEC-11th ACR Blackhorse**, 1974-77. I have been diagnosed with PTSD and need a "buddy letter" to confirm an incident. Contact: Jim Knipe, 3241 N. Majesty Dr., Apt. 10, Prescott Valley, AZ 86314; 928-759-7338.

Looking for **John Goseman**, Army door gunner shot down June 30, 1970, and featured in *In the Shadow of the Blade*. I was the dog handler who walked point on your rescue. Contact: James Meecham, 3057 Ervin Rd., Dover, OH 44622; 330-343-5651.

Searching for Ronnie Harris, Lonnie Casey, or any other buds from A Co., HHC, 3rd Bn., 39th Inf., 9th Inf. Div. at Rach Kien or Dong Tam, 1967-68. Contact: Mike Reade, 3535 28th St., Apt. 102, Boulder, CO 80301; 303-245-0350.

Looking for Vietnam veteran members of **Battery E, 2nd Bn., 11th Marines**. Contact: Mike Alkine, **echo211artygun3@lakefield.net** or Mike Weber, **mweber2@charter.net** or Joe Cavanagh, P.O. Box 2604, Granite Bay, CA 95746; **joe.cavanagh@gmail.com**

Seeking anyone stationed at **Kadena AFB**, Okinawa between July 1969-March 1973. Want to hear from anybody, but especially those sent TDY to Vietnam as part of the mobility unit. Need help with PTSD claim. Contact: Arthur L. Collins, 7230 Lyne Bay Dr., Roseville, CA 95747; 916-772-1005; **cokagene@aol.com**

Looking for former members of MACV Advisory Team #37, veterans of Firebase Brenda, members of 1/50 Infantry located at LZ Betty near Pham Thiet, Binh Thuan Province, Ham Thuan District, also any members of Seahorse 25 or Seahorse 27. Need help for Purple Heart claim, 1970-71. I was District Medical Adviser, MACV Team #37. Contact: Philip F. Cordova, 125 La Nell Dr., Canutillo, TX 79835; 915-568-3658.

I was with USMC 1-3-11 1969 and in Platoon 3042, USMC Recruit Training Depot San Diego in 1968. Anyone who served in these units please contact: Gary Berry, P.O. Box 6671, Silver Spring, MD 20916; yodablood@aol.com

Searching for Army pals from **3rd of the 6th Artillery**. **Lawrence Gonzales**

continued on next page

REUNIONS

Vietnam Security Police Association (VSPA) Reunion October 4-8, Las Vegas. VSPA is the organization for USAF Security Police and Augmentees who served in Vietnam during the Vietnam era. Contact: Don Graham, 2911 Westminster Rd., Bethlehem, PA 18017; 610-691-6960; tuyhoa68@att.net or www.vspa.com

Reunion of **3650th Basic Military Training and Indoctrination Wing,**Sampson AFB Veterans Association.
Open to all veterans of Sampson AFB,
Women's Air Force, Permanent Party,
Basic and Special School Trainees,
1950-56. Sampson State Park, Seneca
Lake, Romulus, N.Y., Sept. 7-10.
Contact: Chris Phillips, P.O. Box 331,
Williamsville, NY 14231;
716-633-1119; **chip34@aol.com**

Fox Co., 2nd Bn., 5th Marines Vietnam Era Biennial Reunion July 26-30, Radisson Hotel, Branson, Mo. Contact: Chris Brown, 9 Alister Circle, E. Northport, NY 11731; 631-499-8739; chris.brown@xlgroup.com or Donna Henderson, deh1262@aol.com

USMC Combat Helicopter Association Reunion for all pilots, aircrew, and support personnel who served together in combat ops. Family and friends welcome. Aug. 10-13, Ft. Worth, Texas. Contact: Robert E. Shantry, 781-337-3239 (home); www.popasmoke.com

1st Bn., 9th Marines (The Walking Dead) Reunion, Sept. 20-24, Branson, Mo. All eras welcome. Contact: Dennis R. Lee, 1807 Vicksburg, Sachse, TX 75048; 800-877-8687.

