



# The California Zephyr

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An Organization Chartered By The U.S. Congress



A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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SPRING 2018

## PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

First and foremost, I want all those involved in the tragic event that took place at The Pathway Home in Yountville to know that CSC has them in our thoughts and prayers.

In June the CSC will be holding our convention at the Radisson in Fresno. The delegate count is now out so check to see how many delegates your chapter is allowed. Hopefully you will be able to send all your delegates to the convention. They won’t be disappointed as we have a full schedule.

Then in July the National Leadership Conference will be held in Palm Springs. This one is close enough that you should be able to have at least one member of your chapter attend. If you have never been to one you need to attend as there is a lot of great information to be had.

Over the past several months CSC chapters have had many of their members pass on. Please keep all of them, their family members and their friends in your thoughts and prayers.

Steve

explained increase of 1 name from the list I provided on 04/02/18. This new name is in Los Angeles County.

There are now 333 California names without photos according to the VVMF Wall of Faces website. There were 430 California names without photos when CSC started this project. Today’s number is a 22.6 percent decrease from our start.

It is important that we track the names that our members have found to document the value of this project and CSC’s success.

Please let me know if you have any questions or if you locate photos for any of the names on the list.

Mike Kennedy  
Southern District Director  
California State Council  
Vietnam Veteran of America  
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“Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another”

## WALL OF FACES

Below is an updated list effective Monday, 04/09/18. This week had another un-

## LEGISLATIVE ADVOCATE

### 2017-18 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

2018 is the 2nd year of the two-year legislative session. There are many new veterans bills coming to our attention and we have been working closely with Dean Gotham, the Government Affairs Committee Chair; who then works with the committee members to develop positions on legislation. We have been submitting letters to the Legislature on the bills you support as well as testifying on key legislation in committee. We are also monitoring the state budget process as it applies to veterans. We are actively engaged in pursuing increased funding for County Veterans Service Officers.

Some of the top legislative priorities for 2018 are briefly listed below. VVA-CSC members who attended the March 14 All-Veterans Day at the Capitol helped distribute information to legislators on these bills.

### KEY VETERANS BILLS FOR 2018:

AB 2801-Salas (D-Bakersfield); Addresses the problem of veteran’s and law enforcement memorials being vandalized.

AB 2521-Quirk-Silva (D-Fullerton); Seeks to curb abuses by unscrupulous lenders who seek to deny deployed military members the benefits of the California Military Families Financial Relief Act via a loophole in the law.

SB 924-Morrell (R-Rancho Cucamonga); Will seek to exclude from gross income of active duty service members of the National Guard while on active duty in CA, if that income is derived from his or her position as a service member of the National Guard.

SB 1043-Newman (D-Fullerton); Increase in local assistance funding for County Veterans Service Officers (from the current \$5.6 million to \$7 million).

SB 1357-Gaines (R-El Dorado Hills); Reinstate the “VETERAN” license plate which will be available to only veterans.

### NEW LOBBYIST REPRESENTING THE VVA-CSC AT THE STATE CAPITOL

Pete Conaty, longtime lobbyist for the VVA-CSC has retired, however he still remains active in veterans issues. Iraq and Afghanistan veteran Seth Reeb, who worked closely with Pete last year, has taken over as the lobbyist for the Legion. Dana Nichol, formerly of Pete Conaty and Associates, is assisting Seth on veterans issues.

Seth enlisted in the US Army in 2004 as an infantryman with the 10th Mountain Division out of Fort Polk Louisiana. He served in Afghanistan in 2006 and Iraq in 2007-2008. He is the recipi-

### Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund - Wall of Faces California Missing Photos – Apr 09, 2018 – TOTALS

California Service Members listed on Vietnam Memorial 5576  
California Service Members listed with photos 5243  
California Service Members listed without photos 333

Note: California Service Members listed as MIA 162

California Service Members – Home of Record 102 Cities or Communities

Alameda County 28 - Missing Photos  
Contra Costa County 12 - Missing Photos  
Los Angeles County 204 - Missing Photos

128 for City of Los Angeles alone  
1 New name added to LA County

Orange County 25 - Missing Photos  
Sacramento County 4 - Missing Photos  
San Bernardino County 4 - Missing Photos  
San Diego County 9 - Missing Photos  
San Francisco County 24 - Missing Photos  
San Joaquin County 4 - Missing Photos  
San Mateo County 7 - Missing Photos  
Santa Clara County 10 - Missing Photos  
Santa Cruz County 1 - Missing Photo

Total 333 - Missing Photos

Wall of Faces Website - <http://www.vvmf.org/Wall-of-Faces/>  
Wall of Faces Website Search - <http://www.vvmf.org/Wall-of-Faces/search/results>  
Wall of Faces Website Submit Photo - <http://www.vvmf.org/how-to-submit>

### California Missing Photos – Comparison to other States/Territories States/Territories with over 100 missing photos

Location	Missing Photos	Change	Total Casualties	Percent Missing
California	333	- 8 + 1	5576	6.0
New York	677	+ 1	4126	16.4
Illinois	231	- 5	2938	7.9
Michigan	149	- 2	2666	5.6
Georgia	339	- 13	1585	21.4
Virginia	180	0	1306	13.8
Tennessee	109	- 8	1295	8.3
Alabama	221	- 1	1210	18.3
South Carolina	110	- 3	895	12.6
Puerto Rico	204	0	347	58.8



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ent of the Combat Infantry Badge, the Expert Infantry Badge, and the Army Commendation Medal for Valor. He

was promoted to the rank of Sergeant, prior to leaving the Army in 2009.

Seth joined his father's firm Reeb Govern-



Veterans attend the All-Veterans Day at the State Capitol to advocate on veterans issues and hear from legislative speakers.

The California  
Zephyr  
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EDITOR  
Tom Hohmann

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The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of VVA, the State Council or its members.

Who Are The Vietnam Veterans Of America?  
Founded in 1978, Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. is the only national Vietnam veterans organization congressionally chartered and exclusively dedicated to Vietnam-era veterans and their families. VVA is organized as a not-for-profit corporation and is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Service Code.

VVA'S FOUNDING PRINCIPLE  
"Never again shall one generation of veterans abandon another."

PURPOSE  
The purpose of Vietnam Veterans of America's national organization, the state councils, and chapters is:

To help foster, encourage, and promote the improvement of the condition of the Vietnam veteran.

To promote physical and cultural improvement, growth and development, self-respect, self-confidence, and usefulness of Vietnam-era veterans and others.

To eliminate discrimination suffered by Vietnam veterans and to develop channels of communications which will assist Vietnam veterans to maximize self-realization and enrichment of their lives and enhance life-fulfillment.

To study, on a non-partisan basis, proposed legislation, rules, or regulations introduced in any federal, state, or local legislative or administrative body which may affect the social, economic, educational, or physical welfare of the Vietnam-era veteran or others; and to develop public-policy proposals designed to improve the quality of life of the Vietnam-era veteran and others especially in the areas of employment, education, training, and health.

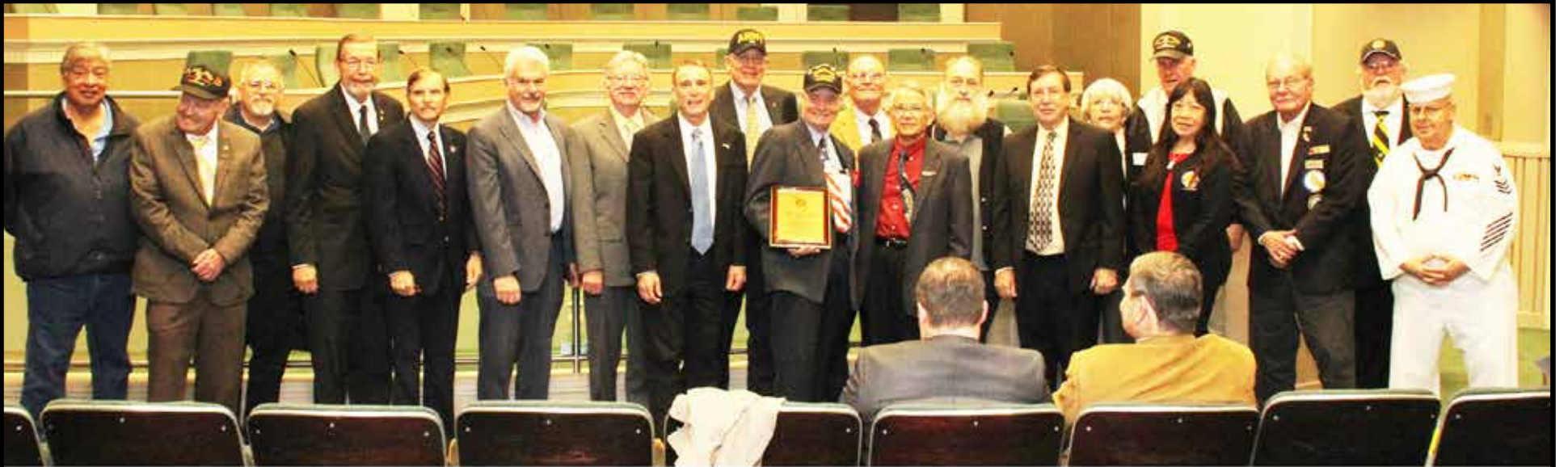
To conduct and publish research, on a non-partisan basis, pertaining to the relationship between Vietnam-era veterans and the American society, the Vietnam War experience, the role of the United States in securing peaceful co-existence for the world community, and other matters which affect the social, economic, educational, or physical welfare of the Vietnam-era veteran or others.

