



Vietnam Veterans of America Sammy L. Davis Chapter 295

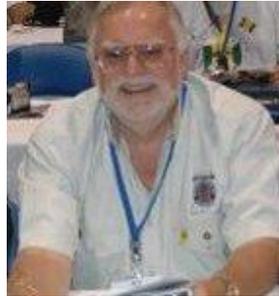


December 2017 Newsletter

President's Message

Hello, all,

Well, it's that time again, when we are preparing for the Christmas holiday. I am looking forward to our VVA 295 Christmas party on Saturday, December 16th with all of our good friends and family, not to mention...good eats.



Our big event for 2018 is going to be the Moving Wall arriving on May 31st and departing on June 4th. This will be the 14th time we have brought The Wall to Marion county, and I so look forward to everything it represents. I hope you all feel the same way, because there is a lot of work that goes into this event and I want this time to be the BEST ever. We will start forming our committees at the January meeting, so be sure to attend to help however you can.

Thanks to all.

Michael L. Hamm

Vietnam Veterans of America

President, Chapter 295

VVA 295 Officers

President	Mike Hamm
Vice President	Ron Sukenick
2nd Vice President	Larry Shaw
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Mmoja Ajabu

AVVA Chapter Representative

Holly Tookolo

AVVA State President

Tony Gigli

VVA Service Officer—Dennis Smalling

Call 317-313-1577 to schedule an appointment for your VA benefits and claims.

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 6:30

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

Important Dates

- Dec 7 Pearl Harbor Day
- Dec 13 VVA 295 meeting; Board meeting at 6:30pm; Regular meeting 7:00pm
- Dec 16 VVA Christmas Party; doors open 5pm; dinner at 6pm; VVA will provide main entrees & drinks. Please bring a side dish to share. If your last name begins with A-G bring vegetables; H-O bring desserts and P-Z bring salads. We will have a special program at 6:30 and later a DJ. Door Prizes
- Dec 25 Merry Christmas
- Jan 1 Happy New Year
- Jan 10 VVA 295 Meeting; Board meeting at 6:30pm; Regular meeting 7:00pm
- Jan 13 De-deck the Halls (take down the Christmas decorations) at 10am

THIS DATE IN HISTORY

- Dec 2, 1962** Following a trip to Vietnam, Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-MT) informs Congress that after eight years and \$2 billion, U.S. efforts to set up an independent Vietnam are “not even at the beginning of the beginning.” Mansfield suggested that the Americans have simply taken the unenviable place formerly occupied by the French.
- Dec 14, 1964** Operation Barrel Roll begins with U.S. planes attacking “targets of opportunity” in northern Laos.
- Dec 8-20, 1965** USMC and South Vietnamese forces join to conduct Operation Harvest Moon/Lien Ket-18, an operation intended to clear Viet Cong forces from the Que Son Valley in Quang Nam and Quang Tin Provinces, I Corps.
- Dec 1, 1966-Dec 14, 1967** Operation Fairfax/Rang Dong is initiated by three battalions-one each from the U.S. 1st, 4th and 25th Infantry Divisions-in and around Saigon, III Corps.
- Dec 21-24, 1967** To thwart plans for what Hanoi calls “the winter-spring offensive,” U.S. Marines launch Operation Fortress Ridge in and around the DMZ.
- Dec 15, 1968-Feb 28, 1969** The Americal Division conducts Operation Fayette Canyon in Quang Nam Province, I Corps.
- Dec 23, 1971** American entertainer Bob Hope tries to negotiate with North Vietnamese authorities in Vientiane for the release of U.S. POWs. His proposal suggests the payment of \$10 million to a North Vietnamese children’s charity in exchange for POWs.
- Dec 18-31, 1972** Operation Linebacker II commences. It is designed to force the North Vietnamese back to the negotiating table. U.S. aircraft, including both B-52s and fighter bombers, will conduct the most concentrated air offensive of the war During this operation, also called the “Christmas Bombing”, which lasts for eleven days, these planes will drop 40,000 tons of bombs, mostly over the densely populated area between Hanoi and Haiphong.

Vice President's Corner

Hello fellow Vietnam Veterans and Family members –

Hope your holiday season is going well and you're spending special time with family, friends and associates.

From all the you have given in 2017, shall it come to you ten-fold in 2018.

We have so much to be thankful for and as your 1st VP for the chapter, I'm thankful for each and every-one of you.

We have projects in the works and I'm sure that all we doing to make a difference for veteran and our legacy would make you proud.