4th Reunion of the Army 544th Engineers Sept. 14-17, Beckley, West Va. Contact: Forney Shrewsbury, Box 36, Justice, WV 24851; 304-664-9207; shrewsbury4@msn.com

Reunion of the **19th Combat Engineer Battalion Association** for
Vietnam and Attached Units, Sept. 8-9,
Roubidoux Park Campground,
Waynesville, Mo. Contact: Tom Ebrite,
765-286-4906; **s2snoopy@comcast.net**or John Hack, 219-947-2363; **ichack3@verizon.net**

Eighth Annual Reunion of the 27th Field Artillery Regiment Association (All Battalions), June 9-11, Ft. Bragg, Fayetteville, N.C. Contact: James R. Suessmann, 570 Park Ave., Paterson, N.J. 07504, 973-357-0033; jrs.cpa@verizon.net

MCB1 Reunion (all eras and active duty), Aug. 11-13, Las Vegas. Minireunion: July 4th weekend, Hemslock, N.Y. Contact: Peter Dowd, 781-837-0393; mcb1reunion@verizon.net

Reunion of **USAF Pleiku Air Base**. All detachments and squadrons from 1962-72 invited. Aug. 10-13, Bowling Green, Ky. Contact: Harry Beam, Jr., 403 N. Jefferson Ave., Canonsburg, PA 15317; 724-745-9129.

Reunion of **Bravo Co., 4th Bn.,** 23rd Inf., 25th Inf. Div., June 22-25, Oklahoma City. Contact: Robert (Bobby) Cheatham, 209 LeCompte Ave., North Augusta, SC 29841; 803-278-1514. 49th Annual WWII Reunion U.S.S. Peiffer (DE-588). July 26-29, Holiday Inn, 100 S. George St., Cumberland, MD. Hotel reservations: Sheila Crites, 877-426-4672 (mention the Peiffer Reunion). Contact: Warren G. Brehm, 1536-B Old Towne Manor, Cumberland, MD 21502; 301-724-2627.

U.S.S. Missouri (BB-63) Reunion, Aug. 31-Sept. 4, Portland, Me. Contact: Herb Fahr, 516-931-1769, mobb63mo@aol.com or Jim Behling, 330-650-5529, jbussmopr@gwis.com

USMC 3/11 Reunion, Sept. 8-10, Marriott Reagan International, Alexandria, Va. Reception, banquet, guest speakers, and candlelight vigil at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. All Marines welcome. Hotel reservations: 800-228-9290. Contact: Mary Ann Reitano, 315-715-0404; ma reitano@msn.com

1st Battalion 4th Marines Association Reunion, August 2-6, Albuquerque, N.M. Contact: Johnny Holquin, 505-233-4959; YSPE1021 @cs.com

220th Reconnaissance Airplane Company "Catkillers" Reunion, October 6-8, South Shore Harbour Resort & Conference Center, 2500 South Shore Blvd., League City, Texas 77573. Contact: Carl Drechsel, cdrechsel@houston.rr.com

U.S.S. Waddell (DDG-24) Reunion, Oct. 5-8, Las Vegas. Contact: Guy M. Ward, P.O. Box 724, Honeoye, NY 14471-0724; 585-229-2391; gward@rochester.rr.com; website:

www.usswaddell.com

Vietnam Living History Day, July 22, Stars and Stripes Museum and Library, 17377 Stars and Stripes Way, Bloomfield, Mo. Events include conferring the Order of the Silver Rose to qualified Vietnam veterans suffering from exposure to Agent Orange. Contact: Jack Dragoni, 11817 State Hwy. 77, Chaffee, MO 63740; 573-887-6048; jdragoni@hotmail.com

U.S.S. *Delta* Association (AR-9/AK-25) Reunion. Sept.3-10, Valley Forge, Pa. Contact: E.T. Sonnleitner, 920-235-1866.

Americal Division Field Artillery Reunion, May 4-6, Wyndham Roanoke Airport, 2801 Hershberger Rd., Roanoke, Va. Contact: Robert J. Miller, 585-924-5296; Ryskowski@aol.com

U.S.S. Davison (DD618-DMS37) Reunion. Sept. 20-24, Coast Long Beach Hotel, Long Beach, Ca. Due to declining membership, this is our last reunion. Contact: Earl Lee, 619-444-5384; 619-322-1494 (cell); reca.lee@sbcglobal.net

Reunion of **G Co., 2/7 Marines Vietnam**, Aug 3-6, Sheraton Westport
Chalet Hotel, St. Louis, Mo. Contact:
Travis Skaggs, 775-887-5652; **tskaggs6@yahoo.com**

LOCATOR

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(who drove for Capt. Love) or **Charlie Ford**. Also **Tom Talley** who attended Columbia High School. Contact: T.J. Litsinger, 797 River Rd., Smithland, KY 42081; 270-928-2863.

Trying to find Marine Kenneth D. Jenkins or anyone from A Co., 3rd Amtrac Bn., 3rd Plt., 1969-70. Contact: Byron A. Craver, 138 Lake St., LeRoy, NY 14482; 585-768-4964; bcraver@rochester.rr.com

Must find Joseph Harrison, Bernard D. Reese, and John M. McBane of the 68th CDS (Air Police) stationed at Seymour Johnson AFB, North Carolina between 1964-66. Also need to hear from any security police stationed at Phan Rang, 1966-67, particularly Orlando Lee and George Davis (from Washington, D.C.), and Ezell Gladney (from Arkansas). Contact: Frederick A.M. Gresham, 1624 Winding Way, Richmond, VA 23235.