To assist disabled and needy war veterans including, but not limited to, Vietnam veterans and their dependents, and the widows and orphans of deceased veterans.

FUNDING  
Vietnam Veterans of America relies totally on private contributions for its revenue. VVA does not receive any funding from federal, state, or local governments.







*Assemblyman Randy Voepel (R-Santee); the VVA-CSC Legislator of the Year.  
Assemblyman Voepel is a Vietnam Veteran and member of the Assembly Veterans Affairs Committee*



*Dean Gotham, right, presents Senator Janet Nguyen (R-Garden Grove) with the Council's Legislator of the Year Award.*



*VVA-CSC Legislator of the Year Senator Janet Nguyen (R-Garden Grove) and veterans*

cacy. The firm specializes in water resources policy representing clients throughout California that have urban water, farm water and flood control perspectives. With the addition of Seth Reeb to the firm, Reeb Government Relations will be now be representing the VVA-CSC. Bob Reeb, the principal of Reeb Government Relations has over 35 years of experience in public policy and local government experience and has been a registered lobbyist for over 20 years.

**ALL-VETERANS DAY AT THE  
CAPITOL  
MARCH 14, 2018**

ment Relations-LLC as a legislative advocate in January 2017 where he worked closely with Pete Conaty on veterans issues.

Reeb Government Relations was established in January 2005 to assist clients with policy analysis, issues management and California legislative and regulatory advo-

On March 14, veterans from numerous organizations attended the All-Veterans Day at the State Capitol to hear from legislative speakers and visit the offices of their local



legislators and deliver informational packets. These folders, prepared by us, contained information on the VVA-CSC as well as other participating groups as well as the California State Commanders Veterans Council, of which the VVA-CSC is a member of. They also contained a list of the bills of importance to veterans. The VVA-CSC was well represented at this event and the Council's Legislator of the Year Awards were also presented to Senator Janet Nguyen (R-Garden Grove) and Assemblyman Randy Voepel (R-Santee).



## PRIVATIZING OF THE VA

**DAVID J. SHULKIN:**

### PRIVATIZING THE V.A. WILL HURT VETERANS

It has been my greatest professional honor to serve our country's more than 20 million veterans. Almost three years ago, I left my private sector job running hospitals and came to Washington to repay my gratitude to the men and women who put their lives on the line for our country.

I believe strongly in the mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and nothing about my political experience in Washington could ever change that. I also believe that maintaining a strong V.A. is an essential piece of the puzzle that is the United States' national security system: We can only expect our sons and daughters to risk their lives and fight for our freedom if we can keep our promise to care for them when they return home broken, injured or traumatized. There is no excuse for not holding up our end of the bargain. The mission set forth by President Abraham Lincoln to care for those who have "borne the battle" is a sacred duty that I will remain committed to always.

During my tenure at the department, we have accomplished a tremendous amount. We passed critical legislation that improved the appeals process for veterans seeking disability benefits, enacted a new G.I. Bill and helped ensure that we employ the right people to work at the department. We have expanded access to health care by reducing wait times, increasing productivity and working more closely with the private sector. We have put in place more and better mental health services for those suffering from the invisible wounds of war. We are now processing more disability claims and appeals than ever before and, for the first time, allowing veterans to see the status of their appeals by simply logging on to their accounts. Unemployment among veterans is near its lowest level in years, at 3.5 percent, and the percent of veterans who have regained trust in V.A. services has risen to 70 percent, from 46 percent four years ago.

It seems that these successes within the department have intensified the ambitions of people who want to put V.A. health care in the hands of the private sector. I believe differences in philosophy deserve robust debate, and solutions should be determined based on the merits of the arguments. The advocates within the administration for privatizing V.A. health services, however, reject this approach. They saw me as an obstacle to privatization who had to be removed. That is because I am convinced that privatization is a political issue aimed at rewarding select people and companies with profits, even if it undermines care for veterans.

Until the past few months, veteran issues were dealt with in a largely bipartisan way. (My 100-0 Senate confirmation was perhaps the best evidence that the V.A. has been the exception to Washington's political polarization). Unfortunately, the department has become entangled in a brutal power struggle, with some political appointees choosing to promote their agendas instead of what's best for veterans. These individuals, who seek to privatize veteran health care as an alternative to government-run V.A. care, unfortunately fail to engage in realistic plans regarding who will care for the more than 9 million veterans who rely on the department for life-sustaining care.

The private sector, already struggling to provide ad-

equate access to care in many communities, is ill-prepared to handle the number and complexity of patients that would come from closing or downsizing V.A. hospitals and clinics, particularly when it involves the mental health needs of people scarred by the horrors of war. Working with community providers to adequately ensure that veterans' needs are met is a good practice. But privatization leading to the dismantling of the department's extensive health care system is a terrible idea. The department's understanding of service-related health problems, its groundbreaking research and its special ability to work with military veterans cannot be easily replicated in the private sector.

I have fought to stand up for this great department and all that it embodies. In recent months, though, the environment in Washington has turned so toxic, chaotic, disrespectful and subversive that it became impossible for me to accomplish the important work that our veterans need and deserve. I can assure you that I will continue to speak out against those who seek to harm the V.A. by putting their personal agendas in front of the well-being of our veterans.

As many of you know, I am a physician, not a politician. I came to government with an understanding that Washington can be ugly, but I assumed that I could avoid all of the ugliness by staying true to my values. I have been falsely accused of things by people who wanted me out of the way. But despite these politically-based attacks on me and my family's character, I am proud of my record and know that I acted with the utmost integrity. Unfortunately, none of that mattered.

As I prepare to leave government, I am struck by a recurring thought: It should not be this hard to serve your country.

### ON VA SECRETARY SHULKIN'S DEPARTURE

Statement by John Rowan, VVA National President, on the firing of VA Secretary Shulkin:

"VA Secretary David Shulkin has shown grace under fire amid the long-circulated rumors of his imminent departure, confirmed today by the President's twitter bomb at 5:31 EST: 'I am pleased to announce that I intend to nominate highly respected Admiral Ronny L. Jackson, MD, as the new Secretary of Veterans Affairs.'

"We are grateful to VA Secretary David Shulkin for his service to our nation's veterans and his firm stance to protect the Department of Veterans Affairs from those who would like to see it handed over to the for-profit, private-sector health systems. Despite the pressure, he has never veered from his mission to care for our nation's veterans while tackling the revitalization of the VA. Secretary David Shulkin will be missed.

"We look forward to an equally productive relationship with Dr. Ronny Jackson. We are pleased that he is a combat veteran with firsthand knowledge of the trauma of war, and as such, will understand what our veterans need."

### SHULKIN SAYS HE WAS FIRED VIA TRUMP TWEET

By Maegan Vazquez, CNN

Former Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin said Monday that White House chief of staff John Kelly called to give him a heads up that he'd be fired via a tweet from President Donald Trump.

"General Kelly gave me a heads up that the President would most likely be tweeting out a message in the very near future, and I appreciated having that heads-up from General Kelly," Shulkin told CNN's Alisyn Camerota on "New Day," describing the events of last Wednesday afternoon.

"So the tweet fired you?" Camerota asked.

"Yes," Shulkin responded.

Shulkin told CNN's "State of the Union" on Sunday that he did not offer to resign, though a White House spokesperson insisted that he tendered his resignation.

On Monday, White House director of strategic communications Mercedes Schlapp told Fox News' "Fox & Friends" that "Kelly offered him the opportunity to resign."

"The President said it was time to move on in terms of Veterans Affairs," she added.

The distinction between whether Shulkin fired or resigned is notable because under the Federal Vacancies Act, the President can put his own candidate in place to assume a Cabinet position if the secretary resigns. Trump has installed a Defense Department official, Robert Wilkie, as acting head of VA instead of the deputy secretary, and he's nominated White House physician Ronny Jackson to

become the VA's next secretary. Lawmakers and veterans' groups have raised questions about whether Jackson he has the right experience to lead the government's second largest bureaucracy.

If Shulkin was indeed fired, Trump's decision to replace him with Wilkie instead of following VA's line of succession could imperil any decisions Wilkie makes while serving at VA in an acting capacity. There could be legal challenges to any actions that Wilkie makes at a moment where VA is at a crossroads and decisions are looming about some of the department's biggest functions.

Given the lengthy process for Senate confirmation, Wilkie could serve in an interim capacity for months, until a permanent head of the VA is confirmed by the Senate.

Shulkin's firing came after an inspector general report took issue with the VA's use of taxpayer funds on Shulkin's travel. For his part, Shulkin has defended his conduct and said people who have ideological disagreements with him used the report as a "political exploit" to remove him from leadership.

Shulkin expanded on comments he made in an op-ed where he blamed political appointees for working against him in the interest of aggressively privatizing the work of the department.

"These individuals, though, when they didn't see that their way was being adopted, used subversive techniques to be able to change leadership at the VA," Shulkin said. "That's the issue that I have concerns with."

CNN's Juana Summers, Gregory Wallace and Eli Watkins contributed to this report.

### OUR VETERANS NEED VA SECRETARY SHULKIN

Amid the flurry of contradictory media reports citing various unnamed sources, it's a challenge deciphering the truth from the 'Fake' news. What remains constant, however, is VA Secretary David Shulkin's firm stance to protect the VA from those who would like to see it handed over to the for-profit, private-sector health systems," said VVA National President John Rowan. "Secretary Shulkin understands that veterans would be lost in the private sector, and he knows that President Trump's commitment to caring for our nation's veterans is paramount. We want to see Secretary Shulkin finish the revitalization of the VA that was ordered by President Trump."

