



# Vietnam Veterans of America Sammy L. Davis Chapter 295



## February 2020 Newsletter



**Presidents' Day**, officially **Washington's Birthday**, in the United States, holiday (third Monday in February) popularly recognized as honoring George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. The day is sometimes understood as a celebration of the birthdays and lives of all U.S. presidents.

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**Valentine's Day**, also called **Saint Valentine's Day** or the **Feast of Saint Valentines** celebrated annually on February 14. Originating as a Western Christian feast day honoring one or two early saints named Valentinus, Valentine's Day is recognized as a significant cultural, religious, and commercial celebration of romance and romantic love in many regions around the world.

### VVA 295 Officers

- |                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| President      | Larry Shaw   |
| Vice President | Bob Parsons  |
| Secretary      | Mike Dolan   |
| Treasurer      | Verne Hanson |
| 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 |
|---------------|------------|

### VVA Service Officer

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

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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 317-844-3554 or cell 317-294-4607

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# Important Dates

- Feb 2** Ground Hog Day
- Feb 3** Four Chaplains Day
- Feb 6** Women Veteran Wellness Workshop, flyer page 7
- Feb 12** Lincoln's Birthday
- Feb 12** VVA 295 Board Meeting 6pm; Regular Meeting is 7pm
- Feb 14** Valentines Day
- Feb 15** VVA was founded as Council of Vietnam Veterans in 1978
- Feb 17** Presidents Day
- Feb 22** Washington's Birthday
- Feb 23** Flag raised in 1945 on Iwo Jima
- Feb 26** Ash Wednesday
- Feb 28** Persian Gulf War cease fire 1991

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## THIS DATE IN HISTORY

- Feb 5, 1960** Saigon government requests that Washington double U.S. Military Assistance and Advisory Group strength from 342 to 685.
- Feb 1, 1962** The 39th Signal Battalion, a communication unit, is the first unit of regular U.S. ground forces to arrive in Vietnam.
- Feb 11, 1963** Senior White House aide Michael V. Forrestal advises President Kennedy to expect a long and costly war.
- Feb 7, 1965** As part of the already planned Operation Flaming Darts, 49 U.S. Navy jets from the carriers Coral Sea and Hancock drop bombs on barracks and staging areas at Dong Hoi.
- Feb 17, 1965** Former President Harry Truman issues a statement that gives his full support to President Johnson's policies in Vietnam. President Johnson meets with former President Dwight D. Eisenhower to demonstrate the caliber of his supporters.
- Feb 11, 1966** President Johnson discloses that additional U.S. forces will be sent to Vietnam to augment the 205,000 troops already serving there, but indicates that the buildup will be gradual.
- Feb 11, 1967** Operation Stone is conducted by the U.S. 1st Marines in Quang Nam Province. Operation Lam Son 67 is carried out by the U.S. 1st Infantry Division 13 miles south of Saigon.
- Feb 1, 1970** Operation Good Luck is initiated by the U.S. Air Force to strike North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao forces in the Plain of Jars.
- Feb 27, 1971** Operation Phoenix is expanded to include the jailing and selective assassination of Viet Cong suspects and sympathizers.



### **The Bunker**

Hours: 10am—2pm on Sunday.

Your purchases support VVA 295 and Fort Harrison Veterans Center. The Bunker will be setup February 3-14 at Roudebush VA Medical Center. We need help in the booth and with loading/unloading. Call Steve to help loading/unloading 317-459-6255. Call Holly to work in the booth 317-294-4607

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## President's Message:

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Hope this finds you well, or getting better. If you have a cold or the flu please go to a doctor, so as not to spread it around to others, such as family, friends, fellow workers, volunteers, or people that we come into contact with daily. Wash your hands often. Some places may insist that you wear a mask to avoid spreading your germs to others, or contacting theirs as well.