My brother was a Vietnam veteran who died in 2004 of **Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease** (CJD), a very rare disease.
He was stationed at Pleiku. I know of 12 other Vietnam veterans who died of CJD. If you have information and would like to share, contact: Dennis Farah, P.O. Box 307, McGregor, MN 55760; **dbfarah@mlecmn.net**

Would like to hear from anyone who was with me in Co. B, 1st Bn., 27th Inf. (1st Wolfhounds, 25th Inf. Div.) when I was WIA Feb. 12, 1968. Contact: James J. Clinton, 86 Seeley Ave., Apt. #5, Keansburg, NJ 07734; 732-778-1974.

Does anyone remember the explosion at **HQ Service Co., 426th S&S**, Camp Eagle in November or December 1968? I hurt my back, shoulder, and hip trying to catch a cook who was on fire. Need verification for VA claim. Treatment records have been lost. Contact: Donald V. Copeland, 42 NW Eagle Rd., Lawton, OK 73507; 580-357-7280; 580-429-3786; 580-248-1927 (fax).

Looking for anyone who served with me in C Battery, 5/42 Field Artillery at Bear Cat, 1968-69, especially "Bullet Brigade" guys Frank Austin and Jimmy Rhodes. Contact: Daniel Green, 305 Osment Rd., SE, Cleveland, TN 37323; 423-339-3542; redpony5@aol.com

Where are you Bravo Co., 4th Bn., 23rd Inf. (mechanized), 25th Inf. Div., 1969-70? Looking for all who served with me. I remember Capt. Frederick Drew, Capt. Horn (from N.Y.), SSG Joseph M. Evangelista, a SSG from Louisiana we called "Coon As," Sp4 John Livingston (Texas), Sp4 Thomas Armstrong (Florida), Sp4 James (Twin) Martin (N.C.), Shelton Bridge (truck driver from N.C.), "Buster" (truck driver from Tenn.), and Sp4 "Gabby" Hayes (Texas). Contact: Robert (Bobby) Cheatham, 209 LeCompte Ave., North Augusta, SC 29841; 803-278-1514.

Would like to hear from anyone who knew **SSGT Claude Hesson Dorris**, USMC, Navy Cross recipient KIA January 7, 1968. Claude and I served together with **3/3 BLT**, Camp Pendleton, 1959-61. We were roommates and I introduced Claude to the woman who became his wife. Contact: Ralph "Lefty" Guillete, 6 Locust Lane, Essex Junction, VT 05452.

Need help with a VA claim. Looking for anyone who served with me in C 1/7, HQ Co., USMC. Was there several weeks awaiting Medevac, and while there sprayed perimeter with Agent Orange from a backpack sprayer. Contact: George Green, P.O. Box 88, Bloomington Springs, TN 38545; 931-268-1907; decreps (Attalylas not

docgreen@twlakes.net

Seeking old friend **Blas Preciado**. We served together in Vietnam. He may now be in Oklahoma in a VA facility. I recently have been diagnosed with cancer and



I'm seeking veterans who served with 3/26 and 2/9 H&S Co., USMC, December 1966 to October 1967, Dong Ha and Phu Bai. I participated in Operation Prairie with 3/26; then I was transferred to the Phu Bai Hospital were I did casualty reporting. Later I was transferred to 2/9; we went to Dong Ha. I served in various operations, including Operation Kingfisher along the DMZ. My best buddy was Charles McKinny, who has passed away. I was 6'3", 170 pounds, and wore black-rimmed glasses. The VA says my records don't indicate I was in combat, so I need two buddy letters. So please guys, search your memories. Contact: Darrell D. Butler, 122 Dewey Davis Rd., Walland, TN 37886; 865-984-2979; LC416@aol.com

want to re-connect. Contact: Robert L. Bozeman, 391 Elm St., Reedsport, OR 97467; 541-271-5382.

Want to locate anyone who knew **Gordon Hoover**, Marine drill sergeant at the **2nd Recruit Training Battalion** in San Diego for nine years before service in Vietnam. Contact: Kyra Hoover, 104 Thistle Ct., Highland Village, TX 75077; 972-249-8965.

