



Vietnam Veterans of America Sammy L. Davis Chapter 295



April 2016 Newsletter

April 13th Meeting

6:00pm Cookout & Pitch-in, please bring a dish to share.

6:30pm Board Meeting

7:00pm Membership Meeting. Elections for VVA Officers & Board of Directors and AVVA will take place.

Message from our President

Elections will be held at the April meeting. All positions are available. It is vitally important that we have new blood to take the reins as the old horses are getting tired. No one will get dropped into a new job. There is a learning curve and the current position holder will help you get up to speed. Please help!

Thanks to all,

Michael L. Hamm

President, VVA 295

Note from Editor:

To paraphrase a famous JFK quote: Ask not what VVA 295 can do for you but ask what you can do for VVA 295. We need members to step up and help this organization move forward. We need new ideas and new leadership. I will be there to help you and so will the current officers. What better job than helping Veterans!

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Meetings are the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm (7pm during winter months); Board Meeting 6:30

Newsletter Editor: Holly Tookolo If you have any information for the newsletter, please send it to my email: htookolo@indy.rr.com

Important Dates

- April 9 & 10 American Indian Council has their spring POW WOW at 4-H grounds in Lebanon, IN. They do honor Veterans with a dance in their honor. Leroy Malaterre has been the MC of this POW WOW and the one in August for many years. This will be the last time Leroy will be MC. He is a Veteran and very proud of his heritage. For more information go to: <http://americanindiancouncil.com/>
- April 13 VVA Meeting and Cookout & Pitch-in; we eat at 6pm, board meeting 6:30pm, membership meeting 7pm. Please bring a dish to share at the cookout. Thanks
- April 16 VVA & AVVA State Council Meetings in South Bend at American Legion 284, 23571 Grant Road, spaghetti dinner at 12 noon, meeting will follow. Driving time 2 1/2 hours.
- April 21 North Central High School's Living History, 7-10:50am & 11:50am-3pm, see below
- April 29-May 2 The Moving Wall in Boswell at Benton County Fairgrounds, 2743 W State Rte 352 hosted by Boswell Alumni Association along with local sponsors. Opening Ceremony 5pm
- May 6 Carmel High School, Veterans Round Table Discussion, 8:30am-3pm, see below.
- May 26 Dedication of POW/MIA Chair of Honor by Rolling Thunder Indiana Chapter 1 at Indiana War Memorial 8:30am prior to their departure ceremony for their Ride to the Wall 2016.

SAVE THE DATE

We would like to invite you to "Save the Date and RSVP" for North Central High School's *Living History Series*. North Central High School believes that throughout your lifetime you have made a difference for the lives of students today. The program was designed to provide high school students with access to those who have so bravely paved the paths for their futures in our country. We hope you will be willing to share your personal stories, life lessons and memories as a way to bring history alive for our students in a way that classroom teachers and the textbook can do no justice. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend. A light breakfast will be served from 7:00 am – 7:20 am, as well as a luncheon from 10:50 am – 11:50 am.

North Central High School

Living History Series

Thursday,

April 21, 2016

First Session: 7:00 AM – 10:50 AM

Second Session: 11:50 AM – 3:00 PM

Any questions please call Leslie @317-259-5222



Veterans Round Table Discussions

Carmel High School May 6, 2016 from 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. (Feel free to arrive & leave at any time during those hours.) If you are interested in taking part in one or more of these sessions, please contact James Ziegler at jziegler@ccs.k12.in.us or 317-748-3660 by May 3, 2016; Carmel High School, 520 E. Main St., Carmel, IN 46032 **Food and Beverages will be provided.** (Parking is available in the Front Lot, by Door 1 & 2, and outside the Freshman Center, Door 13—Please sign-in at the respective offices as you enter.)

The greatest weapon in war: Sammy Davis

Editor's Note: This is the eighth year Pueblo Home of Heroes Association has sponsored an essay contest for students in the Pueblo area. This year the theme was "Of the living Medal of Honor recipients, which do you admire the most and why?" Three hundred and forty students responded. Here is the second of three winning essays for 2016.

Our country has been blessed with brave warriors who courageously prove themselves on the battlefield by going far beyond expectations for a soldier and willingly sacrificing themselves for others. In America, we award these remarkable men the highest honor possible, the Medal of Honor. The Medal of Honor can only be awarded by the president of the United States and will forever distinguish this soldier as a true American hero. Of all the gallant living Medal of Honor recipients, I admire Sammy Davis most of all.