If I could be so bold as to repeat what JFK said back in the 60's, allow me the opportunity to paraphrase it in support of all our members -

Ask not what Chapter 295 can do for you – Ask what you can do for our Chapter

P.S – I'll be in Las Vegas working during both our next meeting and our Holiday Party –

Be sure to invite a guest and share our Chapter with your family.

Want to speak? Don't hesitate to call me at 317-696-1367 or email me at – rs@ronsukenick.com

Happy Holidays -

Regards, Ron Sukenick, Vice President - VVA Chapter 295



2nd Vice President's Corner

Greetings Everyone,

I hope this finds you well, and that you had a pleasant Thanksgiving. Now you can start thinking about attending our Chapter Meeting and Christmas Party, thus giving you a chance to see old friends, and make new ones.

On December 7th, please pause, remember those that lost their lives that day, and through out the war. Remember too all the men and women who served during the war. When you see a WWII Veteran thank them. Never forget those here at home who rationed, sacrificed, and toiled in factories to supply the war needs. Thank them also.

A few reminders to keep your Christmas safe and happy. Ladies when shopping keep your purse close to you, DO NOT leave it lay in your cart. Men carry your wallet in your front pocket. Always try to park close to the door, at night park in a well lighted area, try to walk out with others if you are shopping alone. Watch your surroundings for those who may be watching, or look out of place. Keep packages in your trunk, or covered. Always look inside your car before entering to make sure no one is inside. Have your keys in your hand, with your thumb on the alarm. If you use a real tree, keep it watered and check it daily. Make sure pets and small children DO NOT pull it over. NEVER run electrical cords under carpets, or where they will be a trip hazard. Never leave tree lights on all night, or while not at home. If you still use the old fashion hot bulbs, never leave on for very long. replace if you can. Check your smoke detector; change battery if needed. NO smoke detector, GET ONE. We want you to have a safe and happy time with family and friends. Keeping that in mind, remember "IF YOU DRINK, TEXT, OR USE DRUGS, DON'T DRIVE". Always keep the real meaning of Christmas in your heart and mind.



Wishing you a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS, and a SAFE HEALTHY NEW YEAR.

We now have VIETNAM VETERANS POPPIES, that we will be using as a fundraiser for THE MOVING WALL. This is something that the VVA and AVVA members can do together. We will be letting the community know that we are an active chapter. It gives us a chance explain who we are, what we do, and possibly sign up new members. If you would like to help, please let me know. If you or someone that you know would like to donate to THE MOVING WALL FUND, please send your checks to the Chapter 295 address, and in notation, put FOR THE WALL..

Pray for the safety of our Troops around the world, and their families. May GOD BLESS AMERICA, and you.

Remember we each can do a little, but together we can do a lot.

Larry Shaw, 2nd Vice President—VVA Chapter 295, 765-618-4067



The Bunker

Hours: 10am—2pm on Sunday.

Your purchases at The Bunker support VVA 295 and Fort Harrison Veterans Center.

The Bunker now has a new t-shirt—the one pictured here.

We Stand for the FLAG, We Kneel for the FALLEN

Get yours today!

The Veteran Magazine Project

Repurpose your copy of The Veteran. VVA board member Jim Pierce brought this terrific idea before the board and membership at our last meeting. After you have read your copy of The Veteran, mark out your name and address. Attach your business card or the VVA business card which is available at the VVA office. Take it to your local library and ask if want your issues of The Veteran. Jim said they were very happy to take his issue. Do this each month to reach out to Veterans in the area and maybe even gain new members. Thank you Jim for a great idea!

Hats, Scarves & Gloves

Please donate hats, scarves and gloves in the container in the lobby. This is an annual project of Vets for Vets. They will be taken the Roudebush VA Medical Center for the Veterans. Flyer on page 9.

AVVA Chapter 295

Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America is the extended family of VVA. We are made up of Veterans of all eras, families and friends of Veterans, and all persons who support Veterans' issues. AVVA works in conjunction with VVA striving to ensure that Vietnam Veterans, as well as ALL Veterans, attain the honor, respect, and benefits they deserve. We are here to help Veterans and VVA Chapter 295 with their programs and activities.

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).

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

Agent Orange Update

Veterans Affairs Secretary Dr. David Shulkin sent his recommendations with the reports of new presumptive conditions that are connected to Agent Orange to the Office of Management and Budget and other agencies for approval and analysis of the costs. For complete article on this:

<http://www.military.com/daily-news/2017/11/07/va-may-expand-list-ailments-agent-orange-coverage-shulkin.html>

VVA's Press Release: <https://vva.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/VVA-Press-Release-17-54-1-1.pdf>

The new presumptive list includes bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, Parkinson-like tremors, high blood pressure and strokes.