Looking for James L. Nelson, B Battery, 2/20, Ist Cav. Div. Last-known address (as of summer 1968): A Troop, 8th Squadron, 1st Air Cav., Ft. Knox. Contact: Joseph M. Nowacki, 1596 Brunswick Ave., Lawrenceville, NJ 08648; 609-393-0252; joe_nowacki@yahoo.com

Seeking **Don Gamble** (possibly spelled "Gambill") and **John** ("**Spence**") **Spencer**. E-mails and letters have bounced back. We served together in **Lima 3/3**. Contact: Robert A. Branscombe, 928-567-7729; **bbmicmac@sedona.net**

Looking for John Gibbs, Army or Marine veteran from Grove City, Ohio. Injured and home by 1969, attended Ohio State University. Contact: Patty Hanson, Patricia.Hanson@SEN.CA.GOV

Want to return a Zippo lighter that I think belonged to a Vietnam veteran. The lighter has an engraving of an aircraft carrier and U.S.S. Constellation (CVA 64) and "Tonkin Gulf" on the lower part. The name De Lipski is printed on the top. Contact: Steve Summers, stesum@msn.com

Looking for **Ross O. Raber**, who was stationed on *U.S.S* **Midway** and retired in the Philippines. Also want to hear from **Richard A. Lapinski**, who was stationed at **Camp Hardy, Okinawa** 1969-70. Contact: **Rakasan69@aol.com**

I served with the **20th Preventive Medicine Unit** in Saigon and Bien Hoa, 1966-67. If there is anyone from the 20th out there, I would love to hear from you. Contact: Lester H. Wurtele, M.D., punnims@comcast.net

I've tried for years to locate Michael Wayne Bach. I used to write him during his Vietnam tour in the early 70s. I believe he was an Army helicopter mechanic. I recall he was from Texas. Contact: Melanie Garbo, Vintagediversity@aol.com

I am seeking information on my father, Ronald Wesley Rush, who served in Vietnam approximately 1968.

Not sure where he served but think it was Long Binh. Contact: Lisa Irwin, logancarolyn@optusnet.com.au

Seeking **George Godfrey** on behalf of my uncle, **Dale Gibson**. They served together in Vietnam. Contact: Matt Van Wyhe, **mattvw@sio.midco.net**

Seeking Frank Belosevic from Lackawanna, N.Y., a relative I believe is a Vietnam veteran. Would like to get in touch with him ASAP. Contact: Steve Duric, 11 Riverside Dr., Redwood Park, 5097 SA, Adelaide, Australia; (08) 82647512; (04)38290349 (cell); bato270@tpg.com.au

Looking for my hoochmates **Kaplan**, **Foster**, **Schroder**, **and Lindsay** from **USAF Supply Squadron**, Cam Ranh Bay, Sept. 1968-Sept. 1969. Contact: Thom Collini, **tac.capecod@juno.com**

Looking for anyone who served with the 178th or 132nd ASHC, 71st Assault, Chu Lai anytime during 1969. Contact: Dan Flahaven, cookwagon2@aol.com

Seeking members from the "Evil Eyes" 8/26 Artillery I served with, 1967-68. I was Motor Sgt. after we moved to An Khe. Contact: Hobart ("Hobie") Sibley, hqsibley@earthlink.net

Searching for friends of MACV translator Nguyen Van Thuoc, who worked June 1969-April 1973 under Lt. Kuggler (1969), Lt. Robinson (1970), Maj. James B. McCoy (1971-72), and Maj. John D. Dean (1972-73). Contact: Quyen Thuy Nguyen, thuyquyen830@yahoo.com

Seeking Joseph Dell Regal from Pennsylvania. You were stationed at Ft. Benning when deployed to Vietnam. Heard you were MIA but your name is not on *The Wall*. Have searched for you for 20 years. Contact: Marty, marty@charter.net

Trying to locate anyone who served with me in the 1st Marine Airwing, WERS17, MWSG17, Danang, Jan. 1968-Feb. 1969. Schrefler, Whitie, Walker, Dowing, let me hear from you. Contact: Shirley Loetscher, 783 Lollie Rd., Mayflower, AR 72106; 501-202-2088 (office), 501-202-1740 (fax); saloetsc@baptist-health.org

Seeking a Vietnam veteran named **Mike** that I met many years ago in San Pedro, Ambergris Key, Belize. I worked for the bus company. Contact: Rodrigo Temporal, 347-282-1772; **rodrigotemporal @hotmail.com**

My brother **Thomas A. Pardo** was killed in action in Vietnam on July 18, 1970. He was a member of **Company C, 8th Engineering Bn.** I have a great need

to learn more about his last days, how he died, his feelings and thoughts. Any friends, people he served with, or those who remember my brother, I want to hear from you. Contact: Kathy Pardo Mobarak, paraffmo@stellardirect.com

Searching for **Howard John Bicker**, **Jr.**, who I remember from **NATO Headquarters** in Belgium in the late 1960s. Contact: Siegfried C. Bicker, 040-61140-161, 040-61140-140 (fax); **Siegfried.Bicker@plan-international.org**

