



Vietnam Veterans of America Sammy L. Davis Chapter 295



March 2019 Newsletter



National Vietnam War Veterans Day

is a US holiday observed annually on March 29. It recognizes veterans who served in the US military during the Vietnam War. It should not be confused with Veterans Day. Thank you to every Vietnam Veteran for your service and the freedoms we have today.



VVA 295 Officers

President	Larry Shaw
Vice President	Bob Parsons
Secretary	Mike Dolan
Treasurer	Wes Anderson
Chaplain	Fred Bishop

Board of Directors

Steve Anderson	Jim Finney
Mike Hamm	Steve Mabrey
Dennis Smalling	Tom Madden
Wallace Vaughn	Ken Walters

AVVA Liaisons

Holly Tookolo	Tony Gigli
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VVA Service Officer

Dennis Smalling
smallingindy@sbcglobal.net
Thursday 8am-12pm
Sunday 10am-2pm
By appointment, 317-313-1577

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 269279, Indianapolis, IN 46226-9279

Phone: 317-547-4748

Physical Address: 9450 E. 59th Street, Indianapolis, IN 46216

Website: www.vva295.com

Meetings are the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm; Board Meeting 6:00pm

Newsletter Editor: Holly Tookolo If you have any information for the newsletter, the deadline is the last day of the month—email me: htookolo@indy.rr.com

Important Dates

- Mar 4-8** Bunker is setup at Roudebush VA; Call Steve 317-459-6255 to help loading/unloading van.
Mar 7 Free Talk about Indiana War Memorial at Indiana Landmarks Center, 1201 Central Ave, Indy, 6-7pm, call to register by Mar 4 at 317-639-4534
- Mar 10** Daylight Saving Time begins; move clocks forward 1 hour
Mar 13 VVA 295 Board Meeting 6pm; Regular Meeting is 7pm
Mar 16 VVA Indiana State Council, 12 noon in Indy; finance mtg at 10:30am
Mar 17 St. Patrick's Day
Mar 20 First day of Spring
Mar 29 Remember the 51 Hoosiers Still Missing from Vietnam,, Memorial Brick Dedication at Monument Circle North Quad 11:30am, Rolling Thunder Indiana Chapter 1 will perform their Roll Call Ceremony in honor of Indiana's Vietnam War MIA's; reception at Indiana War Memorial following this program.
- Mar 29** National Vietnam War Veterans Day
April 1-5 Bunker is setup at Roudebush VA; Call Steve 317-459-6255 to help loading/unloading van.
April 6 VVA Indiana State Council , 12 noon in South Bend; finance mtg at 10:30am
April 10 VVA 295 Board Meeting 6pm; Regular Meeting is 7pm

THIS DATE IN HISTORY

- Mar 2, 1961** Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with "1960 Device" is authorized by the government of the Republic of Vietnam for members of the U.S. armed forces who serve in Vietnam for a minimum of six months.
- Mar 23, 1962** The first U.S. Army regular unit, the 39th Signal Battalion, arrives in Vietnam.
- Mar 11, 1965** U.S. Navy's Seventh Fleet begins Operation Market Time, the blockade of South Vietnam coastal waters to detect and interdict waterborne infiltration and resupply by seizing/destroying enemy craft.
- Feb 10, 1966** The U.S. 1st Infantry Division and a battalion from the Royal Australian Regiment conduct Operation Rolling Stone to provide security for road building crews on highways in Binh Duong Province, III Corps.
- Mar 3-6, 1966** U.S. 1st Infantry Division conducts Operation Cocoa Beach in Binh Duong Province..
- Mar 19-23, 1966** U.S. Marines and ARVN troops conduct Operation Oregon in Thua Thien Province.
- Mar 1-April 14, 69** U.S. 4th Infantry Division conducts Operation Wayne Grey in Kontum Province.
- Mar 1-Aug 14, 1969** Troops from U.S. 101st Airborne Division and 1st ARVN Division conduct Operation Kentucky Jumper, a continuation of Nevada Eagle aimed at eliminating enemy base areas, lines of communication and infiltration routes in Thua Thien Province.
- Mar 30-May 29, 1969** U.S. 7th and 26 Marine Regiments conduct Operation Oklahoma Hills to clear North Vietnamese troops from the area southwest of Danang in Quang Nam Province.