"Furthermore, some of the recent negative news stories have been misleading. While the issues identified by the VA Inspector General's report on the D.C. Medical Center were real, they are old news," noted Rowan. "Secretary Shulkin fired VA Medical Center Director Brian Hawkins in September 2017 for failure to provide effective leadership at the D.C. Medical Center. He utilized the VA Accountability Act, signed into law by President Trump in June 2017, making effective use of this much-needed legislation."

In a House hearing on March 15, Secretary Shulkin told the Appropriations Subcommittee that he is not in favor of privatization. "You can't take the 9.1 million veterans getting care in the VA system — 60 percent of whom carry a mental health issue — and release them into the general public. It simply couldn't work by turning on a switch and privatizing the system," Shulkin said. "The President is very, very committed to improving services for veterans," noted Shulkin, praising him for his support of the proposed \$200 billion budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Shulkin told the Appropriations Subcommittee that while there is no pressure to privatize the VA from the White House, there is pressure to fix the VA, and the way to fix the VA is by investing in it where it needs to be improved and also by working with the private sector.

"We have no issue with the VA getting assistance from the outside when relevant and necessary, but veterans prefer to get their comprehensive care at the VA," said Rowan, noting that many do not realize the VA already makes excellent use of outside medical resources. Most VA Medical Centers are affiliated with a medical school, which provides many of the specialized medical personnel that veterans need. "My aortic valve replacement last year at the Manhattan VAMC was done by the chief thoracic surgeon and his surgical team from NYU Medical Center. But my aftercare was provided by the skilled and caring staff at the VAMC, many of whom were veterans," noted Rowan.

## CHAPTER NOTES

### *Chapter 201*

Operation Eagle Visit Parade  
Between 23 and 25 March 2018, nine cities in the San



Francisco Bay Area collaborated to honor the U.S. Army 101st Airborne Screaming Eagles on the 50th anniversary of the War in Vietnam. Dozens of active-duty troops and veterans attended the Operation Eagle Visit – Homecoming 50 Years celebration during the three-day event which included a homecoming parade in downtown San Mateo that attracted about 10,000 spectators.

On March 4, 1968, San Mateo City Council voted unanimously to adopt Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division of the U.S. Army in hopes of improving morale among the fighting troops during the Vietnam War. Support from the city, and its residents, was so strong that at the end of the Vietnam War, San Mateo held the only homecoming parade in the United States honoring returning Vietnam veterans.



1972 San Mateo Welcome Home Parade

The rain that Northern California had been experiencing for the past week came to an end in San Mateo about an hour before the start of the Operation Eagle Visit Homecoming Parade on Saturday, March 24th. The Operation Eagle Visit Homecoming Parade, celebrating 50 years of continued support honoring the men and women who have served in harm's way with Company A during the Vietnam War, included a contingent from the 101st Airborne Division from Kentucky.

Twelve members of VVA Chapter 201 braved the cold weather Saturday morning to participate, with Chapter 464, in the San Mateo Operation Eagle Visit – Homecoming 50 Years Parade in downtown San Mateo.



Chapter 201 members Mike Frangadakis, Steve Thompson (Secretary) Rose Herrera, Richard Paulson, Bob Kadlec, Warren Finch (President), Randy Richmond (Chaplain), Dennis Whittaker (Director) and Gene Fanucchi (Vice President) assemble before the parade.

Chapter 201 Members Rose Herrera and Randy Richmond carried the Vietnam War 50th anniversary banner at the head of the combined VVA Chapter 464, 201 and 201 Associates formation.



VVA-201 Members Rose Herrera & Randy Rich-

mond Carry The Vietnam War 50th Anniversary Commemorative Banner

Chapter 464's color guard, which included the participation of CSC Central District Director Al Sickie, took the lead in the VVA formation followed by members of Chapter 201 and Chapter 201 Associates.



Chapter 464 Color Guard participates in the Operation Eagle Visit – Homecoming 50 Years Parade



VVA Central District Director Al Sickie in the Chapter 464 Dignitary Vehicle

Chapter 201 members carried the Chapter 201 banner and provided a color guard along with a large contingent of Chapter 201 VVA Associates.



VVA Chapter 201 Color Guard participates in the Operation Eagle Visit – Homecoming 50 Years Parade



Chapter 201 Associates Color Guard participates in the Operation Eagle Visit – Homecoming 50 Years Parade

Following the parade, the City of San Mateo hosted a "Festival in Central Park" in downtown San Mateo. The family-friendly festival included food trucks, community booths, as well as music, bouncy houses, face painting, a magic show, balloon twister, arts and crafts table and photo booth.

## Chapter 357

2018 Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day

Redding California, in Shasta County, is blessed to have a County Veterans Memorial Hall, a State Northern California veterans Cemetery, a State Veterans Home, an active VVA Chapter 357, and a National Organization Missing In America Project (MIAP).

Missing In America Project takes possession of un-

claimed Veterans in funeral homes across the Nation and provides those urns of Veterans with a military burial.

Saturday. March 24, 2018, Chapter 357 and Missing



in America, had their 9th Annual Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Celebration. The day started with a MIAP motorcade of 20 Veterans in Urns headed to a program and burial at the North California Veterans Cemetery.

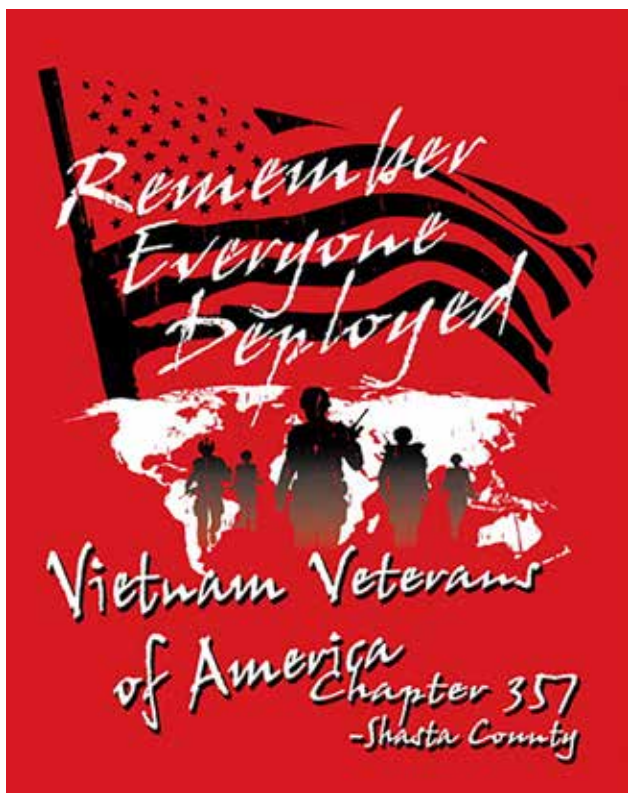
The Motorcade returned to the Vets Hall for a free lunch prepared by our 9 years partner Sons of Italy Shasta Lodge #2453, a program with Veteran serving groups, entertainment by local schools, speakers, a elected official,





Preston Sharp (in the blue) a young Veterans Advocate that has placed flags at the grave sites across the Nation and was the guest of the President at the State of the Union.

Our chapter fundraiser is Remember Everyone Deployed R-E-D T shirt sales for "Deliveries for Deployed" sending care packages to Men and Women Deployed.



The R-E-D T-shirts will be available at the CSC meeting this coming April 27-29, 2018

The cost for Veterans for a T-shirt is \$10.00

If you are interested please contact

Eddie McAllister

VVA Chapter 357

530-524-7504

eddiesphagetti@yahoo.com

## Chapter 223

We are getting ready for our summer activities. This year we will have a booth at the Santa Rosa Wednesday Night Market in downtown Santa Rosa. This is an information booth and a good spot to talk to veterans from all eras and update them on current veteran issues.

We will be holding our third annual town hall with the San Francisco VA on May 21st at 6 PM in the Santa Rosa Veterans Building. We use this event to learn about new technology and programs in the VA. Veterans are encouraged to ask questions regarding health and access questions. We are hoping to have someone this year from the benefits department. All veterans are encouraged to attend. We will be providing snacks.

Our coffee cart at the clinic is doing great. We are looking for more helpers since some of ours are starting to run down. We close during bad weather since we are outside, and we do not want anyone getting sick. It is a good place to come hang out have coffee and whatever else is available (donuts, fruit or whatever else turns up) and spend time talking to outer veterans or event the VA staff when they come out on break. If Earl is there you may even be able to buy a hat or pin or whatever else he may have handy.

We are still assisting veterans and families affected buy the fires. Our assistance in the community has increased with need and we are working with a lot of others in assisting people.

On March 28th the chapter held a ribbon cutting event to show off our Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall inside our Veterans Building. Our local congressman Mike



Thompson, 173rd in Vietnam, will be attending and officiating the event. Our Wall is 13 inches tall and 42 feet long. It lists all names and important dates during the war. This makes a good learning tool and makes the building look better. Some say the names are hard to see, but if you



stand real close or bring a magnifying glass your can see them clearly. People are really taken back by the immensity and the number of names. For those that will never have the opportunity to see the real one this is a place their friends and loved one will be honored. Jerry Shimmel, a long-time life member, picked it up somewhere in the past and had it laminated. We talked for years about where to display it and then we talked about hanging it on the wall. One of our Iraq Veterans, Brian McKeown, said just do it. He never gave up and finally got it put up. The place it is in the building makes it very difficult to take pictures of it because of the lighting. You must stop to look at it and that



Chapter 223 - Reading the Names for Santa Rosa who died in the Vietnam war at Santa Rosa City Hall.

is a good thing. If you stop and look, or read something on it, it makes you think, remember or ask questions. Mission accomplished.