Want to contact anyone stationed with a BARC Co. at Wunder Beach from August. 1968-November 1968. The U.S.S. New Jersey was off our coast at the time. Contact: Jim Cain, iimcain2646@msn.com

Looking for members of USAECAV, Vietnam 1969-70: Garland Crawford, Jacob Applelove, Robert M. Mallia, Douglas G. Bennet, Charles Hatch, Larry Chambers, "Huck" Hutchins, Helbert Brown, Elmer Hays, Leonard Gardner, B.A. Baylor. Contact: Archie Thibeault, Reiki03809@hotmail.com

In search of veterans who served or trained at Fort McClellan, Alabama. We were exposed to Agent Orange, PCBs, mustard gas, nerve gas, lewisite, sarin gas, VS, VX. We are a group of veterans seeking status of presumptive exposure like Vietnam veterans and Gulf War veterans have. Contact: Carolyn Tyler, 3242-A West Mangold Ave., Greenfield, WI 53221-4793, 414-817-0716; Amendment5WACs@aol.com

Seeking anyone assigned to the Area Maintenance Supply Facility (AMSF) of HQ & HQ Detachment, 5th Signal Command (Stratcom), at Sullivan Barracks in Manheim, Germany, 1975-76. I want to share photos and stories. Contact: Joseph Peck,

Peckfam@hotmail.com

Looking for **Robin H. Shores**, a Vietnam vet discharged in early 1969 as a Navy machinist mate first class (MM1) from the **U.S.S. Truxtun** (**DLGN 35**). Contact: Jordan Gmach, 182 Buffalo Ridge Rd., Amherst, VA 24521.

Seeking anyone denied equivalency by the DOD Civilian/Military Service Board for Vietnam service. Looking for support for legislation to halt board denials involving Agent Orange diseases. Contact: Don Isaacs, 162 Andover G, W. Palm Beach, FL 33417. Looking for anyone who served with me at Nha Trang, 1970-71, **15th/90th SOS.** Col. Howell was also later with me at Langley AFB, 1971-75. Contact: Charles A. Kirby, P.O. Box 888, Richlandtown, PA 18955.

Anyone out there who served with 1st Plt., C Co., 3/325 Inf., 82nd Airborne, in 1972? I need a claim witness. I injured my back in a chopper blast in 1972, amd went to sick call. Jeff Lawson, Alfredo Marquez, Robert Otta, Sgt. Redd, or anyone else who served with us and remembers, contact: Robert E. Rigler, P.O. Box 244, Graterford, PA 19426.

Searching for anyone who served with the 148th Ordnance Co. in Vung Tau, with detachments at Can Tho, Soc Trang, and Vinh Long, Jan. 1969-Jan. 1970. In Sept. 1969 our company moved to Long Binh to relieve a National Guard unit from Wisconsin. I'm originally from Scottsboro, Ala., and lived in Tennessee for 20 years. Contact: Joseph T. Phillips, 637 Long Island Rd., South Pittsburg, TN 37380; 423-837-7776.

Looking for fellow "Sea Barons" I served with at Camh Ranh Bay, July 1970-71. I was with U.S. Army Marine Maintenance Activity Vietnam (USAMMAV). Anyone remember pulling guard duty on the jetty? Contact: Joe Lupo, 45566 White Pines Dr., Novi, MI 48374; 248-728-5700.

Would like to hear from anyone who served with the **240th Assault Helicopter Co.** at Bear Cat, 1969-71. Contact: Walter Weber, 35 Elmtree La., Galax, VA 24333.

Seeking old friends from Co. B, 2/9th Artillery, 4th Inf. Div., Oct. 1968-Oct. 1969, or the friends we supported in 2/35th Inf. Contact: Tom Roman, 6382 Breckenridge Cicle, Lake Worth, FL 33467; 561-968-2115; Tomsflor@bellsouth.net

Searching for Joe T. Cruz and Tony Gresham ("Flipper"). We served together on swift boats, Qui Nhon, April 1967-April 1968. Contact: Ron Gagnon, 1618 Country Club Blvd., Cape Coral, FL 33990: Ronbo004@aol.com

Looking for members of the **5th Plt.** from **DLI Vietnamese Language School** in Monterey, Calif., July-September 1969. I lived in B-19. Len Boyd, John Doty, James Brown, Greg Duckworth, Steve Faer anybody out there? Contact: Warren Griffin, 54 Shaw Farm Rd., Holliston, MA 01746; 508-429-3002;

griffcher@juno.com
Seeking "Jungle Eaters" from 27th
LCT and 60th Landclearing Co., 196870. Denton ("Denny") Miller, French
Camp (from Manteca, Calif.), Kurt Oltman
(Pa.), John Geiling (Pa.), Gary Oenning
(Ill.), and others. Reunion in June. Contact:
Dave Minto, 165 Spooner Ave., Warwick,

Searching for family members of **Frank Edward McClellan.** Mac was KIA Apr. 6, 1970, at An Khe. I was a Sgt. at the time and Mac's team leader, and remember that he was from Indiana. Contact: Mark J. Estopare, 699 Cunningham Rd., Cuba, MO 65453; 573-885-2744.