To sign the petition requesting this new presumptive list gets approved and funded:

<http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/agent-orange-still-killing-veterans> (Agent Orange Petition)

Blue Water Navy Vets Foiled Again

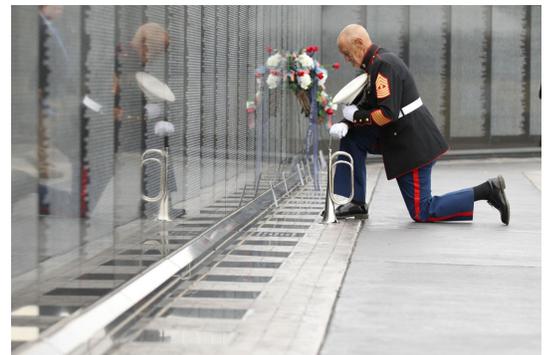
House Committee tables H.R. 299 which would restore eligibility for VA health care and disability for 90,000 Blue Water Navy veterans. This is the sailors and other personnel who served on open sea ships off the shore of Vietnam during the Vietnam War and were exposure to Agent Orange. They did not have boots on the ground.

Tupelo, MS Dedicates Replica of Vietnam Veterans Wall

By CALEB BEDILLION DAILY JOURNAL

By Caleb Bedillion, Daily Journal, Nov 2, 2017

With construction complete and ceremonies concluded, Tupelo's Veterans Park is now officially home to a replica 60 percent the size of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial wall, located in Washington D.C. Constructed out of granite, the Tupelo memorial features two walls that form a wide angle, chronologically inscribed with the names of the 58,318 veterans known as of Memorial Day 2017 to have been killed or gone missing in Vietnam. Traveling walls have toured the country before, but John Rowan, president of the Vietnam Veterans of America, was on hand Thursday and called Tupelo's monument the first full replica he has seen. The approximately \$1 million project received significant funding of \$750,000 from the state of Mississippi, with the remaining money supplied in about equal parts from private donors and the city of Tupelo. Even so, Tupelo Mayor Shelton underscored that the monument was born from the vision and initiative of private citizens, primarily a group of dedicated volunteers from neighboring Itawamba County. One of these volunteers, Janie Alexander, tried hard to avoid the spotlight Thursday, but it found her anyway. Credited locally as a key figure behind the initial idea and the success of early fundraising, Alexander called Thursday's ceremony one of the happiest days of her life but sought to deflect attention away from herself. "It's about the names, the stories," Alexander said.



Holiday Dates for Mail

Military Mail: Letters/cards Dec 4-11; Parcels Dec 4.

Domestic Mail: First Class Dec 19, Priority Dec 20 and Express Dec 22

POW*MIA Chair of Honor On Nov 12 at halftime, Rolling Thunder Indiana Chapter 1 unveiled and dedicated the POW*MIA Chair of Honor which will now be a permanent fixture to symbolize that there will always be a place in Bankers Life Fieldhouse awaiting their return. To watch the unveiling:

<https://p-s-e.box.com/s/0g3yn5nlv0lded6h6q02bqnpjksr5yr4>

This makes five POW*MIA Chairs of Honor that Rolling Thunder Indiana Chapter 1 has dedicated. They are located at Lucas Oil Stadium, Indiana War Memorial, Indiana Statehouse, Indianapolis International Airport and Bankers Life Fieldhouse.

A POW/MIA chair dedication ceremony on Capitol Hill in Washington DC was held Nov 8. The commemorative chair, which sits in Emancipation Hall of the United States Capitol Visitor Center, serves to honor American prisoners of war and stands as a reminder of the nearly 83,000 servicemen and women missing in action.



Online Exchange Shopping Begins: Beginning Veterans Day weekend, millions of honorably discharged veterans will be permitted to shop online at all four military exchanges, but you still have to verify your eligibility with VetVerify.org. On Veterans Day, eligible veterans will be able to shop online by logging on to the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, Navy Exchange, Marine Corps Exchange, and Coast Guard Exchange websites at, respectively, shopmyexchange.com, mynavyexchange.com, mymcx.com and shopcgx.com. Actual online pricing can be seen only by those who are authorized to shop at the websites: shopmyexchange.com; shopcgx.com; mymcx.com; and mynavyexchange.com. Military exchange shopping returns more than \$300 million annually to support on-base morale, welfare and recreation programs. Verify your eligibility at VetVerify.org

TAPS Monument Unveiled

VVA Chapter 1059 in Green Cove Springs, FL dedicated the TAPS monument in honor of the Civil War era music that is sounded at dusk, flag ceremonies, memorial services and funerals. It was a monument 2-1/2 years in the making and cost \$82,000, being completely funded by charitable organizations and individuals. TAPS is also known as Day is Done or Butterfield's Lullaby. It was Union Army Brigadier General Daniel Butterfield who arranged TAPS in its present form.