## Chapter 201 Four Chaplains Service

The four chaplains, of Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish faiths were aboard the troopship Dorchester in the North Atlantic, when on February 3, 1943, a torpedo struck at 2:00 am. The ship sank within a very short period of time beneath the icy waters along with the majority of those aboard. Many of those who survived attributed their survival directly to the assistance and acts of compassion of the four chaplains aboard that night.

Chapter 201 Members John Hassenplug and Richard Francis participated in the American Legion District 13 Four Chaplains ceremony in San Jose on February 3rd on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the sinking of troop ship USAT Dorchester sank during World War II after being torpedoed by a German submarine.



Above - VVA-201 Members John Hassenplug & Richard Francis post Chapter 201 Colors during the American Legion District 13 Four Chaplains Service

The chaplains helped other soldiers board lifeboats and gave up their own life jackets when the supply ran out. They joined arms, said prayers, and sang hymns as

they went down with the ship.

## Chapter 982

March was Women Veterans Month. We paid trib-



ute to three women Veterans attending our meeting, Julie Wallace, Dea Cunningham and Shevonne Harris, all US Army. Thank you ladies and thank you to all Women Veterans, you are forgotten all too often.

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day for Chapter 982 is March 24th with our annual Dinner/Dance. We will have a full house with dancing to "Steppin Out", raffles, silent auction, 50/50 and AVVA baked goods sale. Fun for all

San Luis Vet Center is hosting "The Wall That Heals" on March 29th through April 1, 2018 at the Madonna Meadows in San Luis Obispo. There will an escort for "The Wall That Heals" from Santa Maria to San Luis Obispo on March 28th. Chapter 982 will be doing the opening ceremony for the candlelight vigil on March 30th at 7 PM. Many of our members are standing watch while the Wall is here. Thank you to all at the Vet Center for putting this together.

Coming up we have a garage/yard sale fund raiser in May and a couple of Melodrama nights planned. Till next time.

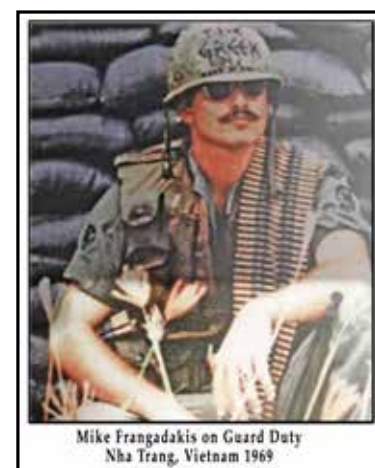
Jerry Kaufman



Chapter 47 members with their info table at the Veterans Expo in Beaumont, California.

## A Vietnam Veteran's Experience A Different Point Of View

By Mike Frangadakis, Chapter 201



Mike Frangadakis on Guard Duty  
Nha Trang, Vietnam 1969

Since I returned from Vietnam in 1969, I have been hearing from my fellow Americans about how we shouldn't have been involved in that horrible war and why did 58,318 Americans have to perish? I served in that conflict from October 31, 1968 to October 1969. Even though I was attached





Left to right: Chapter 446 members Steve Malmberg, Jose Ramos and Al Biernesser at Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day 2016. We have lost Steve and Jose - R.I.P



Steve was born in Menominee MI. 1940 - Rosemead High School class of 1958 - US Army Vietnam 1964 - Cal State University Los Angeles

to the 101st Airborne as a medic technician at a godforsaken location near the DMZ, I did not see what the American Public was watching every night on their local TV news stations. Things like burning villages, killing Vietnamese civilians and atrocities of war that did happen on rare occasions.

Recently Ken Burns, known as Americans Story Teller, produced a Documentary shown on PBS Stations around the country which portrayed more of the same. Less than 20 percent of all the military that served in Vietnam saw those horrors. I was in the 44th Medical Brigade dedicated to provide all military and civilians medical support as needed. It was very rewarding duty and opened my eyes at that time on how other people live in our world. As a young 21-year-old just out of tech college, it made me proud to be from this wonderful country where we are protected by the constitution and educated people who for the most part respect one another.

My unit was mobile, which means we would go where our troops needed medical and dental support. After treating our personnel using doctors, dentist and tech's like me, we would proceed to Vietnamese remote villages to help civilians with their issues. We had security forces to protect us since the enemy hated what we did and would have executed us in a heartbeat. We were winning the hearts



## Images of Bravery Award

*Images of Bravery ~ is the recognition of a Veterans personal, quiet acts of courage in the pursuit of their own peace after serving their country during a war.*

*It is not about heroic deeds on the battlefield, for those ~ the military has the appropriate awards.*

*The California State Council seeks to profile a small group of in country Veterans who have overcome personal sacrifice and adversity to lead lives contributing to their families, communities, and their fellow Veterans while providing a positive image of the Vietnam Veteran.*



**To make a nomination: (one per chapter)**

**Submit a written narrative describing a Vietnam Veteran who has shown involvement in Veteran and/or community affairs since their wartime service.**

**Provide a list of activities that demonstrates that the nominee has enhanced the image of the Vietnam Veteran.**

**The following information must be included in the nomination:**

- Branch of Service
- Dates of Service
- Military Decorations
- Occupation
- Family Status
- Home Address
- Phone Number

Also, provide a chapter contact person and phone number should the selection committee require additional information. The Chapter President and one other board member should sign the nomination.

**Please have the nominations postmarked: May 14, 2018**

**Information is available at (209-728-2138) or [Leanin.Al391@yahoo.com](mailto:Leanin.Al391@yahoo.com)**

The State Council regrets that it cannot pay travel and hotel costs for the recipients of the award.

**Nominations should be mailed to:**

Al Sickle  
Images of Bravery Award Committee  
PO Box 1424  
Murphys, Ca. 95247  
Email : [Leanin.Al391@yahoo.com](mailto:Leanin.Al391@yahoo.com)



## Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. California State Council 16th Biennial State Convention - CalCon 16 June 22 - 23, 2018 - Fresno, CA. CSC Awards Program

The 16<sup>th</sup> Biennial State Convention will be held June 22 and June 23, 2018 at the Radisson Hotel Fresno Conference Center, Fresno, CA. During the Saturday evening banquet, the CSC will present the Awards Program, recognizing outstanding Chapters, VVA Members and other recipients for their dedication and contributions to VVA and/or the Veterans Community.

**The California State Council presents Recognition Awards for the following:**

- Outstanding Chapter of the Year
- Outstanding VVA Member of the Year
- Outstanding Chapter Newsletter/E-Newsletter
- Outstanding Veteran Community Supporter of the Year
- Presidents Award

Nominations of recipients for these awards may be submitted by individual VVA members or chapters. It is suggested that individual members making nominations should consider getting the support of their chapter (if affiliated). Chapter sponsored nominations should be signed by the Chapter President, unless it would reveal a surprise nomination.

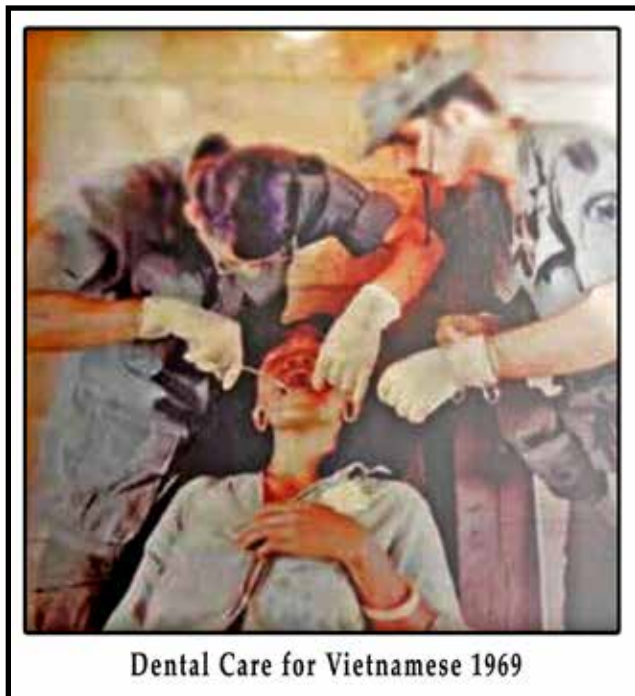
Nomination Forms and supporting documents should be sent to the Committee Chair at the below address: **Submission deadline is May 14, 2018**

**You may submit via USPS or email: [nebhuskfan@aol.com](mailto:nebhuskfan@aol.com)**

Steve Mackey  
Awards Program  
7407 Candlelight Drive  
Riverside, CA 92509  
(Home) 951-681-9531  
(Cell) 951-231-7268  
[nebhuskfan@aol.com](mailto:nebhuskfan@aol.com)



and minds of the villagers with food and medicine. Interpreters would let the people know we were there to support and assist them for a better life. Every single person I came in contact with wanted what we had to offer in the States. They called it MEDCAP Missions-Medical Civil Action Patrol. I also saw nation building first hand and have the pictures to prove it. Roads, hospitals, schools, orphanages and infrastructure all provided for a country begging to be free of communism. I witnessed how horrible the communist were to their own people. It made



Dental Care for Vietnamese 1969

me proud to be in the military and protect and serve those innocent helpless civilians.


My unit was mobile, which means we would go where our troops needed medical and dental support. After treating our personnel using doctors, dentist and tech's like me, we would proceed to Vietnamese remote villages to help civilians with their issues. We had security forces to protect us since the enemy hated what we did and would have executed us in a heartbeat. We were winning the hearts and minds of the villagers with food and medicine. Interpreters would let the people know we were there to support and assist them for a better life. Every single person I came in contact with wanted what we had to offer in the States. They called it MEDCAP Missions-Medical Civil Action Patrol. I also saw nation building first hand and have the pictures to prove it. Roads, hospitals, schools, orphanages and infrastructure all provided for a country begging to be free of communism. I witnessed how horrible the communist were to their own people. It made me proud to be in the military and protect and serve those innocent helpless civilians.