Congratulations to Ronald Ayres Vietnam Veteran Chapter 295 Member of the year. Ron earned this honor by helping Steve and Patty to load, set up, and return Bunker merchandise, from various locations. So when you see Ron be sure to thank him for his efforts in helping them, and the Chapter.

A big guess what has hopefully happened at the building by the time that you read this. Something that you have been wanting, and they are installing as I write this, our brand new cooling system. We shall have both new heat and air conditioning in the building. What's next? Out side plug ins for food trucks to use to prepare fish, chicken, tenderloins, and bar-b-q meals for us to sell as a fund raiser for a new roof. This is where a lot of you can help the chapter, by selling tickets to others as well as buying some for yourselves. We will also need people to help bread the meats, serve food and drinks. Plus help to keep tables clean during and after the events. Other organizations have these types of fund raisers for their buildings and projects. they have fun doing this as they laugh and talk to each other, as well as the guests that are

present, who might become members.

Hopefully we can get some raffles going to help with fund raising. These will possibly be set up in various locations. Again we will need help in selling tickets, along with buying some yourselves.

Can you feel the spark of energy that all of us working together can bring? The friendship that it help to create among not only our fellow members, but the community as well. We have heat and air, there can be no stopping us from achieving even more. Remember "YOU NEVER LOSE, UNTILL YOU QUITE TRYING". Let's try together to see what we can do. If you do not wish to help, and only want to bad mouth those who do, then stay out of the way, and keep quite.

We have the largest VVA and AVVA Chapters in the state, yet we do the least of most of them. They are doing things in their community's and getting recognition for it as well. While we sit around hoping the community and others will give us what we need, or want. It doesn't work that way my friend. If it did we would not be so needy. If you want it, and it is worth having, then you must work and earn it.

In the military we worked together. Different branches, and different units in those branches. Yet we worked as one, for a common goal. A goal that would lead to victory. Reaching and attaining a set destination. A chain is only as strong as it's weakest link. I'm sorry, but in the last two years of my term as president, we have not had a chain that could not agree on anything if they had to put forth a little effort on their part. With two exceptions. First, at Christmas time a few links came together to shop for HVAC Veterans. That is for a short period of time. Others in the local community need help and assistance year around. Can we help them? Can we aid them with their projects? Or do we sit idly by and wait for someone else to do it? Rolling Thunder has some thing going on all the time. Why can't we?

Now that the Bunker is set up in the VA for two weeks each month, they have a few who have volunteered to help them. But they need more help, as they do not know when these people will be available. Two to three people have been doing all the volunteering for the bunker. They do not get anything out of it, as they do it to help the chapter. We could not have maintained the building the last few years if not for the help of those in the Bunker. Do you shop there yourselves? Do you tell others about it? Have you offered to help them? Will you offer now? Being in the booth is not hard work. You get to talk to each other as well as those shopping. You can help yourselves, the chapter, make new friends, all things that help make the day go faster.

We have 292 members in our VVA Chapter. For the past year we were hoping to reach 300. We are eight (8) short an easy goal to reach, Or is it? Do you receive the National VVA Magazine, or paper as it is called either way? Have you noticed that it has a application inside to join the VVA? Life Membership is only \$50.00. That is a lot cheaper than most of us paid. Have you ever cut that application out and carried it with you to give to a friend, or someone you meet? They aren't that heavy to carry. You can be the link in our membership chain. The one who helped hit 300 members. Or will you continue to wait on someone else to do it? that has not worked in the past, it will not work now, nor in the future.

Just so the AVVA Members do not feel left out, you can do things as well. I know that some of you are, and I THANK YOU. But we had a group of you coming to meetings, and you seemed to have a good time with others, and willing to help. Continued on next page.

Continued from previous page.

We have not seen you in quite a while. We still have meetings that you can attend and be part of. Hope to see you soon. Please let's take care of these sections of chain, add a few more links, and become a mighty chain. Don't let me down, as I know that you can do it.

Pray for the safety of our troops, their family's, our leaders, and our Nation.  
May GOD bless America, our Troops and you.

