



# Vietnam Veterans of America Sammy L. Davis Chapter 295



## October 2020 Newsletter

### VVA 295 Officers

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### AVVA Liaison

Tony Gigli	Anthony.gigli@gmail.com	317-965-1976
Holly Tookolo	htookolo@indy.rr.com	317-294-4607

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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    317-844-3554 or cell 317-294-4607  
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# Important Dates

- Oct 5-9 & 12-16** Bunker will be setup at Roudebush VA Medical Center; Volunteers needed
- Oct 12** Columbus Day
- Oct 14** VVA 295 Board Meeting 6pm; Regular Meeting is 7pm
- Oct 17** VVA Indiana State Council meeting 11am
- Oct 24** Outside Clean Up Day at Ft Harrison Veteran Center. At 12 noon; cookout at 2pm—bring a dish to share.
- Oct 31** Halloween
- Nov 1** Daylight Savings Time ends—turn clock back one hour.
- Nov 11** Veterans Day
- Nov 21** VVA Indiana State Council meeting 11am—Thanksgiving meal; bring dish to share.
- Nov 26** Thanksgiving

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## THIS DATE IN HISTORY

- Oct 24, 1955** Lt General Samuel T. Williams replaces General John W. O’Daniel as senior U.S. Army officer in Vietnam and as commander of MAAG-Indochina, he renames it U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group-Vietnam. MAAG will concentrate on preparing the South Vietnamese armed forces for a conventional attack from North Vietnam.
- Oct 14, 1962** An Air Force reconnaissance flight photographs nuclear armed Soviet missiles in Cuba, causing a major showdown between President Kennedy and Soviet Premier Khrushchev that results in what will become known as the Cuban Missile Crisis.
- Oct 1 1964** U.S. Fifth Special Forces Group deploys to Vietnam from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to oversee Special Forces operations in country.
- Oct 7, 1964** Former Vice President Richard Nixon claims that Vietnam will be lost within a year and all of Southeast Asia within three years if the U.S. does not quickly change its policy.
- Oct 1, 1965** The 1st Infantry Division deploys to Vietnam from Fort Riley, Kansas; it will initially be stationed in Bien Hoa Province, III Corps. U.S. Navy establishes support base at Danang.
- Oct 6-Nov 19, 1965** In the first large scale operation since arriving, the 1st Air Cavalry Division (Airmobile) joins with South Vietnamese marines to conduct Operation Happy Valley, a search and clear operation conducted in Binh Dinh Province, II Corps
- Oct 1, 1966** The U.S. Air Force 834th Air Division and 483rd Tactical Air Lift Wing deploy to Vietnam. U.S. Navy begins Operation Sea Dragon to interdict enemy supply vessels in coastal waters off North Vietnam.



### The Bunker

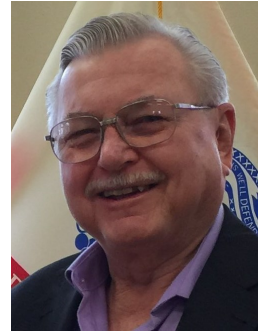
**Hours 10am-2pm Sunday**

Your purchases support VVA 295 and Fort Harrison Veterans Center. The Bunker will be setup at Roudebush VA Medical Center October 5-9 & 12-16. If you want to help load at Vet Center, call Steve 317-459-6255 or help unload/setup on Sunday, Oct 4 morning or pack, load van at VA on Fri afternoon. Help needed Mon thru Fri each week to sell—let Holly know, 317-294-4607..

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**President's Message:**

Hello Brothers and Sisters,



Many of us have never met, yet we wish each other good health, and wealth. The best that life has to offer. But this is far from what many of us has in life. Many have sickness, aches and pains. A life that comes up short on money for bills, food for nourishment, and friends to fight the loneliness of life. Veteran groups like ours, your church, and neighbors can help fight the loneliness. Which in turn might help you with other problems. A smile can warm and heal a heart, and go a long way to enrich our lives.

Have you voted in the past? Are you registered? You have until October the 5th, to register, and then please vote. If you do not vote, then you have no right at all to complain how things are being done. Be it locally in your town, city, county, state, or nation. If you do not vote, that is a slap in the face so to speak of the hundreds of thousands of men and women who fought and died to give you those rights. Millions of oppressed people have died, or been killed over the years wanting to have the freedoms that you have and take for granted. The right to vote. To live where you wish. To work at a job of your choice. To attend church. To educate your children where you chose. To own a car, gun, hunt, fish, travel, and question all government agencies. Learn as much as you can about those running for office, then vote for the one that you feel will best represent you and your community.