We won every major battle including three major offenses the communist launched. No engagement with the enemy was reported as a victory back home, only how many people were killed or wounded. I agree that every casualty is horrible. As a military litter carrier and ambulance driver, I witnessed young men in peril. My point is that by turning the American public against the military objective, the one-sided news media prolonged the carnage on both sides. Ho Chi Minh, the enemy's leader was ready to have peace talks after our huge victory, the North Vietnamese Tet Offensive. When he heard about the rioting going on in the States, because of horrible one-sided news coverage depicting terrible casualties, Ho Chi Minh got an idea. BY prolonging the suffering, we would pull out and act defeated. His strategy worked. Even though we won militarily, we lost the war. Did we really? Vietnam would look like Japan today if we could have finished our mission and objectives.

The main objective for our leader's involvement in that war, starting with President Truman, was not disclosed to the U.S. citizens in my humble opinion. The objective was a proxy conflict with the Russians and Chinese who provided the enemy's war machine. Vietnam avoided a direct confrontation and mutual mass destruction of us all. That war may have been the most important war in history to preserve the human race.

## LITTLE SAIGON

I happened upon Little Saigon by accident. New to the area, I was driving down Brookhurst Blvd. in Garden Grove, Calif. looking for a short cut to the Beach, and there it was. Vietnamese signs on the storefronts and Vietnamese Civilians walking the streets. Wow! it was definitely a 'wake up call' for me. I noticed a large Vietnamese Market (Saigon City Market) with many S. E. Asian Countries flags flying below Old Glory, including



**Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.**  
**California State Council**  
**16th Biennial State Convention**  
**June 22 - 23, 2018**  
**Radisson Hotel Fresno Conference Center**  
**1055 Nan Ness Ave, Fresno, CA 93721**

Hotel reservations are to be made by chapter delegates and guests through the Radisson hotel direct by: **May 30, 2018**

- ❑ The convention room rate is \$95.00 a night.
- ❑ Local tax is 13.695%.
- ❑ \$108.10 a night all inclusive.
- ❑ This rate is good for up to 3 days before and after the convention dates.

Here is the reservation information that you will need.

- ❑ Reservation phone number to call for our group is: **559-233-6650**
- ❑ Reservation code will be **Vietnam Vets**. Ask for in-house reservations. Please use only that phone number and code to assure your correct pricing, so that the CSC can get proper credit toward our room guarantee and you can get the room that you are looking for.
- ❑ We will have a block of 45 sleeping rooms put aside for the weekend.
- ❑ Our reservation cutoff date is **May 30, 2018**, so you need to act immediately and phone for your reservation at the Radisson Hotel Fresno Conference Center.
- ❑ Room reservations received after **May 30, 2018**, will be on a space available basis and may not be at the Convention rate.

Welcome Home Reception on Thursday June 21 starts off the weekend. Early Registration and a Pizza Buffet sponsored by the California Veterans Benefit Fund.

Convention registration, AVVA Luncheon and VVA Banquet reservation information and other needed forms will be handled through the appropriate Convention Committees and are available on the CSC web site [www.vvacalsc.com](http://www.vvacalsc.com) as they are published.

the now Extinct South Vietnamese flag in the shopping center. After circling the block several times and observing for a while from my parking spot, I ventured inside. This was a very big move on my part, in fact, I was very Leery and yet I felt compelled to enter. I had not been around any Vietnamese people since I left Viet Nam 45 years ago. I did visit several small Vietnamese stores in my working days. I knew their Nationality but Never disclosed I was a Viet Nam Vet. I remember the store owners & clerks as being very friendly, courteous & good business people.

Upon entering the market, I was totally 'back in



country'. The sing-song of the Vietnamese language being spoken, the mixture of traditional and casually dressed Ladies, young And old, and some dressed in beautiful Vietnamese Ao Dai dresses of all colors, Mama-san pushing shopping carts wearing black pajama bottoms and traditional Straw hats( Non La) with flip flops. Children dressed nicely and Papa-san sipping tea at the lunch counter, just passing time. Then there was the old ARVN (Army of the Republic of Viet Nam) soldier with the Viet Nam Vet hat on, whom I thanked for his service.

I am not used to being around these Vietnamese people unarmed and without other Marines in the area, it was just an unnatural act for me and I certainly was very uncomfortable. I also noticed that I was the only 'non-national' in the store. Back in Viet Nam, you did not go anywhere alone, ever, and you always had a backup plan. I was keenly aware of the different smells, the sound of Vietnamese being spoken and the wide variety of items and People, not seen by me in 45 years. It was Amazing! This S. E. Asian market had giant carrots, 2 pounds each, mud fish steaks, roasted and lightly salted seaweed, canned bamboo shoots, black organic fungus strips, pork uterus,



sold by the lb. alongside frying chickens with head and feet attached. Preserved boneless snake head fish in brine, Fish sauce, and a great variety of teas for all purposes including 'Horney Goat' and Artichoke for your wellbeing. A whole row of different kinds of rice led me into a vast array of specialty shops with everything from beauty creams, current Viet Newspapers & magazines from Ho Chi Mein City (still Saigon here) to Hanoi and a Buddhist Monk





taking donations at the door. To see such a variety and abundance of so many foods and necessities available to this Vietnamese community was highly unusual, but a real Good feeling to me. The whole area was very clean and the children did not chase you down looking for candy, trinkets or cigarettes. There was a beggar at the corner, and "Yikes!", He was crouched down in the submissive S. E. Asian begging position with hand outstretched & head bowed in shame.

The first people I noticed were the older Men & Ladies. Mama-san was old & wrinkly and some had traditional dress on, including triangular straw Non Las, This brought me right back to `the day`, but something was not right. They just were not the same. After a few trips back to Little Saigon, I realized the missing ingredient, `Betel Nut`. All these elderly Viet Seniors had shiny white teeth and beautiful grandmotherly smiles. They were looking happy & even making eye contact occasionally. The drug they used to chew for relief & mellowness back home is not available to them here in the U. S. In fact, some of the younger generation Vietnamese have never heard of it. Many older Vietnamese Villagers `In Country` would chew betel nut and their teeth and gums would turn a tary dark Black color. It was quite a sight for a person who brushed his teeth often and saw a dentist once a year.

When I first arrived in Da Nang, RVN in late 1967, I was immediately flown directly to Chu Lai, Marine Air Base where I joined my Marine Phantom (F4-B) squadron, VMFA-115, MAG-13. Wow!! I had seen very few Asian People at my young age, let alone, the Vietnamese People. They were all over the place on my 1st day of duty, Digging sandbags for bunkers and scurrying around their guarded area, always looking down but laughing and talking like no one I have ever heard. They were all 2 feet shorter than I was and dressed in faded, face covering Non Las, loose fitting clothes and sandals. They avoided direct eye contact when they did look up and I was told right from the start to watch them constantly. By mid- afternoon, these workers were paid, loaded into trucks (6 ply's) and taken off the base.

After a while in Viet Nam I got to know a few of these `little people` fairly well. They would show up at the front gate in the morning, put in a full day's work and leave always before dark. No Local Civilians were ever left on base at night. They would go home to their bamboo huts or hooch's and small bowls of rice and be killed or threatened by the Viet Cong almost constantly. Their schoolhouses, which we built for them (MAG-13, An Tan, '68) and villages were burnt down quite often. Village elders were executed and sons and fathers were whisked away by the North Vietnamese Army to be forced into service against their own family. The VC or NVA would confiscate what little rice, vegetables or animals they had.

These Viet Civilians would be back at the base the next morning, ready to go to work. If they sided with the Communist, life would be a lot easier for them. By coming to our front gate daily, they were certainly going to be targeted as U. S. supporters, or they could be a spy for the Viet Cong. We positively could not tell the good people from the bad, so, we treated them all equally.

I had Perimeter Guard duty quite often during my tour at Chu Lai. I distinctly remember driving our 6-by past the dump in the mornings and seeing many Vietnamese locals lining the road waiting for anything edible to be dropped off. The mostly older mama-sans and children were starving and were not allowed in that area, But we Marines, sometimes looked the other way. We always had to be very careful about what was left behind because the VC would use everything they could find against us when possible. Day old SOS and bread or vegetables were a Treasure for the locals, Old batteries and tin cans could be Deadly to us if in the wrong hands. We always searched them as they left the area.

At the Civic Center in Westminster, Calif. The Vietnamese have built a wonderful Memorial for their fallen soldiers and all Allied Forces of the Viet Nam War. The American Flag and POW Flag fly alongside the now fallen South Vietnam Flag. The grounds are always kept very clean and a few of my Viet Nam Veteran buddies and I stop by occasionally. I attended the 39th anniversary of the Fall of Saigon at this site by the invitation of several ARVN veterans (dressed in full military gear) from my Viet Nam era (67-69) and location (Chu Lai, I corps). The whole ceremony was in Vietnamese until the last speaker said in English, "We are here tonight to share the shame and humiliation of losing our Beautiful country to the Communists. We, who managed to escape, thank the USA for taking us in. "We will never return to Viet Nam while the Communist still rule". Then a beautiful young Vietnamese woman dressed in a traditional Ao Dai read the names of at least 50 Vietnamese Officers and enlisted soldiers and their entire families who were either executed

or committed suicide the day of or shortly after the North Vietnamese Takeover (The Fall of Saigon, 30 April, 1975) . There are thousands of names on that list.