The Bunker

Hours: 10am—2pm on Sunday.

Your purchases support VVA 295 and Fort Harrison Veterans Center.
The Bunker will be setup at Roudebush VA on March 4—8.
Call Steve if you are going to help load/unload, 317-459-6255.

President's Message:

Greetings Everyone,

I take that all of you are doing well, as we have never heard from anyone when asked.

It is a few short days till spring, but Old Man Winter does not want to give up his hold on us. I am going to keep this short for now, possible next month there will be more.

Daylight Savings Time begins Sunday the 10th.

St. Patrick's Day on Sunday the 17th.

National Vietnam Veterans Day on Friday the 29th. I urge all VVA and AVVA members to gather with other Vietnam Veterans on the North side of Monument Circle for Brick Laying Ceremony at 11:30am. Refreshments will be served later at the Indiana War Memorial. To all Vietnam Brothers and Sisters, "WELCOME HOME"! You served honorably.

Ask not what your Chapter can do for you, but ask what you can do for your Chapter.

May God Bless America, our Troops and you.

In Patriotism,

Larry Shaw

765-618-4067



Boots in Service

In South Carolina they discovered that there were Veterans in need of medical services who would refuse treatment due to the lack of options for their pets. After the idea for the program was hatched by Veterans Affairs social workers and Pawmetto Lifeline, a shelter that will provide pet care for the program, it was backed by Governor Henry McMaster and funded by the Michael J. Mungo Foundation. This program will provide the pets of Veterans in need of health care with boarding, foster homes, medical services and training free of charge.

VA Parking Lot Suicides

Veterans are taking their own lives on VA hospital campuses, a desperate form of protest against a system that they feel has not helped them. Veterans are 1.5 times as likely as civilians to die by suicide. Sixty-two percent of Veterans, or 9 million people, depend on VA's vast hospital system, but accessing it can require navigating a frustrating bureaucracy. "Veterans who take their own lives on VA grounds often intend to send a message." says Eric Caine, Director of Injury Control Research Center for Suicide Prevention at University of Rochester. Caine said, "It is very important for the VA to recognize that the place of a suicide can have great meaning." The VA now trains parking lot attendants and patrols on suicide prevention efforts. Veterans Crisis Line 800-273-8255 and press 1 to talk to someone; or send a text message to 838255 to connect with a VA responder.



VVA Member Pat Parrish is asking for prayers for his friend Dennis who is having surgery. Thank you.



Daylight Saving Time begins on Sunday, March 10, 2019 at 2:00 A.M. Remember to "spring forward" in the spring and set your clocks forward one hour (i.e. losing one hour).

Vice President's Corner

VVA 295 Brothers and Sisters,



Hope you are all coping with the winter weather...just remember that Spring is not too far away.

At last month's VVA 295 BOD meeting several excellent ideas were proposed. Firstly, we are going to make an effort to get back into some of the schools to better help the students understand the "real" story of Vietnam , which is not necessarily depicted accurately in their textbooks. We did this in years past and found that students were keenly interested in not only the war itself, but the Vietnamese people, their customs, food, religious beliefs and the country of Vietnam it-self. Their questions were insightful and thoughtful, in most cases. As soon as we are "booked" into various schools, we will need VVA Chapter 295 members to volunteer to share their knowledge of the war, country and people with these students. In the past, we have even taken some of the equipment we used as well as photos and literature from the chapter for the students to examine. If you are interested in participating, please let one of the BOD members know so that we can compile a list of willing participants. From experience, I can tell you that it is a very rewarding experience.

Another excellent suggestion was presented , at the BOD meeting, and is one that we intend to try at March's chapter meeting.