In Comradeship

Larry Shaw  
President VVA 295  
[comdshaw@yahoo.com](mailto:comdshaw@yahoo.com),  
765-618-4067

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## Vice President's Corner

VVA Brothers & Sisters,



Time for my taking yet another stab at journalistic infamy. Hope everyone made it through the New Year healthy and unscathed. As I write this ( Jan 30) I can't help but think back on the Tet Offensive which began on Jan 31 (or a day earlier) in some areas in 1968 was repeated on a slightly lesser scale in 1969.

I was stationed near Hue, in a Military Intelligence unit, (OK....I will wait while the laughter subsides) For several months we warned the higher echelon in Saigon that something was up because of the huge build up of North Vietnamese forces on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Obviously our warnings and assessments went largely unheeded because we all know how that worked out for us during the Tet Offensive, particularly in Hue. Even after the North Vietnamese attacked, as predicted, the higher ups chose to down play the severity of the situation and their initial response was tepid at best . So much for relying on Military Intelligence.

So much for ancient history.....it just doesn't seem possible that over 50 years have gone by since then. In the last century a few things have changed..Vietnam is now a tourist destination, they are in the final stages of planning for a Formula 1 Grand Prix race to be held in the streets of Hanoi this year. and We have gotten a bit older and I honestly don't mind getting older so much, my body lets me know it every day. The problem is that I still have a 19 year old's brain and am still prone to do the same stupid stuff I did then, only now with an old beat up body.

The "Bunker" will set up for the next 2 weeks at the VA and Steve and Patty need our help. It is a long day, for sure but you get to meet some interesting people while there and I know that I have learned a lot about the war by merely talking to vets while there. Parking early in the morning is plentiful and Steve will even buy your lunch for helping out. (Try the fried chicken...it is incredible and ....if you arrive early they have corned beef hash on the breakfast line.)

Speaking of the VA Hospital, I know that there are a lot opinions out there but from a personal standpoint I could not be more thankful for the care I have received over the years. If you are happy with your care , don't forget to convey that to the hospital staff . They are always appreciative of kind words. Yes, we earned our VA benefits but that doesn't mean we should take them for granted and be less than appreciative. Vets in many countries (probably most countries) get nothing.

(Editorial) On a similar topic, and yes, this is my personal opinion, When someone thanks you for your service to our country, be gracious and thank them for their kind words. I have actually observed and heard , on occasion, vets respond with "well you should thank us" and other similar responses. This type of boorish behavior reflects negatively on all of us. These people are simply trying to be kind and lest we forget how we were treated 50 years ago their comments now should be appreciated and accepted graciously. (End of editorial)

So much for this month...see you all at the Feb Chapter 295 meeting.

Bob Parsons, VP VVA Chapter 295  
Phu-Bai, Vietnam. 1966-67-68

Ph: 317-919-7589: Email: [rcparsons47@comcast.net](mailto:rcparsons47@comcast.net))

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## U.S. Cities Rated on Veterans Appeal

A personal finance website based in Washington D.C. ranked 100 of America’s biggest cities last fall to determine which ones are the best to call home for veterans and their families. The company, WalletHub, compared cities across 20 key indicators of livability, affordability and veteran friendliness. The factors range from the share of military skill rated jobs to veteran income growth to the availability of VA health facilities. Listed below are WalletHub’s ranking of the 10 best and 10 worst cities for veterans.