When I left Viet Nam in late 1969, I thought that we were winning and I would probably return someday to experience this gorgeous country after the conflict. Tragically South Viet Nam lost their War and so did All Vietnam Nam Vets. We each handle it differently. I know one Vietnam Veteran that has been back to his battleground (Hue) two times and is considering a third visit. It is a healing process for him. I also have Vietnam Vet friends that will never go to Little Saigon or back to Viet Nam period!

Pho is a traditional Vietnamese noodle soup that is positively delicious. I have tried several of the small Pho eateries in the Little Saigon area. They are all- neat and clean but the real small ones may be trouble for a Vietnam Vet. The larger ones are wide open with plenty of doors and windows and be sure to get the fresh baked hot bread with your order. I always order two glasses of water to start with because after you are served by the hostess they go about their business just like in Viet Nam. They do not "eyeball" or look around much and being noticed by them for a refill is hard. However, believe me, these little ladies know everything that is going on in their business, just like Viet Nam again.

I wore my USMC Vietnam Vet cover to this Vietnam refugee community a while ago. It was the first time except for Military events at the Memorial. I swear the older people seemed actually more friendly to me. I asked a young Vietnamese mother what the words "vui ve" meant. It was on a display of trinkets & toys. She didn't know, so I went on about my business. An hour later, her young son and daughter caught up with me and informed this old man that it meant 'Happy', I was impressed how those children looked all over for me. Is that their way of saying "Thank you " Viet Nam Vet for your help in my Grandfather and Grandmas' Country? I think so.

Although many of the younger Vietnamese speak English, it sometimes can be a real problem. This was the case for us in Viet Nam. Do they really not understand the directions or are they pretending not to get it. This lack of communication could get them or us killed and it did at times. I always take a pen and paper with me to town. If you write it down, they will find someone to help. The Vietnamese seem to go out of their way to be helpful in Little Saigon.

I just heard about another memorial in Little Saigon dedicated to the 'Boat People', a whole new story of suffering and death for these Refugees. It's a must visit for me. I'll get some Pho while I'm there and relax this time and observe this Tragic moment in History. Take it from me GIs, The Vietnamese Women now wear beautifully colored dresses and gowns and have access to all the modern beauty supplies. The children are very polite and as cute as ever walking to school with no fear in their eyes, and the men love to talk with us Viet Nam Vets in English. Little Saigon is probably the only Good thing resulting from the Viet Nam War. The second and third generation of these Allied Refugees seem to have adapted quite nicely to "The World". These fellow American Citizens are now Free of Communism. That was the American Vietnam Soldiers' job in Viet Nam, And We Did it Well!!

During my tour of duty at Chu Lai, R. V. N. I was fortunate enough to be inside the wire every night. I never had to sleep in the Jungle, take cover in a rice paddy or live on a hill like many of my Vietnam Veteran Brothers. I have never taken a Huey into a hot L. Z. and I have never been ambushed in a Vietnamese Village. We were rocketed and mortared and shot at in Chu Lai. And serious injury was a constant threat on our Phantom Flight Line. My F-4B fast movers were shot out of the sky by the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army and the downed aircrews were captured or executed on the ground by Vietnamese. Possibly 1% of the Rage, frustration, sadness, or lack of emotion, that I came home to the 'Real World' with has left me because of this experience in Little Saigon. I hope so!! I have not forgotten my Marines or anyone that did not come home from Viet Nam, and I never will. Semper Fi!!

Sgt. Stephen Cooper P/C F/L  
VMFA-115, MAG-13, Chu Lai, RVN 67-69

## HAROLD K. GRAVES, JR.

May 15, 1941 – January 30, 2018

Harold K. Graves, Jr. passed away peacefully in the arms of his loving wife, Patricia, on January 30, 2018.

Some people are born to be excellent followers. A few are born to be leaders. Harold Graves was a leader. He was born May 15, 1941 in Louisville, Kentucky. Six

weeks later, he and his father, mother and older sister moved to Chickasha, Oklahoma. After four years, they moved to Bartlesville, Oklahoma, where he spent his childhood managing the neighborhood group of children. On any warm summer day, as five or six kids stood in a circle and one asked, "What can we do today?" the whole group looked at Harold. He always had a plan.

In 1952, the family moved to Berkeley, California where he started the sixth grade and then continued, graduating from Berkeley High School. Harold was a leader in the Sea Scouts for several years. The family moved to Mill Valley, California in 1959.

His military life began with basic training at Ft. Ord, California. He was chosen for Officers Candidate School in Georgia, and then went through Jump School and Ranger School. His leadership abilities were evident in 1966 when he was sent to Vietnam and was assigned to the 25th Infantry Division at Cu Chi. His first assignment was with the 2nd of the 27th Infantry Wolfhounds where he had the first platoon in A company. Then, he took over Battalion Recon and was used as a fourth company. He was awarded the Silver Star for conspicuous gallantry in action while leading his men in an attack against a strong North Vietnamese force after being pinned down in intense enemy fire. Though wounded, he led his men in an assault on a bunker, while encouraging his men to follow him. He then directed the evacuation of other wounded to the rear.

In February '67, he became the Aide-de-Camp to the new Assistant Division Commander, BG Edward Flannigan. Two months later they moved into Westmorland's Villa in Saigon. General Flannigan had become the Special Assistant to General Westmorland and it turned out that Harold's only job was to set out the name tags for the evening meal. At his request, he left the next day and went back to the 25th Division and took over the job as Aide-de-Camp to the other ADC, General Don Bolton. He finished out his tour flying every day with General Bolton. During his service, he received the Silver Star, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Viet Nam Service Ribbon, Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star, Air Medal with 11 OLC, and Combat Infantry Badge.

After active duty, he returned to Mill Valley, obtained his Broker's License in Real Estate and managed an office for a large real estate company. He was again, a leader in several capacities during this time, President of the Mill Valley Jaycees, President of the Mill Valley Chamber of Commerce, President of the Mill Valley Rotary Club and President of the Marin County Board of Realtors. He served on the '71-'72 Marin County Grand Jury where they deliberated the fate of Angela Davis and the San Quentin Six. In 1980 he took a complete 180 and decided on early retirement, dropping out of all the organizations with which he had been so completely involved.

In September of 2001 he and his wife, Patricia, bought a home in Nevada City, and he became very involved in the community. He loved living in Nevada County and was most proud of the way veterans were made to feel particularly welcome. He joined the Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 535, in 2002 and served as their President for a total of four years. He was also a proud honorary member of the Blue Knight Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club where he made many true and loyal friends. Their many rides across the US were some of the



highlights of his life.

Harold will be forever remembered by the 'love of his life' his wife, Patricia, and his loving daughters Jennifer (Mark) and Kerry (Geheris), and his four wonderful grandchildren, Katy, Rebecca, Taylor and Ashley. He will also be truly missed by his sister, Nancy, his nephew Scott (Kristen), his niece Stacey (David) and several great nieces and nephews. Among those who will forever remember him are his loyal friends, Stu Fisher, Wells Rasmussen, Bob Troutt and Chris Lopiccolo.



Many thanks go to James E. Irons, MD of the VA Sierra Foothills Outpatient Clinic in Auburn who was not only his doctor but also his friend, and to the wonderful staff of Hospice of the Foothills, particularly his nurse, Erica.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a memorial donation to: Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 535, P.O. Box 37, Grass Valley, CA 95945.

A grave-side service was held at the New Elm Ridge Cemetery in Grass Valley on Saturday, February 17th.

## WILLIAM F. GAVITT. JR.

Colonel USAF (Ret)

September 14, 1934 - March 4, 2018



William (Bill), 83, passed away at home in Riverside, California with his wife and daughter by his side. Bill is survived by his wife of 60 years, Shirleyann Ashton; his sons, Jeff (Terry) and Greg (Connie); daughter, Lori and grandchildren, Lisa and Katie Gavitt and Lucas (Nancy) Jones, all of Southern California. He was predeceased by his parents, William F. Gavitt, Sr. and Mary Isabelle Chapman, his brother John Robert Gavitt, Sr. and his sister, Isabelle Gavitt Larkin.

Bill was born in Westerly, Rhode Island, graduated from Westerly High School in 1951 and from Dartmouth College in 1955. He was commissioned as a Lieutenant in the Air Force in May 1956. He served most of his 30-year career in the Strategic Air Command in Ballistic Missile Operations working with the Atlas, Titan and Minuteman Missile programs. Bill also earned a Master's Degree in Economics from South Dakota State University and was a Distinguished Graduate from the Naval War College in Newport, RI. He served overseas in Kaiserslautern, Germany and Da Nang, Vietnam as well as on nine USAF bases in ND, SD, KS, TX, AL and twice at March AFB and finally at Norton AFB in CA. He traveled to all 50 states and 19 countries during his career and retired from active duty in July 1986.

After retiring Bill became known as the "Constant Volunteer" serving on numerous military and civic boards. He was a life member of the Military Officers Assn. of America (MOAA) serving as President of the Riverside Chapter, Chairman of the Board of Governors, State Director for the Inland Empire Chapters, CA Council Secretary, VP and Pres. and served a six year term on the National Board of Directors for MOAA's 375,000 members. He worked tirelessly and lobbied state and federal politicians for veterans' rights, pay and benefits. He was also a member of the Disabled American Vets, Vets of Foreign Wars, Vietnam Vets of America Chapter 47, AF Missileers, Fifteenth AF Assn. and the American Legion.

