



Vietnam Veterans of America Sammy L. Davis Chapter 295



May 2016 Newsletter

May 11th 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 will take place. AVVA had their elections last month.



Message from our President

Elections were postponed until the May meeting. We need members to step up. All positions are available. All former officers will help the new officers with their positions. If you want to help Veterans, this is one way to do that. If you want this organization to continue, we need you.

Thanks to all,
Michael L. Hamm
President, VVA 295

One person can make a difference and everyone should try.

~ John F. Kennedy

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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

- 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 4/28.
- May 6 Carmel High School, Veterans Round Table Discussion, 8:30am-3pm, (*Feel free to arrive & leave any time during those hours.*) *If you are interested in taking part in one or more sessions, please contact James Ziegler at jziegler@ccs.k12.in.us or 317-748-3660 by May 3;* Carmel High School, 520 E. Main St., Carmel, IN 46032 **Food and Beverages will be provided.**(Parking is available in Front Lot, by Door 1 & 2, & outside Freshman Center, Door 13—Please sign-in at respective offices as you enter.)
- May 11 VVA & AVVA 295 Meeting; Cookout at 6pm; Board Meeting 6:30pm; Meeting 7pm.
- 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.
- June 10 & 11 Sandbox Reunion at Howard County Vietnam Veterans property. Opening ceremony is Friday, June 10 at 11:30am. Hog roast served after opening ceremony. Music both night 7:30-11:30pm
- June 17 & 18 WarBird Expo 2016; go to <http://www.warbirdexpo.com/> Friday 8am-9pm; Sat 9am-6pm, at Mount Comfort, IN at Indianapolis Regional Airport.
- June 29-July 4 American Veterans Traveling Tribute in Kokomo, sponsored by VFW Post 1152, on display at IU-Kokomo , during this time is Haynes Apperson Festival; starts at 3pm on June 29 & closes at 3pm July 4. For more info or to volunteer, contact John Meeks 765-452-1521 with VFW Post 1152.
- July 19-23 VVA & AVVA Leadership Conference; <https://vva.org/events/leadership-conference/> in Tucson, AZ at HILTON EL CONQUISTADOR.
- July 27-31 American Veterans Traveling Tribute in Berne during their Swiss Days Festival
- August 4-7 The Wall that Heals in Flora at Carroll County Fairgrounds sponsored by Carroll County Veteran Remembrance Committee
- August 12-14 Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall in Crawfordsville at Lane Place, 212 S. Water St., sponsored by Byron Cox American Legion Post 72
- Sept 14-18 34th Annual Vietnam Veterans & All Veterans Reunion, at Howard County Vietnam Veterans property;
- Sept 21-25 American Veterans Traveling Tribute Wall in Mitchell, Indiana, Persimmon Festival
- Sept 22-25 The Wall that Heals in Richmond, Veterans Memorial Park, hosted by Wayne County Veterans, American Huey 369; Sammy Davis, CMH is guest speaker 9/24.

Success has nothing to do with what you gain in life or accomplish for yourself. It's what you do for others.

~ Danny Thomas, American nightclub comedian, singer and television and film actor and producer , spanning five decades. Founder of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

GONE, BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Kristen Duus
From The Quest, Spring 2016, Newsletter of DPAA



Natalie Anderson Rauch remembers her dad as a funny man who loved to make everyone laugh and was the life of the party. She remembers living in England as a child and trips to the beach with her family. Beyond that, her memories are nearly nonexistent. Rauch was eight years old when her father's plane went missing in North Vietnam.

"My dad was in the Air Force and always wanted to be a pilot," said Rauch. "He was in for about 11 years before he went to Vietnam."

Col. Warren Anderson and his copilot, 1st Lt. James Tucker, were flying an RF-4C Phantom conducting reconnaissance when they disappeared from the radar, April 26, 1966.

Rauch said it was normal for the plane to go off the radar at a certain point, but that night they never came back. Due to the conditions of where the pilots went missing, she is still unsure, nearly 50 years later, if they crashed on land or in water, or what their ultimate fate

was.