Operation Blanket a Veteran—Helping Veterans One Blanket at a Time

The Weir Cook Memorial Project announces Operation Blanket a Veteran. They will be hand making lap blankets for Veterans in assisted living facilities now until spring. If you would like to get involved and/or make a donation, please visit our website: weircookmemorial.org If you would like to make and donate a lap blanket, we are using Red Heart Yarn "America" #4 which can be purchased at any Jo Ann Fabrics or Walmart. The dimensions for the lap blanket are 25 inches by 32 inches. The finished lap blanket can be sent to:

Weir Cook Memorial Project, P.O. Box 83, Wilkinson, IN 46186

We will be taking pictures when Veterans receive the blankets and posting on Facebook and our website.

Smartphones for Veterans

We here at Allied One Solutions are pleased to announce that our "Surviving PTSD, A Soldiers Journey" seminars will be presented by PESI beginning this fall. We also are excited to be able to offer FREE SMARTPHONES with monthly service of 500 free minutes and unlimited texting to qualifying veterans. We are currently providing phones to veterans in Indiana and Ohio and hope to be in other states this summer. Together we must fulfill our obligation to care for those who have stepped forward to protect us all.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Wes Russell, President

Information on this program:

Qualified Veterans or Spouse

- * Receiving Veterans Affairs Compensation/Pension
- * Receiving Survivor Benefits

Documentation Proof

- * Valid Identification Card—VA ID card or membership card to veteran organization
- * Veterans Affairs benefit letter that shows % & \$ amount of benefits

Questions—Call 765-609-7078 for information about the Lifeline program for Veterans and to see if you qualify.

Mission Statement of Allied One Solutions: The mission and intention of Allied One Solutions is to assist in the care of our military service members, veterans and their families. To do this, Allied One Solutions intends to recruit and train interested civilian behavioral health providers in military specific culture and treatments that focus on the needs of the military population, primarily in the area of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Supportive Services for Veteran Families

In 2013 InteCare was awarded a Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) grant from the VA. The purpose of the SSVF program is to promote housing stability among very low income Veteran families who reside in or are transitioning to permanent housing. InteCare's SSVF program operates in Marion, Madison, Shelby, Hancock, Hamilton, Boone, Johnson and Vigo counties. The program provides the following services as they relate to housing stability: outreach, case management and peer support services, assistance obtaining VA and other public benefits, housing counseling and assistance with housing searches, financial planning as it relates to stabilizing housing, transportation, child care, and temporary financial assistance as it relates to stabilizing housing. In order to receive services under this program you must: 1) Be a Veteran, or member of family in which the head of household, or spouse of the head of household is a Veteran. 2) Meet income eligibility requirements-annual income cannot exceed 50% of area median income. 3) Be homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless. For further information or to arrange an eligibility screening appointment please contact 855-896-4345 or ssvf@intecare.org

Closure Brings Healing by Natalie Rasnich, Dean of Development, College of the Ozarks

Vietnam Veteran Sgt Maj Eddie Neas (USMCR/RET) traveled back to Vietnam in March 20, 2016 as part of the College of the Ozarks Patriotic Education Travel Program—only to discover a single dog tag at Khe Sanh. Forty-nine years after it was lost, Neas delivered the dog tag to the family of the fallen. In a ceremony on Tuesday, Aug 8, 2017 in Magnolia, TX, Neas presented the dog tag to the brother of Vietnam Veteran Lance Cpl David Bruce Freed, who was killed in action Sept 19, 1968.

Neas knew returning to the battlefields where he fought wasn't going to be easy, but he was willing to go because he knew sharing his story with the next generation was important. Paired with College of the Ozarks student Grant Talburt, along with 11 Veterans and 11 students, the group traversed cities like Can Tho, Saigon, Cu Chi, Dan Nang, Hue City, Dong Ha, and Hanoi learning firsthand what the Vietnam War was really like. While in Khe Sanh, Neas made a discovery that was the start of, in his own words, a life-changing 'quest'. Neas tells the story with preciseness that demonstrates the importance of the moment—vividly recalling his interaction with a Vietnamese street peddler outside a museum. He says he observed a variety of items on the peddler's tray and something special caught his eye. "I saw many interesting artifacts on this tray. Things like pieces of shrapnel, bullet shell casings, and even the Red Star the North Vietnamese Army wore on their helmets, but I noticed a single USMC dog tag on his tray. I knew I had to bring it back home." After deeming it "the real thing" and bartering with the peddler, Neas purchased the dog tag for approximately 568,000 VND (Vietnamese Dong), which is equivalent to about \$25 U.S. dollars. And it was then that the story of Lance Cpl David Bruce Freed began to unfold.