Recently we spent some time at the Howard County Vietnam Veterans Organizations grounds for their reunion. Why do I mention this? At our last board meeting Steve asked who was going to help him pack, load the truck at the building, unload and set up in Kokomo. Then sell, reload the truck, then unload and unpack at the building. No response. Steve then stated that he is setting up for two weeks in October, November, and December at the VA, then he is through. He and Patty have ran the Bunker for twenty (20) years. they are tired. Their bodies hurt, and they deserve a life. Steve is the best vendor that the VA has, and they would like for him to set up full time. This is not fair to them, as they do all of this with out pay, to help the Chapter. If not for them, we would not have a building to meet in, lights, water, or heat. Steve is willing to train someone on what to order, and who from. But we need someone to say that they will do it. Plus we need volunteers each day to sell, plus pack, unpack, load and move both ways. I brought this up in our regular meeting, and no volunteers. Yet everyone in the room wants the chapter to remain, and not close. Steve had a surprise, when help showed up to load the truck, unload, and sell. plus reload and unload at the grounds and the building. To all of you that helped, in any way, THANK YOU. This is not a one person chapter, it takes all of us working as a team.

Attend our next meeting, and we might have some good news, on a different subject.

Medal of Honor Recipient Sammy Davis and his wife Dixie were at Kokomo, talking and posing with veterans, plus signing their books. Sammy gave a talk and played his harmonica for both the Sand Box and Vietnam Veterans. After speaking to the Vietnam Vets, he auctioned off his harmonica for \$1,100.00, and donated the money to the grounds.

We also met someone who does catering, does not need an electrical hook up, and is willing to help us with a fund raiser. I wish that you would get motivated into helping the chapter, by fund raisers or working in the Bunker. The Chapter needs you. Your fellow brothers and sisters need you. Most of all, Steve and Patty need you. Please help.

Ask yourselves why has Steve and Patty put in twenty (20) years of their lives in the bunker for the chapter. Why has Holly spent several years doing the news letter, taking care of our finances, working with the service officers and taking care of the building. We have three (3) Service officers to help you and other veterans get your entitlements. Continued on page 4

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**Reminder: The Veteran Magazine is online at [www.vvaveteran.org](http://www.vvaveteran.org)**

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**Vice President's Message:**

Hello VVA 295 Brothers and Sisters,



I would like to thank all of you who drove up to Kokomo to help Steve and Patty with the bunker. I don't know the figures but it seemed that we did pretty well.

At the reunion, our own Holly Tookolo was given a special award for her many years of service to the reunion and to veterans. Holly has received a number of awards recently, all of which are well deserved and in my opinion long overdue. Congratulations, Holly !

As Fall is upon us it is time to spruce up around the Veteran's Center and as the Grounds Committee Chairman I would like to ask all of you to help us on October 24 clean up the grounds around the center. We will need to trim the area with mowers, weed eaters, hedge trimmers and perhaps even chain saws as well as rakes. Bring whatever tools you can.

Our "Operation Clean-up" will begin at noon and wrap up around 2-3pm. We need as many volunteers as possible to accomplish this task so please put the date on your calendars. Lunch will be provided. Please help in this endeavor if you can. Please let me know if you plan to join us either at the October meeting or via email or phone. Thank you in advance.

Bob Parsons VVA 295 VP

Phu-Bai, Vietnam, 1966-67-68

PH: 317-919-7589

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Continued from President's Message, page 3

Plus Tony Gigli, son of past President Gene Gigli, helps to take care of the building also. What motivates them to do as much as they do, as often as they do, and do it free of charge. You Veterans both members, and non members, along with your families. There are other places besides the battle field, where others have your back, and this is just one of them. Do you have their back? Do you care? Please show us that you do, and that all that they do is not for nothing.

Please pray for the safety of our troops stationed around the world, and bring them home to their loved ones. Offer aide and support to their families while they are deployed.

May GOD bless America, our troops, our leaders, and you.

In Comradeship

Larry Shaw

President VVA 295

765-618-4067

[comdshaw@yahoo.com](mailto:comdshaw@yahoo.com)

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**Making Service Dogs Available to Veterans**

Dog Chow has launched their 3rd annual Service Dog Salute campaign, which donates to organizations dedicated to providing trained service dogs to veterans free of charge. Because of restrictions like cost and training time, less than 1% of veterans in need of a service dog can obtain one, according to Purina's Dog Chow. The end goal of this campaign — which starts in September, National Service Dog Month, and runs through Nov. 26 — is to create a future where "every military hero in need can find a canine hero of their own. Bag a specially marked bag of Dog Chow to support this.

Dog Chow wants to ensure that service dogs are available to all veterans who need them. Along with bringing back the Service Dog Salute campaign, Dog Chow and Purina are also working with members of Congress in support of federal legislation that would provide training and service dogs for veterans. The PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act (HR4305) would create a pilot program in the VA to give veterans access to treatment derived from working with service dogs. The bill has been approved by the House, but still awaits passage in the Senate.

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**VVA Service Officers**

**Dennis Smalling**  
317-313-1577  
smallingindy@sbcglobal.net

**Michael Dolan**  
317-374-5578  
michaeledolan@prodigy.net

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**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/>

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**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).

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**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](mailto:hvaf@hvaf.org)

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**Member Speaker Program at Meetings**— Call Fred Bishop, 317-918-1142 to sign up.

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**Community Guest Speaker at Meetings**

Call Larry Shaw to schedule a speaker from our community. 765-618-4067.