Past chapter president, Gene Gigli often said that although we were all sent to the same war, once there we all had vastly different experiences, not to mention, duties and responsibilities. I for one, am unaware of what many of you did while serving in Vietnam. While there, I, like I am sure many of you, concentrated on my job alone. Obviously many of you were involved with front line combat units but for every one front line troop there were, I have read, eight others who served in support capacities. Some drove trucks, while others flew in various aircraft, served on ships, patrolled waterways, built bridges, unloaded, loaded and distributed supplies, monitored enemy communications or dealt with the mountains of paperwork multitude of other jobs that need-ed done. Many of us don't have a clue of what each other did or was responsible for.

So...each month a chapter member is going to briefly describe his or her duties and experiences while in Vietnam in order to give us all a better understanding and appreciation of the individual service of our fellow chapter members. I think that it should be interesting and informative.

Now the bad news: I have been "volunteered" to initiate this program at the March meeting and hopefully the description of what I did in country, while not all that exciting, won't lull you into sleep. (You might want to bring a book to read during my presentation). Honestly, I think that this should add some interest to our meet-ings and give us a better understanding and appreciation of what others experienced. Please consider volun-teering to share your experiences at a future meeting so that we all can better appreciate your service.

I know that this sounds like a "broken record" but the chapter is in dire need of income to keep the Veteran's center functioning. if you have any ideas on fundraising, possible grants or outright donations please make them known. We need your help and input. And a reminder: Any chapter member is welcome to address any concerns or ideas to the BOD as a whole or to an individual BOD member. This is YOUR chapter and the only way we can properly guide it is through YOUR input. Every member of this is important and deserves to have his or her voice heard.

Until the next meeting take care of yourselves (and your fellow vets).

God Bless America

Bob Parsons VVA 295 Vice-President

Phu-Bai, Vietnam, 66-67-68

Our debt to the heroic men and valiant women in the service of our country can never be repaid. They have earned our undying gratitude. America will never forget their sacrifices. ~ Harry S. Truman

Roudebush VA Medical Center is needing volunteer drivers. Veterans Transportation Service provides Veterans a ride to their medical center or outlying clinic. This is a great way to help Veterans. To volunteer, visit or call Volunteer Services, 317-988-2734 or call driver Pat Parrish, 317-632-4263 (he's a VVA member). Most recently members Bob Parsons and Mark Fix have become volunteers Thank you Pat, Bob and Mark.

Food Drive for HVAF

Bring non-perishable food to the next meeting for HVAF (Hoosier Veterans Assistance Foundation) for the Veterans they are helping. What they need the most is canned meat & tuna, pasta and noodles. You can visit their website to see what they do. <http://www.hvafofindiana.org/>

HVAF needs volunteers. Volunteers help sort and stock donations that come to HVAF. They provide essential services to Veterans to help promote them towards self-sufficiency. Volunteers also beautify housing properties by raking leaves, painting and landscaping. Call 317-951-0688 or email hvaf@hvaf.org

Company/Coffee All Veterans WWII to present day are invited for free coffee & safe space to share. Come every Tuesday 10am—2pm at Higher Grounds Coffee Shop inside Geist Christian Church, Promise Rd & 126th St. Fishers. If you have questions, contact John Smitha 317-439-6304 or jonsmitha@comcast.net

Supreme Court to decide the fate of cross-shaped WWI memorial in Maryland



A 40-foot, 16-ton Latin cross on public land in Bladensburg, Maryland, is the next major legal test for the Constitutional separation of church and state. The Supreme Court will consider on Feb 27 whether the memorial, erected in 1925 to honor 49 Americans who fought in World War I, improperly promotes Christianity at government expense. Big Picture: What the nine justices decide could have a sweeping impact on communities nationwide, where historic war memorials and government buildings bearing religious imagery are commonplace. The Supreme Court decision may not come until June.