He was a Board Member of the March Field Air Museum, President of the Riverside Museum Assn., Exec. Advisory Comm. of Riverside National Cemetery, member of the Military Affairs Comm. of the Riverside Chambers of Commerce, President of the International Relations Council, Board Member of SoCal Sister Cities International, chaired the March Economic Dev. Coalition, and was appointed by five US Secretaries of Commerce as a member of the SoCal District Export Council.

The Gavitts resided in Riverside, in Park Granada for 35 happy years where Bill served on the Homeowners Assn. Bd. for most of those as President, VP, Secy., committee member and unofficial rose bush trimmer.

In addition to nearly 65 years of service to his country and community, Bill still had plenty of time to devote to his family. With Shirley by his side, they came home from Germany where their three children were born. They lived and traveled all over the country as the Air Force transferred them from base to base. He and Shirley were inseparable with the exception of the year he was sent to Vietnam in 1964. Bill volunteered as a Cub and Boy Scout leader and Little League umpire for Jeff and Greg and even helped with the Brownies, Girl Scouts and Daughters of the American Revolution with Lori. They never missed a baseball or football game or any of the track meets their kids ran in and attendance at the dinner table was mandatory, which we all enjoyed and will surely miss.

## HELICOPTER MEMORIAL

### VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOT AND CREWMEMBER MONUMENT TO BE DEDICATED APRIL 18

Dedication ceremony of the Vietnam Helicopter



Pilot and Crewmember Monument at Arlington National Cemetery took place on April 18, 2018, at 4:00 p.m.

This important monument honors the nearly 5,000 helicopter crew who perished while operating rotary-wing aircraft during the Vietnam War. It is the first monument dedicated exclusively to those helicopter pilots and crewmembers who died while serving in combat.

First proposed in 2014, the effort to create the monument was led by Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association and championed by Rep. Mark Amodei (R-NV), Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), and Sen. Dan Sullivan (R-AK).

The monument is located along Memorial Drive at Arlington National Cemetery.

Sincerely,  
John Rowan  
VVA National President

## MIA RETURNS

### 50 YEARS AFTER HE WENT MISSING, A VIETNAM WAR AIRMAN COMES HOME

By Richard Stradling

Nearly 50 years after he went missing when his plane was shot down during the Vietnam War, Air Force Col. Edgar Felton Davis returned to North Carolina on Thursday to be buried next to his wife.

His remains arrived to a hero's welcome at Raleigh-Durham International Airport on an American Airlines



flight from Dallas. Water cannons from two RDU fire trucks arched over the plane as it pulled up to the gate, where a six-member honor guard from Seymour Johnson Air Force Base waited. About 130 motorcycles, members of the N.C. Patriot Guard Riders, escorted the hearse to Goldsboro, where Davis will be buried Friday with full military honors at the Eastern Carolina State Veterans Cemetery, under the flight path for the Air Force base.

Martha Sue Davis did not live long enough to welcome her husband home, but their three children were there, among about 20 family members who stood in the shadow of the Airbus jet's wing while his flag-covered coffin emerged from the cargo hold.

Born and raised in Goldsboro, Davis graduated from N.C. State University in 1958 just before joining the Air Force.

He was 32 and a navigator on a night photo reconnaissance mission over Laos when the RF-4C Phantom fighter-bomber was shot down by anti-aircraft artillery on Sept. 17, 1968. The pilot ejected and was later rescued, but Davis was declared missing in action when efforts to find him or the plane failed.

Davis was later declared dead, according to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, which announced Jan. 18 that Davis had been found.

According to the agency, a joint U.S. and Laotian team visited a crash site thought to be his plane six times between 2001 and 2015, but did not turn up any human remains.

Then, in 2015, the Defense Intelligence Agency received a tip from a Laotian man who said his father had come across the remains of a U.S. pilot in 1968 and buried them near his house. The man turned over bone fragments, which the POW/MIA agency identified as Davis using DNA that matched his family.

The remains of Col. Edgar Felton Davis, who was shot down over Laos in 1968, received a hero's welcome



at Raleigh-Durham International Airport on Thursday. He was buried in his hometown of Goldsboro Friday.

Hundreds of people were involved in Davis' homecoming Thursday, including the honor guard from the 4th Fighter Wing at Seymour Johnson and volunteers with the USO of North Carolina who tended to the family's needs. Police, sheriff's deputies and State Highway Patrol officers cleared traffic along the route to Goldsboro, and firefighters saluted from bridges as the procession passed.

The Patriot Guard will escort any veteran's funeral at a family's request, and volunteers are usually riding somewhere in the state every day of the week, said Charles Bullock, a Vietnam veteran from Knightdale who is the group's assistant state captain. Bullock said he wasn't surprised by the turnout Thursday, given the circumstances.

"A man coming home after 50 years, it's not hard," he said.

Bullock said Davis came from a military family. His grandfather served in World War I and his father was killed in World War II, Bullock said. And his two sons, Alan and Edgar Jr., followed their father into the Air Force.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency lists 1,600 Americans as unaccounted for in Southeast Asia as a result of the Vietnam War, including 38 from North Carolina. The agency removes the names of those who are found and places them on another list. Davis became the 27th man to join the list of those whose remains have been identified since 1974.

Read more here: <http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/article207956869.html#storylink=cpy>

## FORMER POW DIES

### EX-SENATOR AND VIETNAM POW WHO BLINKED "TORTURE" IN MORSE CODE DIES

Prisoner of war Jeremiah Denton declared his loyalty to the U.S. government during a 1966 interview for what was supposed to be a propaganda film. But his enraged captors missed his more covert message: "T-O-R-T-U-R-E," blinked into the camera in Morse code, a dispatch that would alert the U.S. military to the conditions he



endured.

Denton, who would survive 7 1/2 years confined in a tiny, stinking, windowless cell at the infamous "Hanoi Hilton" and other camps before his release in 1973, died of heart problems Friday in Virginia Beach, Va., at age 89, his grandson Edward Denton said.

The elder Denton later became the first Republican from Alabama elected to the U.S. Senate since Reconstruction, though the iron will that allowed him to persevere in captivity gave rise to criticism he was too rigid a politician.

In this May 19, 1999 file photo, Retired Admiral Jeremiah Denton is interviewed at his home on Fowl River, Ala. AP Photo/Mobile Register, Bill Starling, File



In July 1965, a month after he began flying combat missions for the U.S. Navy in Vietnam, the Mobile native was shot down near Thanh Hoa. He was captured and recalled his captivity in a book titled "When Hell Was in Session."

"They beat you with fists and fan belts," he told the Los Angeles Times in 1979. "They warmed you up and threatened you with death. Then they really got serious and gave you something called the rope trick." The use of ropes - to cut off circulation in his limbs - left him with no feeling in his fingertips and intense muscle spasms, he said.

Some of the most severe torture came after the 1966 interview, in which he confounded his captors by saying that he continued to fully support the U.S. government, "and I will support it as long as I live."

"In the early morning hours, I prayed that I could keep my sanity until they released me. I couldn't even give in to their demands, because there were none. It was pure revenge," Denton wrote.

The tape was widely seen, and U.S. intelligence experts had picked up the Morse Code message. But Denton theorized later that his captors likely figured it out only after he was awarded the Navy Cross - the second-highest decoration for valor - for the blinks in 1974.

He said his captors never brought him out for another interview. But with the war's end drawing closer, he was released in February 1973.

Navy Cmdr. Jeremiah Denton Jr. had been a prisoner



of war in North Vietnam for nearly 10 months when he was interviewed by a Japanese television reporter on May 2, 1966, as part of a propaganda campaign. During the interview, Denton blinked the word T-O-R-T-U-R-E in Morse code, giving the first clear confirmation that American POWs were being tortured.(National Archives, records of the CIA)

Denton was the senior officer among former POWs who stepped off a plane into freedom at Clark Air Base in the Philippines. Denton epitomized the military spirit as he spoke for the returning soldiers: "We are honored to have had the opportunity to serve our country under difficult circumstances. We are profoundly grateful to our commander-in-chief and to our nation for this day. God bless America."

His words and bearing, beamed back to his country by television, gave heart to the military at a time of increasing uncertainty and bitter division over the course of the war.

He was promoted to rear admiral and retired from the Navy in November 1977. Denton then turned to politics, despite having no experience running for a statewide political office. With Ronald Reagan atop the GOP ticket, Denton became the first Republican elected to the Senate from Alabama since the Reconstruction era following the Civil War.

In Washington, he was a Reagan loyalist, a defender of military might and an advocate for a return to traditional family values and conservative stands on moral issues. But critics said his rigid stands left him no room for political compromise and lessened his influence, limiting his ability to help Alabama.

Denton lost his re-election bid in 1986 by only a fraction of a percentage point.

After his defeat, Denton founded the Coalition for Decency and lectured about family causes. Denton also launched a humanitarian outreach to needy countries through his National Forum Foundation, which arranged shipments of donated goods.

"He was a war hero, an honorable senator, and a family man who cared deeply about his country," said a statement from U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby, who as a Democrat defeated Denton in 1986. Shelby switched to the GOP in 1994 and was elected to a fifth term in 2010.

Arizona Sen. John McCain, who also was held captive as a POW in Vietnam, described Denton as his mentor.

"As a senior ranking officer in prison, Admiral Denton's leadership inspired us to persevere, and to resist our captors, in ways we never would have on our own," McCain said.

Alabama Sen. Jeff Sessions called Denton a "friend, warrior, leader, and hero."

"He was a man of grit and character that can't be manufactured," Sessions said in a statement. "His word was his bond and his loyalty was unshakable."

In later years, Denton lived in Williamsburg, Va., but he still appeared at patriotic gatherings. In November 2008, an emotional Denton watched at Battleship Memorial Park in Mobile, Ala., as a newly restored A-6 Intruder fighter/bomber - like the one he flew over North Vietnam - was rolled out in his honor.