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**Cancellations**

**Oct 17** Mayors Veterans Appreciation Day has been cancelled. Date for 2021 is August 14, 2021.

**Nov 11** Veterans Day Parade—cancelled

The Veterans Day Council of Indianapolis, Inc., a voluntary non-profit organization fostering a wholesome relationship between the community and veterans of our Armed Forces, is today announcing the cancelation of the annual Veterans Day breakfast and parade. “The Veterans Day Council board of directors have been closely monitoring conditions concerning public health,” said Jill Druskis, President of the Veterans Day Council of Indianapolis. “The Council’s decision to cancel its in-person events was taken out of a great abundance of caution for safeguarding the health and well-being of spectators, participants, and volunteers.”

In place of the annual events held near The American Legion Mall in Downtown Indianapolis, the Veterans Day Council will present a Veterans Day virtual service and awards ceremony to honor veterans. The virtual service will be live streamed online at 11:00a.m. on Veterans Day.

“The Council invites Central Indiana and now American's worldwide to join us as we honor our military veterans for 'their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good',” said Druskis.

Join us Nov. 11, 2020 at 11:00a.m. by visiting: [VeteransDayIndy.org](http://VeteransDayIndy.org)

## **May Add to Presumptive Agent Orange Conditions List**

The House and Senate passed their own versions of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 in July.. Each bill includes adding bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinson-like symptoms or Parkinsonism. Both version omit hypertension. The bill would also remove Confederate symbols and names from U.S. military installations. The House and Senate have to settle on a final version of the DOD budget.

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## **Legislation Passed for Mental Health Care at VA**

In August the Senate passed The Commander John Scott Hannon Act of 2019. This bill was named in honor of the late Cmdr. John Scott Hannon, a retired Navy Seal who committed suicide. This bill will give the VA authority to hire more mental health professionals, increase the number of locations veterans can access VA telehealth services, study and invest in alternative treatment options, and improve management of suicide prevention resources.

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## **Three Bills Sent to President to Support Troops, Veterans and Families**

GI Bill Work Study Improvement Act of 2019—would eliminate VA from having to process work study claims. It would authorize schools to make payments to students who are enrolled in the VA work study program.

Ryan Kules and Paul Benne Specially Adaptive Housing Improvement Act of 2019—would expand Specially Adapted Housing grants for blind and seriously injured veterans. It would allow the veteran to double the number of grants to six per veteran. This bill is names after two Army retired veterans who used these grants to adapt their homes for their disabilities.

Amend Servicemembers Civil Relief Act S.3637 –would protect military members who were issued a stop movement order from the Department of Defense in the middle of changing their duty stations during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The stop movement order caused many troops to have house and car leases in different locations.

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## **VA completes digitization of archived Vietnam-era deck logs**

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today (Sept 28) completion of an interagency effort with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) to digitize declassified deck logs to process claims faster for eligible Vietnam-era Veterans. The U.S. Navy and Coast Guard deck logs within NARA contain helpful information being used to validate claims for Blue Water Navy (BWN) Veterans who served in the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam, to establish presumption to herbicide exposure for service-connected disability benefits.

Data contained in deck logs is used when deciding VA benefit claims. Also known as ship logs or captain's logs, information was manually inputted to chronologically document the daily activities of a navy ship or unit. VA provided the digital images of deck logs to NARA, available in the National Archives Catalog.

“Digitization of all available Navy deck logs for ships that served in Vietnam were completed in December 2019, while Coast Guard deck logs were completed in September.

Veterans, dependents and surviving spouses may contact approved Veterans Service Organizations for assistance in filling a claim. Learn more about Agent Orange or call 800-827-1000 for more information.

*The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019, signed into law by President Trump June 25, 2019 and effective January 1, extends the presumption of service connection for certain diseases associated with herbicide exposure. To date, VA has collectively awarded \$641 million to more than 22,524 Blue Water Navy Veterans or survivors. From VA Press Release*

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# **Operation Clean Up**

**Time to clean up outside  
Fort Harrison Veteran Center**

**Date: October 24**

**Time: 12 noon**

**Lunch starting 2 or 3pm**

**Bring whatever tools you can.**

**We will need to trim the area with mowers, weed eaters, hedge trimmers and perhaps even chain saws as well as rakes. Roundup too.**

**Please let me know if you plan to join us either at the October meeting or via email or phone. Thank you in advance.**

**Bob Parsons VVA 295 VP**

**PH: 317-919-7589**

# **Volunteers Needed**

**Bunker will be setup at Roudebush  
VA Medical Center for two weeks,  
October 5-9 and 12-16**

**To help with packing/loading/setup/etc., Call Steve 317-459-6255**

**Call Holly to volunteer to sell, 317-294-4607; hours to work 7am-4pm**

**Monday, October 5**

**Tuesday, October 6**

**Wednesday, October 7**

**Thursday, October 8**

**Friday, October 9**

**Monday, October 12**

**Tuesday, October 13**

**Wednesday, October 14**

**Thursday, October 15**

**Friday, October 16**

**Thank you**