Sammy Davis was born in Dayton, Ohio, into a family with military experience. His father had served in World War II, and was one reason that he was familiar with the military. While he was working in a bowling alley as a teenager, Sammy Davis saw a broadcast of the president awarding the Medal of Honor to a soldier and he knew then that he wanted to be a soldier.

It was in 1965, after he had graduated from high school, that he enlisted in the Army where he was immediately trained and sent to serve in Vietnam. Nov. 18, 1968, was the day that Sammy Davis distinguished himself as a true American hero. Davis became a cannoneer and was sent west of Cia Lay in Vietnam. When his battalion came under mortar fire from the Viet Cong, he bravely used a machine gun to cover his gun crew, but there were just too many Viet Cong soldiers and they flooded in around him. He was thrown from his gun by a large blast that also hit his sergeant in the chest. Davis was knocked unconscious and became injured from the vicious blow. When he became conscious again, he found the will to get up and go back to his weapon to protect his fellow soldiers. He found that parts to the Howitzer had been blown everywhere on the ground, so he searched for them and started to load it one more time. He said, "I thought I could get away with one more."

It worked, so he continued firing until he realized there was a soldier on the other side of the river shouting for help. He decided he had to go get him even though he was weak from his injuries and couldn't swim. He used a mattress for a raft and made his way across the river. When he arrived on the other side of the river, there actually were three wounded soldiers. He asked God for strength that day and made several trips to save the three men across the river and many others as well.

Who would imagine that a soldier would learn the true meaning of love during war? I admire Davis greatly because during the brutal battle, he found that he would sacrifice himself willingly to save his brothers. Isn't self-sacrifice the greatest expression of love? He loved his brothers who fought with him on the bloody ground in Vietnam enough to save them or die trying. He also realized how much his fellow soldiers loved him as well. Davis found his wounded sergeant who lifted up his hand so he could hold it, and it was then, when he looked into his sergeant's eyes that he could see that his sergeant loved him. All of the times that the sergeant drilled his troops to make them work so hard to give them the best chance for survival in war — it was out of love. In the end, it was love that saved all of the survivors in that vicious battle in Cai Lay.

How many Americans today truly understand the selflessness of love? How many of America's famous athletes, singers and movie stars are willing to sacrifice themselves to save someone else? With his courageous deeds, Davis proved to his brothers on the battlefield that he loved them enough to sacrifice his own life for them. The true heroes in America are men like Davis, a valiant soldier who learned that the greatest weapon in war is love. Carlie Sweckard is in the seventh grade at Corwin International Magnet School. Her favorite subjects are writing and history. Her hobbies are playing volleyball, tennis and crafts. She enjoys acting in drama productions at her school. Her immediate goal is to go to South High School and then on to college. From <http://www.chieftain.com>

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Open House on March 30

As Mike Hamm said about this event, "WOW". It was certainly more than we ever expected. It was wall-to-wall people, a line to get into the building and just a special time. There are pictures on: www.vva295.com Here are a few:





H.R.3558 - Perpetual POW/MIA Stamp Act

Representative Gus M. Bilirakis (R-FL-12) introduced H.R. 3558, Perpetual POW/MIA Stamp Act on September 18, 2015. It would create a Forever POW/MIA stamp to honor the sacrifices of the brave men and women of the Armed Forces who have been prisoner, missing, or unaccounted for. This stamp would be for first class mail up to one ounce in weight and shall not ever be discontinued. This stamp will depict the National League of Families POW/MIA flag. It has been referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. We need more sponsors. Currently there are only 10 sponsors. They are: Rep. Joseph Crowley (D-NY-14), Rep. Bobby Rush (D-IL-1), Rep. Dan Benishek (R-MI-1), Rep. Paul Cook (R-CA-8), Rep. Doris Matsui (D-CA-6), Rep. Elizabeth Esty (D-CT-5), Rep. John Conyers, Jr (D-MI-13), Rep. Sander Levin (D-MI-9), Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-NJ-11), Rep. Daniel Webster (R-FL-10). Please let your representatives know they need to sponsor this.

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 meats, pasta and noodles. You can visit their website to see what they do. <http://www.hvafofindiana.org/>