Purple Heart Recipients Will Move to Front of Line for VA Claims, Wilkie Says

Purple Heart recipients will soon take priority in the queue for Department of Veterans Affairs claims adjudication, VA Secretary Robert Wilkie announced Tuesday. In a hearing before the House Appropriations Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Subcommittee, Wilkie said veterans who have earned the Purple Heart will be placed "at the front of the line when it comes to claims before the department."



According to Wilkie, the change is in "recognition of wounds taken in battle."

He didn't provide details on how the change will be implemented but said it is among the many improvements the department is making as part of the claims and appeals modernization effort.

VA Launches New Process for Claims

The VA launched a new process for handling compensation claims appeals Feb. 19, with a goal of reducing the wait time for a final decision from three to seven years to roughly four months.

The new process, created under the Appeals Modernization Act, gives veterans three choices for appealing their claim, including providing new evidence to the original reviewer; having a more senior adjudicator re-view the decision; and appealing to the Board of Veterans Appeals.

Wilkie described the change as part of a 21st-century transformation at the department.

The VA appeals backlog, which will be handled by the legacy system of appealing decisions to the board, stands at roughly 402,000 cases.

The new system will not only be used for disability compensation claims decisions, it will tackle decisions on education and insurance applications, vocational rehabilitation, caregiver benefits and claims with the National Cemetery Administration, according to the VA.



School Pulls Out Of American Legion Coloring Contest Over 'Inappropriate' Image

Military veterans said they felt disrespected after a New Jersey school district opted not to participate in an annual American Legion coloring contest because school administrators didn't approve of this year's picture.

The coloring page is titled "The Four Pillars of the American Legion" and features soldiers in 1919, 1965, and 2019 military uniforms carrying guns appropriate for that period in history. An unarmed nurse in a 1941 uniform is also featured, along

with a banner honoring the centennial anniversary of the American Legion. The picture also has a POW/MIA logo and a "battlefield cross," which is a pair of boots with a rifle standing up and a helmet hanging off it. It is used to symbolize a soldier killed in the line of duty.

The New Jersey American Legion puts on the Americanism Award coloring contest for fourth and fifth grade students around the state every year. But this year, Glen Rock Public Schools informed American Legion Post 145 that they felt the picture to be colored was "inappropriate" because of the guns in the image. American Legion Post 145 Vice Commander Ken Frank said that Hamilton School had contacted the post and told them that unless they changed the image, their students wouldn't be participating in the competition.

"We are very upset, and we feel disrespected," Frank said. "There wasn't any reason given, and there hasn't been another school in the state, that we've heard of, that's refused to use the picture."

Glen Rock Schools Superintendent Bruce Watson said it was a district-wide decision, the North Jersey Record reported.

Glen Rock Board of Education President Sharon Scarpelli said that the decision was made by the school administrators, who then informed the school board.

"The administration had asked if they could be provided with a different picture. They were concerned over the display of guns in the picture," Scarpelli explained in an email to the North Jersey Record.

New Jersey American Legion Adjutant John Baker said that Glen Rock is the first school district to voice any concern about the contest picture.

**CAROLINE SCOTT HARRISON CHAPTER,
DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
REMEMBERS THE 51 HOOSIERS
STILL MISSING IN ACTION
FROM THE VIETNAM WAR**



You are cordially invited to attend a dedication ceremony presented by
The Daughters of the American Revolution

**Honoring Indiana's
Fifty-One Vietnam War MIA**

**Memorial Brick Dedication
Friday, March 29, 2019*
11:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon**

Monument Circle North Quadrant

Honored Guests

Families of MIA Veterans
Vietnam War Veterans

Keynote Speakers

CW5 Peter Lautzenheiser,
U.S. Army (Ret.)
and Joy Brinduse

National League of Family Members
Siblings of

SP5 Michael Lautzenheiser, MIA

Reception following ceremony

Indiana War Memorial
Shoop Hall

Hosted by the
Caroline Scott Harrison Chapter,
National Society

Daughters of the American Revolution

* Inclement weather date:
Monday, April 1, 2019