RI 02886; Dave.Minto@gmail.com

Looking for POWs/MIAs stationed at Sampson AFB, 3650th Basic Military Training Wing, 1950-56. Also welcome names of dependents who were stationed at Sampson with active-duty personnel. Contact: Chip Phillips, Sampson AFB Veterans Association, P.O. Box 331, Williamsville, NY 14231; 716-633-1199; 716-633-9118; chip34@aol.com

Looking for **David Leroy Steele**, who attended Chadron State College before entering the service. Contact: Christina Hendricks-Findley, 52 Hoover St., Newark, OH 43055.

Trying to find Roger Keese (from Pryor, Okla.) and Patrick Thompson (from Bradford, Pa.) from the 365th Trans. Co. (FORSCOM), Ft. McClellan, Anniston, Ala., from 1973-1974. Also would like to hear from Leigh Ann Hipp. Contact: John Beal, P.O. Box 278, Swan Quarter, NC 27885.

ACH MEMORIAL DAY WE HONOR OUR FALLEN DEAD FROM EVERY BRANCH OF SERVICE AND EVERY WAR IN WHICH WE HAVE BRAVELY FOUGHT. AS MEMBERS OF VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA WHO HAVE COMMITTED NEVER TO LEAVE ONE OF OUR OWN BEHIND, WE COMMEMORATE OUR FELLOW VVA MEMBERS WHO HAVE DIED. OFFER A SPECIAL PRAYER OR MEMORIAL SERVICE AND PROMINENTLY DISPLAY THIS MEMORIAL LIST AS OUR PLEDGE NEVER TO FORGET THE LEGACY OF THOSE GONE BEFORE US.