### Best Cities for Veterans

1. Tampa, FL
2. Austin, TX
3. Orlando, FL
4. Raleigh, NC
5. Scottsdale, AZ
6. Colorado Springs, CO
7. Virginia Beach, VA
8. Gilbert, AZ
9. St. Petersburg, FL
10. Jacksonville, FL

### Worst Cities for Veterans

91. North Las Vegas, NV
92. New Orleans, LA
93. Chicago, IL
94. Toledo, OH
95. Philadelphia, PA
96. Indianapolis, IN
97. Memphis, TN
98. Jersey City, NJ
99. Newark, NJ
100. Detroit, MI

For full list, go to: <https://wallethub.com/edu/best-and-worst-cities-for-veterans/8156>

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## Commissary & PX expands Access

Larry Shaw went to the Commissary and PX to see if they would let him in. He showed his VA ID health card which said served connected disability and Purple Heart. Larry got to shop in the Commissary and PX. So it works. Starting Jan 1, 2020 access will expand to include all veterans with service connected disabilities, veterans who are Purple Heart recipients, veterans who are former prisoners of war and individuals approved and designated as the primary family caregivers. Show your VA ID card that says “serviced connected disability.

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## POW/MIA Flag Act Signed into Law

On November 7 President Donald Trump signed the National POW/MIA Flag Act which requires the POW/MIA flag be displayed below the U.S. flag at federal sites around the country. These locations include:

- |                                            |                           |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| White House                                | Capitol Building          |
| World War II Memorial                      | Vietnam Veterans Memorial |
| National Cemeteries                        | State Secretary Offices   |
| Defense Secretary Offices                  | VA Secretary Offices      |
| Selective Service System Director’s Office | Military Installations    |
| VA Medical Centers                         | Post Offices              |

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I never gave anybody hell! I just told the truth and they thought it was hell. Harry S Truman



## Ground Broken for National POW/MIA Memorial & Museum



The first of its kind, the memorial and museum is being built at 6112 POW/MIA Memorial Parkway at Cecil Commerce Center, which is the former Naval Air Station Cecil Field jet base on the west side of Jacksonville, FL. Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial, Inc., a nonprofit organization, is leading the multi-phase memorial and museum project. “Our mission is to honor all former prisoners of war, and remember and never forget those missing in action heroes and the families who seek their return,” said Mike Cassata, organization executive director. The memorial and museum is being built on 26 acres and estimated to cost \$82 million. The project is 59 percent funded, according to the organization. The January 18th ground-

breaking was for Phase I, estimated at about \$5 million, of the five year project. Phase I calls for restoring and using the historic military chapel, named the Chapel of the High Speed Pass. Just north of the chapel, there will be a display of four aircraft that flew out of Cecil Field. The existing grounds of the memorial park will be enhanced, and a replica of the USS Saratoga (CV-60) will be built.

For more info or to donate: <https://www.powmiamemorial.org/>

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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.hvafindiana.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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**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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**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](mailto:jonsmitha@comcast.net)

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America was established not to create wealth but to realize a vision, to realize an ideal - to discover and maintain liberty among men. Woodrow Wilson

Women Veteran Wellness Workshop

Seating is limited (40) - Will be 1st come 1st served

DATE: Thursday, February 6, 2020

TIME: 10:00am 2:00pm

LOCATION: YMCA on Lafayette Road (5315 Lafayette Rd., Indpls, IN 46254)



PRESENTS

## Women Veteran Wellness Workshop

**Seating is limited (40) and will be 1<sup>st</sup> come 1<sup>st</sup> served**

**Date:** Thursday, February 6, 2020

**Time:** 10:00am – 2:00pm

**Location:** YMCA – Lafayette Road

*5315 Lafayette Rd, Indianapolis, IN 46254*

### TOPICS

- 9:30 -10:00am Registration
- 10:00 -10:15am Event Remarks
- 10:15 -10:45am Chaplain Presentation
- 10:45 -11:15am Power of the Mind
- 11:15 -11:45am iRest activity
- 11:45 -12:00pm *break*
- 12:00 -1:00pm Healthy Cooking Demo
- 1:00 -1:45pm Creative Art Tool Box
- 1:45 - 2:00pm Workshop Ends/Participants' Evaluation

**JOIN US!**



**VA**

U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

**It is recommended that you dress in layers. You may wish to bring a jacket or sweater since meeting room can be cold at times.**