Denton's grandson, Edward, said that on one hand, Denton was a normal grandfather who enjoyed taking his grandchildren fishing aboard his boat in Mobile. "On the other hand," he said, "he was a war hero and someone who set an example for being what being a good, patriotic American is all about."

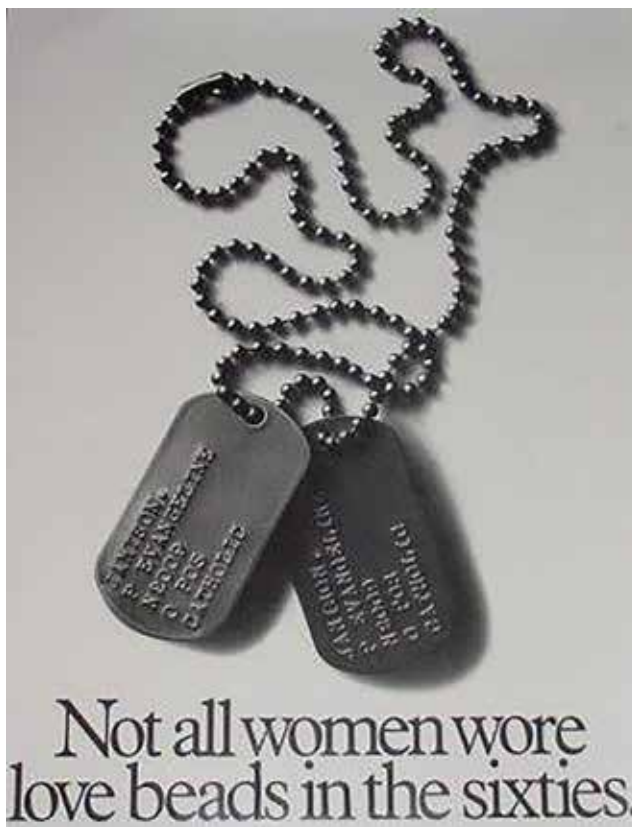
CBS affiliate WKRG reports that Denton, a native of Mobile, attended McGill Institute and Spring Hill College before graduating from the Naval Academy.

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## FEMALE VIETNAM CASUALTIES

Below is a list of the female casualties for the Vietnam War.

### 1ST LT. SHARON ANN LANE - ON THE WALL AT 23W 112



Lt. Lane died from shrapnel wounds when the 312th Evac. at Chu Lai was hit by rockets on June 8, 1969. From Canton, OH, she was a month short of her 26th birthday. She was posthumously awarded the Vietnamese Gallantry Cross with Palm and the Bronze Star for Heroism. In 1970, the recovery room at Fitzsimmons Army Hospital in Denver, where Lt. Lane had been assigned before going to Viet Nam, was dedicated in her honor. In 1973, Aultman Hospital in Canton, OH, where Lane had attended nursing school, erected a bronze statue of Lane. The names of 110 local servicemen killed in Vietnam are on the base of the statue.

### 2ND LT. PAMELA DOROTHY DONOVAN - ON THE WALL AT 53W 043

Lt. Donovan, from Allston, MA, became seriously ill and died on July 8, 1968. She was assigned to the 85th Evac. in Qui Nhon. She was 26 years old.

### LT. COL. ANNIE RUTH GRAHAM - ON THE WALL AT 48W 012

Chief Nurse at 91st Evac. Hospital, Tuy Hoa. From Efland, NC, she suffered a stroke in August 14, 1968 and was evacuated to Japan where she died four days later. A veteran of both World War II and Korea, she was 52.

### CAPT. MARY THERESE KLINKER - ON THE WALL AT 01W 122

Capt. Klinker, a flight nurse assigned to Clark Air Base in the Philippines, was on the C-5A Galaxy which crashed on April 4 outside Saigon while evacuating Vietnamese orphans. This is known as the Operation Babylift crash. From Lafayette, IN, she was 27. She was posthumously awarded the Airman's Medal for Heroism and the Meritorious Service Medal.

### 2ND LT. CAROL ANN ELIZABETH DRAZBA - ON THE WALL AT 05E 046

### 2ND LT. ELIZABETH ANN JONES - ON THE WALL AT 05E 047

Lt. Drazba and Lt. Jones were assigned to the 3rd Field Hospital in Saigon. They died in a helicopter crash near Saigon, February 18, 1966. Drazba was from Dunmore, PA, Jones from Allendale, SC. Both were 22 years old.

### CAPT. ELEANOR GRACE ALEXANDER - ON THE WALL AT 31E 008

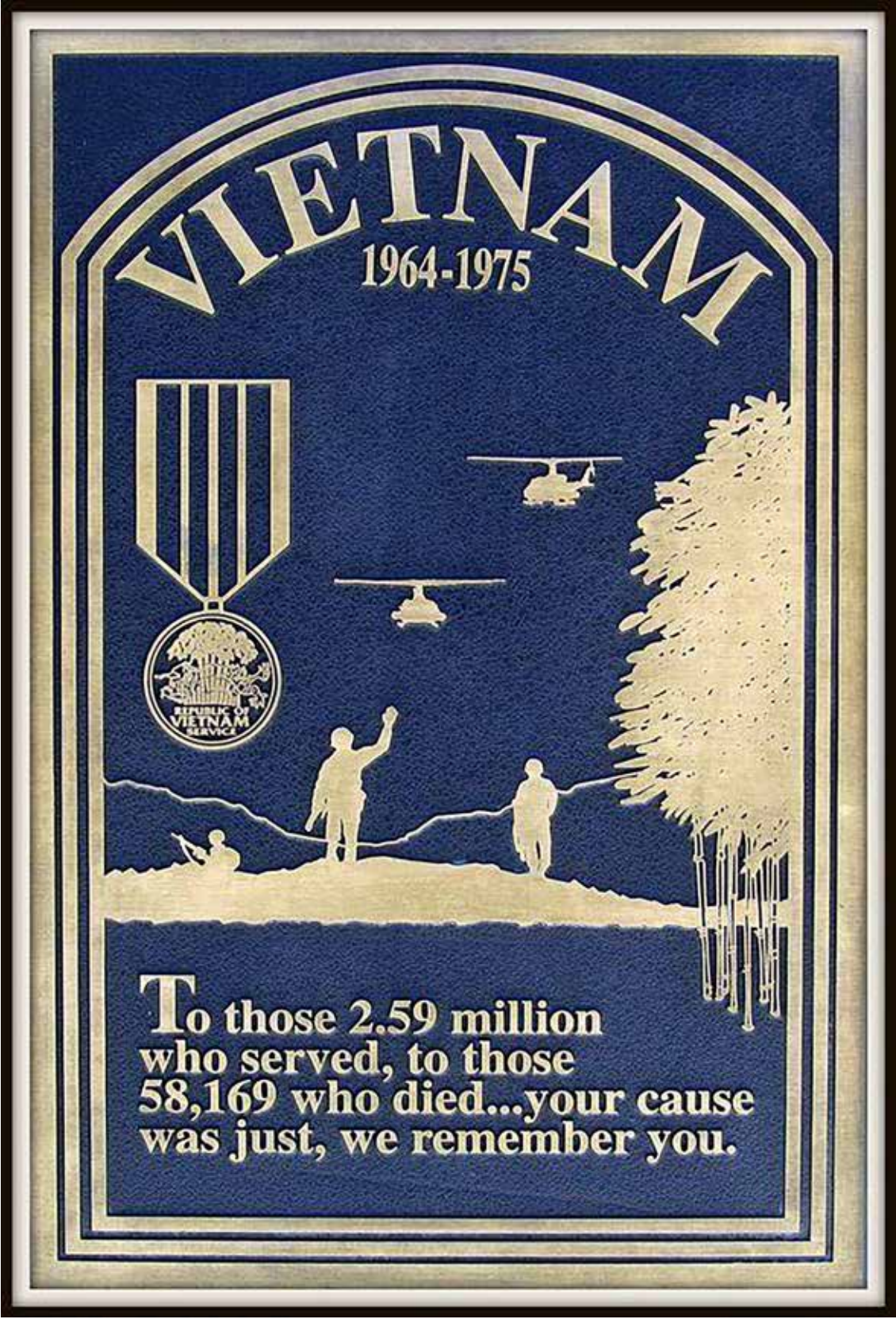
### 1ST LT. HEDWIG DIANE ORLOWSKI - ON THE WALL AT 31E 015

Capt. Alexander of Westwood, NJ, and Lt. Orłowski of Detroit, MI, died November 30, 1967. Alexander, stationed at the 85th Evac., and Orłowski, stationed at the 67th Evac. in Qui Nhon, had been sent to a hospital in Pleiku to help out during a push. With them when their plane crashed on the return trip to Qui Nhon were two other nurses, Jerome E. Olmstead of Clintonville, WI, and Kenneth R. Shoemaker, Jr. of Owensboro, KY. Alexander was 27, Orłowski 23. Both were posthumously awarded Bronze Stars.

For more information and a complete list of all American, Australian and New Zealand Civilian and Military Women Who Died in the Vietnam War (1959-1975). Please Visit [www.illyria.com](http://www.illyria.com)







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In this issue:  
• Chapter/Council Activities-Events/Photos  
• Legislative News  
• Veteran Info  
And more...

CSC Meeting Dates & Events  
April 27-29, 2018, Fresno, CA  
Convention - June 22-24, 2018, Fresno, CA  
National Leadership - July 24-28, 2018, Palm Springs, CA  
August 24-26, 2018, Fresno, CA  
**Zephyr deadlines 5 weeks prior to each CSC meeting**