BRIAN V. ABBEY • LINDA KAY ABNER • ALAN J. ABRAHAM • GERALD H. ACHESON • MARTHA ACEVEDO • JAMES CLARK ADAIR • GEORGE ADAMS • HOUSTON ADAMS • WESCOTT "WES" B. ADAMS • VINSON ALAN ADAMS • JACK DARRELL ADAMS • JOHN ADAMS • ROBERT D. ADAMS • T. PATTON ADAMS • GERALD ADDISON • JERRY K. ADKINS • ULYSSES STEVEN ADOLPH II • THOMAS C. AGNEW • CHARLES DAVID AHRNS • DAVID AIKEN • JACKY T. AKERS • ROYCE H. ALBAUG • PHILLIP DAVID ALCANTAR • ROBERT C. ALDRIDGE • DAVID EUGENE ALDSTADT, SR. · ALEXANDER J. ALEXANDER, JR. · JANET ALFIERI · SAMUEL DAVID ALFRED · BRUCE R. ALLEN · JAMES D. ALLEN · FRANK E. ALLEN · ROLLA E. ALLEN III · MYRTLE O'KEEFE ALLISON · JACOB ERNEST B. ALLWEBER, JR. • MANUEL ALMARAZ, JR. • AHIMUTO ALMAZAN • ANGEL ALMEDINA • LEONARD RAY ALMY • THOMAS A. ALVAREZ • OCAMPO ANAYA • ERNEST W. ANDERSEN • PAUL W. ANDERSON • ARTHUR E. ANDERSON • CHARLES ANDERSON • JOSEPH M. ANDERSON • LAUN E. ANDERSON • RALPH ANDERSON • WILLIAM ANDERSON • WEBSTER ANDERSON • NANCY ANDREWSREPPARD A. ANDREWS • THOMAS R. ANDREWS • PETER CHARLES ANDRONACO • FRANCIS VINCENT ANISKIEWICZ • JOHN ROBERT ANNAN • JOE WILLIAM ANUSKA • MILTON S. APPLEGATE, JR. • REMO APOLLONIO • JAMES SCOTT APPS • CHARLES AQUILINO • ROBERT F. AQUILINO • LURTY B. ARMENTROUT • AARON M. ARMSTRONG • FRED G. ARMSTRONG • WILLIAM A. ARMSTRONG • SUSAN S. ARNIM • GARY ERNEST ARNOLD • MICHAEL STONE ARNOLD • JULIUS P. AROCHA • JOHN F. ARP • JESUS ARREDONDO • JOSEPH LAMAR ARRINGTON • EARL F. ARTAS • DAVID B. ARTHUR • TRACY ARVIN • ABBIE ASHLINE • HOMER C. ASHWORTH, JR. • RAYMOND MARVIN ASMUS • JAMES BROWN ATKINS • EDWARD ANTHONY ATWELL • JAMES FRANCIS ATWOOD • PAUL C. AUGUSTEIN • CHARLES J. AUSTIN • RICHARD ANTHONY AVARITT, JR. • KIRBY LYNN AVERY • WILLIAM J. AVEY • ALAN S. AYER • RONALD A. AYLIFFE, SR. • WILLIAM BABIK • JAMES BACZKOWSKI • PATRICK BADDGOR • MICHAEL PAUL BADGET • CHARLES BAILEY • GERALD BAILEY • JAMES FRANK BAILEY • JERRY W. BAILEY • KENNETH E. BAILEY • PAUL BAILEY • STEPHEN BAILEY • JERRY BAILIN • THOMAS D. BAIRD • HAROLD H. BAISCH • HENRY C. BAKER, JR. • HOLLIS LEE BAKER • JAMES L. BAKER • LYLE BAKER • MICHAEL E. BAKERROBERT STILES BAKER II • RUTH S. BAKER • KUWASI BALAGOON • CHUCK BALD COULTER • PATTY BALD COULTER • RICHARD CHARLES BALDERSON • FRANCIS J. BALLARD • RONNIE R. BALLARD • JOSEPH F. BALZANO • ALBERT J. BANDOLYAL • MAROUN H. BARAKAT • JACK L. BARBER • PATRICK M. BARBER • FRANKLIN DELANO BARBOUR • WILLIAM E. BARCLAY • ELMER BARGO • FRANK DALE BARKER • IRENE G. BARKER • JOSEPH T. BARLOW • CHARLES M. BARNES • DONALD H. BARNES • MILTON BARNES • ROLAND S. BARNES • CHARLES R. BARR • FRED BARRETT, JR. • JANICE L. BARRETT • MARCOS BARROCAS, M.D. • BOBBY R. BARROW • ROBERT BENN BARRY • STEVEN ROBERT BARRY • RANDY BARTON • CINDY BARTONE • L. ROBERT BASILE • STEFANYE BASS • FRANK ALLEN BATES • JAMES L. BATHURST • GERALD W. BATTCHER • RONNIE BATTS • FREDRICK J. BAUER • JOHN D. BAUER • DONALD FRANKLIN BAUGHN • JAMES S. 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CARUSO • RUSSEL JAY CARVER • JOSEPH H. CASBIER • LARRY D. CASEY • RICHARD I. CASOLI • TED CASON • JAMES FRANCIS CASS • LARRY L. CASSILL • KENNETH L. CASTO • VICTOR L. CASTRO • EMMANUEL CAUCHI • JULIAN TERRELL CAUDILL • EILEEN CAULFIELD • FRANK JACK CAUSLEY • RONALD A. CAWLEY • C.W. CAYWOOD • ABRAHAM CECEMSKI • JAMES D. CECIL • RONALD FRANKLIN CECKOWSK • JOHN O. CHADWICK • HOYT BAXLEY CHAFIN • RICHARD ALLEN CHAGNON • HAROLD MARVIN CHALFIN • JAMES AUBERY CHAMBERS • LLOYD V. CHAMBERS, JR. • RICHARD JOHN CHAMPAGNE • KENNETH JAMES CHAMPION • RICHARD