"It wasn't until 1973 and the prisoners of war were released that we knew for sure they weren't coming home," said Rauch. "My mom hoped for seven years that he was a POW -- that he was coming home. She even stayed in the same house."

Rauch is married to an Army chaplain, and has lived in Honolulu for about 18 months. She lives only a few miles from Glenda Tucker, the widow of her father's copilot.

Tucker and her husband were high school sweethearts. She was 25 and a mother of two when her husband's plane went missing. She remembers him as the football jock who was adored by all the girls and worked hard.

"He was at the top of his class in pilot training, so he got to pick the plane he wanted to fly," said Tucker. "It was such a hard decision; we had a dartboard and we put the pictures of what he thought he might want to fly on there, and we threw darts on it to decide."

Tucker's dart landed on the Phantom, which was known for its high visibility due to heavy exhaust, making their plane virtually defenseless in enemy territory.

Rauch and Tucker met for the first time just over a year ago and have kept in contact ever since, sitting next to each other and connecting again at a government update briefing held by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, in Honolulu, Jan. 25. Briefings are held throughout the country several times a year to update families of missing personnel of their loved ones' cases.

Though they both are hoping for closure, and to bring home their loved ones, they are not holding onto expectations that a recovery will ever be made. The plane went missing in a tumultuous area, and with little information of the exact location, there is not enough information to begin a recovery operation, said Rauch.

Tucker spoke of how much her husband adored flying, that it was his passion, which kept her from ever really seeing the dangers of it.

"He lived to fly," said Tucker. "I don't think I ever realized how dangerous it was- I was young. He never indicated that it was anything other than a holiday."

Both pilots' names are etched into the Court of the Missing at the Punchbowl Cemetery in Honolulu. Rauch was able to take one of her brothers to see their father's name when he visited for Christmas. And though they may never know the circumstances of their loved ones' loss, they still have come to their own personal closure. "Being in Hawaii is quite an experience as far as bringing closure -- just knowing that it's going to stay there, that marble etching," said Rauch. "That's going to stay there forever."

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.

Coming Home

A Son, A Brother, A Vietnam Veteran Laid to Rest

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Erik Cardenas

From The Quest, Spring 2016, Newsletter of DPAA



Bill Hill didn't want his son Billy to go to war in Vietnam, but the need to keep his younger brother, Bobby, safe was too strong for his eldest son. "Billy was afraid Bobby would go to Vietnam and get himself killed, and it turned out to be just the opposite," said Hill.

On Jan. 21, 1968, Sgt. 1st Class Billy D. Hill, assigned to the 282nd Aviation Battalion, 17th Aviation Group, 1st Aviation Brigade in his second tour to Vietnam, volunteered to be the door-gunner in the lead helicopter on a mission to Khe Sanh transporting South Vietnamese soldiers into the advisory headquarters. As the helicopters approached the landing zone, the lead helicopter was shot down by a rocket propelled grenade. Hill was believed to have died in the initial attack and was declared missing in action shortly thereafter.

Nearly 57 years after that fateful day, Billy Hill's remains were recovered and identified by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting

Agency. Billy Hill was then returned to his family and buried at the Central Texas State Veterans Cemetery, Killeen, Texas, where nearly 1,000 mourners came to honor him.

retired U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 2. "I was there that day, flying, and saw all the action going on. Just to have him back is pretty special."

Billy Hill was buried on what would have been his 69th birthday. And though his father said the ceremony did not provide him closure over his son's death, it was at least one last opportunity to celebrate his birthday and who he was as a man.

"It's something I never expected in my entire life," said Bill Hill. "I figured I'd be dead and gone before they found him."

Luckily Bill Hill was proven wrong on his assumption of never seeing his son return home. Already 91 years old at the time of his son's funeral, he did not have much more time to wait. Five days after his son was laid to rest, Bill Hill passed away in Gatesville, Texas.

"I was very proud that he served; he was a gung-ho soldier," said Bill Hill.



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. Contact Robin Close at 317-951-0688 or rclose@hvaf.org

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/>