Neas would spend the next 17 months chasing leads for the location of Lance Cpl Freed's family. He would first make the startling discovery that Freed grew up in Montclair, NJ—a mere 20 miles from Neas' current home town of Rahway, NJ. That fact propelled Neas' investigation as he imagined this fellow young Marine, just down the road, heading off to Vietnam almost at the same time he did. Neas spoke to various Veterans groups, sharing the story of his trip of a lifetime through the College of the Ozarks Patriotic Education Travel Program and always ended with the story of the dog tag that he had hanging around his neck, next to his. He remained hopeful that his efforts would lead him to Freed's family.

Neas was speaking at a Marine Corps League Mess Night event in Connecticut when a Marine named Ray Baldwin, who was sitting next to him, said he would share this story with a friend who loved to conduct research. Two days later, he was given a lead on four family members living out of state. After receiving no response from his inquiries, Neas began to wonder if he would ever be able to return the dog tag he had found—would he ever catch a break and find closure on this important quest?

And then one day, he did. Neas, as final effort, contacted the Police Department in Magnolia, TX—where Freed's family might live based off a tip he had received. With the help of the Chief of Police Terry Enloe, they found and identified some of Freed's siblings. The chief of police connected with the brother of Freed, Brian Dale Freed. Arrangements were then made for Neas and the family to finally meet. "Neas and Talburt flew to Texas Tuesday, Aug 8, 2017. During the ceremony, Neas shared that the dog tag didn't belong in Vietnam. And, he knew he wasn't meant to keep it either. "And tonight I'm giving this tag to his brother—where it belongs," Neas said as he choked back tears and handed over the tag. Brian Freed and Neas embraced in an emotional hug following the presentation. Freed's tears reflected the deep ache of missing his older brother. "It may have been nearly 50 years ago, but I was only 10 years old, and I didn't get to know my older brother and I miss him still," Freed said. "And this means more than Eddie will ever know."

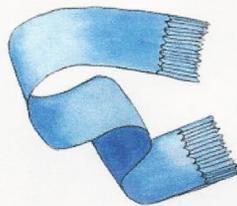
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CENTER**

**THEY WILL BE TAKEN TO VA HOSPITAL AFTER
DECEMBER 17, 2017 TO GIVE TO VETERANS**



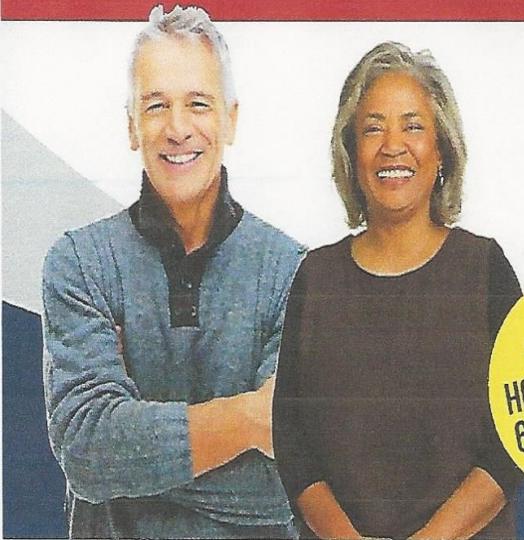
Supporting Advertisers

Disclaimer: The ad solicitations posted here do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of VVA Chapter 295. They are established vendors that support the VVA chapter and seek to do business with you.



My name is Mike Dolan and I am retired Air Force and a member of VVA Chapter 295. I am a specialist in Medicare and am here if you need someone to help you in navigating the many options for Medicare and Medicaid and how these benefits interact with VA benefits. There are several medical plans that many folks are unaware of and it is my mission to help veterans understand their options and act on the appropriate ones. A great client is someone over 65 who served in the military for a tour or so but did not draw military retirement (Tricare), and is eligible for VA healthcare but not 100% disabled. If you would like to review your options, please contact me. Most of these plans offer a wide network of doctors and hospitals outside of the VA system and offer an expanded formulary of available prescription drugs., all with low or no monthly cost. There are also incidental benefits such as dental, vision, gym membership, etc. If you would like to visit, please contact me using the information below. I speak a foreign language- I speak **Medicare!** Michael E. Dolan, Maj USAF (Retired), 317-374-5578, michaeledolan@prodigy.net

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