C. CHANDLER • CURTIS CHANEY • ROBERT M. CHAPMAN • RICHARD L. CHAYER • GARY CHEATWOOD, SR. • JIMMY CHEEK • WILLIAM CHERRY • JOHN ALBERT CHERRY, SR. • STEPHEN K. CHESS • VICTOR M. CHEVA · GENE A. CHEW · DENNIS CHIADO · MARGARET S. CHILDERS · WALTER R. CHILDRESS · TERRENCE P. CHISLEY · RICHARD A. CHRISTENSEN · RICHARD THOMAS CHRISTENSEN · JOSEPH C. CHRISTIANSEN • NORMAN F. CHRISTOPHERSON • FOREST DAVID CHURCH • JOHN CICOTTE • MICHAEL J. CIPRIANO • RICHARD A. CLAES, JR. • STANLEY C. CLARK • ALLEN CLARK • GERALD CLARKKENNETH L. CLARK • RANDALL CLARK • RICHARD STEPHEN CLARK • RICHARD T. CLARK • SHARON CLARK • STANLEY C. CLARK • STEPHEN C. CLARK • WILLIAM CLARK • ANDREW CLARK, SR. • JOHN E. CLAUS • PAUL CLAWSON • JOHN A. CLEARY • ALAN CLEAVER • DONALD RAY CLEMENTS, JR. • RALPH CLESEN • DOUGLAS F. CLEVELAND • ROY CLEVELAND • WAYNE E. CLIFT • STEVE CLIKAS • JAMES C. CLINE • ROBERT L. CLINTON, SR. • JAMES V. CLOUD • ROGER CLOUSE • WILLIAM JAMES COATES • RALPH S. COATS • LAWRENCE J. COBB • DONALD P. COCHRAN • TED COCHRAN • DOUGLAS M. COCHRANE • LEROY C. COCKERILL • MICHAEL J. COCOZZA • A. EDWARD CODISPOTI • CURTIS CHARLES "BOMBER" COE • TERRANCE COGAN · CHIP COGGINS · ARTHUR R. COHEN · JOHN ROSS COKELETTE · RICHARD L. COLDWATER · RICHARD F. COLE · WALTER J. COLE · CURT A. COLEMAN · MADELYN F. COLEMAN · OWEN W. COLEMAN • RONALD DALE COLEMAN • RICHARD L. COLLETT • JASPER E. COLLEY • JAMES DEAN COLLIER • BRIEN COLLINS • JOSEPH W. COLLINS • MICHAEL D. COLLINS • TIMOTHY F. COLLINS • THOMAS IOHN COLLINS • WILLIAM I. COLLINS • EDGARDO COLON • PATRICK MICHAEL COLOSIMO • DONALD KENSON COLSON • HANON COMBSIOSEPH COMEAUX • REGINA FAYE KRULIC COMER • JOHN E. COMERFORD • GEORGE JUDSON COMMINS • CHARLES E. COMPTON • RONNIE LEE COMSTOCK • RICHARD CONAWAY • RICHARD C. CONFER, SR. • DENNIS R. CONKLIN • WILLIAM A. CONKLIN • ROBERT CONN • ROBERT F. CONNALLY • JAMES L. CONNELL • MICHAEL CONNELLY • TIMOTHY JOSEPH CONNELLY • EDWIN R. CONNER • ALAN RICHARD CONNOLLY • PATRICK F. CONNOLLY • PETER M. CONRAD • MICKEY R. CONROY • SAMUEL G. CONTOS, SR. • CHAUNCEY J. "BUDDY C." COOK • CHARLES R. COOK • FLOYD RAY COOK • HERBERT COOK • HOWARD COOK • JAMES "LARRY" COOK • JOEL COOK • JOHN PAUL COOK • JOHN W. COOK II • PAUL COOK • ROBERT COOK • JOHNNY COOL • HARRY A. COOLEY • JOHN COOLEY • PHILLIP A. COONEY • STEVEN M. COONEY • ARNOLD BERNARD COOPER • DENNIS L. COOPER • DOUGLAS H. COOPER • GEORGE MELVIN COOPER • PAUL COOPER • WILLIAM JOHN COOPER • BERNARD COPUS, JR. • JAMES CORMACK • JAMES M. CORMIER • JOHN W. CORN • PHILIP W. CORNEY • HELEN K. CORNFIELD • W. PAUL CORNWELL • ARTHUR R. CORREIA • JOSEPH S. COSTA • GARY M. COSTELLO • THOMAS L. COSTELLO • JOSEPH MICHAEL COSTENBADER • JOSEPH J. COTTON • RICHARD C. COUGHLAN • RICHARD H. COUPE · DONALD COURTNEY · WILLIAM H. COURTNEY · CARL BRUCE COURVILLE · RICHARD P. COVERT · CLARENCE COVINGTON · MAYNARD LEAR COWGILL · DONALD KEITH COX · HERBERT P. COX • IAMES W. COX • MARK A. COX • RICHARD D. COX • STEPHEN WAYNE COX • IOHN P. COYNE • BENNY CRAIG • MICHAEL L. CRAIG • PAUL CRAMER • CORDELL CRAMPTON • ROLLIN B. CRANE • LLOYD EARL CRATHERS • JOHN NELSON CRAWFORD • EDWIN KAYE CRAWLEY • MICHAEL E. CREAMER • RAY G. CREASEY, JR. • JAMES F. CREASMAN • THOMAS ALLEN CREEL • DOUGLAS ROY CREIGHTON • IRVIN ANDY CREMEANS • BENJAMIN J. CRESCINI • VICTOR P. CRISCI • RUBEN D. CROCKETT • TOMMY LYNN CROFT • RICHARD G. 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0236	VVA 3" Patch	3.25	VVA	CAPS		0004			0783	12" POW/MIA Patch	12.00
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