



Vietnam Veterans of America Sammy L. Davis Chapter 295



January 2021 Newsletter



2021 New Years Wish for You

- 12 months of happiness,
- 52 weeks of fun and laughter,
- 365 days of success,
- 8,760 hours of good health,
- 525,600 minutes of blessings, &
- 31, 536,000 seconds of joy.

Have a blessed & prosperous New Year 2021

Non-Profit Repurposes Fatigues

PARKVILLE, MO (KCTV) -- A local woman is turning camouflage into couture., and helping veterans in the process. Connie Swartz runs a [nonprofit called Celebrate Fatigues](#) that works with a material familiar to those who served. She carefully disassembles used army uniforms, transforming the fabrics into handbags and other accessories." I want the people who wore it to get the respect they earned," Swartz said.

She started two years ago with an old set of fatigues her husband, Barry, used to wear. He was reluctant to dispose of them or donate them, and wanted to do something useful with the fabrics.

With help from a designer, Swartz began strategically stitching together pieces of coats and pants. She found designs for bags, phone cases and, most recently, masks. She's always been handy with a needle and thread.

"I started sewing when I was two," she said. "I'm the sewer in the family."

Her nonprofit also works with volunteers from St. Michael's Veteran's Center, who help separate the stitches. Another nonprofit, The Sewing Lab, helps assemble the products.

To Swartz, every uniform tells a story of service and sacrifice.

"I feel that when I touch these fabrics," she said. "I can feel that honor they earned. I'm just a visitor."

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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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WARRIORS HOPE

Every Thursday evening at 6pm you will find John Smitha at the Fort Harrison Veteran Center leading and helping a group of veterans with fellowship. Coffee and donuts are usually available. All veterans are welcome. It is good to talk with other veterans. If you have questions, call John Smitha, 317-439-6304.



If

Reminder: The Veteran Magazine is online at www.vvaveteran.org

Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let each new year find you a better man. ~ Benjamin Franklin

Important Dates

- Jan 1** New Year's Day
- Jan 13** VVA 295 Board Meeting at 6pm; Regular meeting at 7pm
- Jan 18** Martin Luther King Day
- Jan 20** Inauguration Day
- Feb 2** Groundhog Day
- Feb 10** VVA 295 Board Meeting at 6pm; Regular meeting at 7pm
- Feb 15** Presidents' Day

THIS DATE IN HISTORY

- Jan 13, 1962** As part of Operation Farm Gate, U.S. Air Force pilots fly T-28 fighter bombers on their first combat missions in support of a South Vietnamese outpost under Viet Cong attack.
- Jan 1, 1965** Total U.S. strength in South Vietnam is 184,300; 1,369 American military personnel have been killed in action to date and 7,000 wounded.
- Jan 1-8 1966** Paratroopers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade and Australian troops conduct Operation Marauder, a search and destroy operation in Hau Nghia Province, III Corps.
- Jan 1-19, 1966** Elements of the 1st Cavalry Division conduct Operation Matador in Kontum & Pleiku Provinces, II Corps to provide security for incoming 3rd Brigade of 25th Infantry Division.
- Jan 19-Feb 21, 1966** Troops from 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, Korea's 2nd Marine Brigade and ARVN forces conduct Operation Van Buren, a combined security effort to protect the rice crop in Phu Yen Province, II Corps.
- Jan 25-Mar 6, 1966** In Operation Masher/White Wing/Thang Phong II, the largest search & destroy operation to date, the U.S. 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), South Vietnamese and Korean forces sweep through Binh Dinh Province, II Corps.
- Jan 6-15, 1967** The U.S. 1st Battalion, 9th Marines and South Vietnamese Marine Brigade Task Force Bravo launch Operation Deckhouse V, Kien Hoa Province in the Mekong Delta.
- Jan 11-21, 1968** The U.S. 9th Infantry Division conducts Operation AKRON V in Bien Hoa Province, III Corps to eliminate enemy forces in Base Area 303..
- Jan 13-July 21, 1969** U.S. Marines, soldiers from Americal Division and South Vietnamese troops will take into custody 470 Viet Cong suspects during Operation Russell Beach, a complementary operation to Bold Mariner meant to clear guerrilla forces from the Batangan Peninsula.
- Jan 19-July 22, 1970** Troops from the U.S. 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized), and 1st ARVN Division conduct Operation Greene River in Quang Tri Province, I Corps, to support provincial pacification programs.



The Bunker

Hours 10am-2pm Sunday

Your purchases support VVA 295 and Fort Harrison Veterans Center. The Bunker will be setup at the VA for three weeks, January 4-22. Steve is still looking for another manager to help with the Bunker. Please consider volunteering or managing..

Steve 317-459-6255 or Holly 317-294-4607

President's Message:

Brothers and Sisters,

Hello and welcome to 2021. Hopefully a better year than last year, as it was really crummy, and hardly ever funny. But here we are in a new year full of hopes and dreams for an improved year and life. Did you stay up to see the new year in? Or are you one of those who goes to bed and lets what ever happens happen? It is tough to get old, you miss so much. Did you make any new year resolutions? You know the usual ones to go on a diet, lose weight, get more sleep, travel, clean out the garage, etc. Different folks, different quotes.



I would like for this year to be extra special for both VVA and AVVA. All members on the same page working for a common goal, the best for the Chapter. That means fundraising. We have only had one for several years now, and that is our Bunker Store. For you new members we have a store that sells hats, jackets, shirts, pins, patches, and many other things that all Veterans need, or want. This in turn helps to pay for insurance, gas, lights, water, and up keep on the building. We have been sitting up in the Indy VA for a week each month. This year the VA wanted us to be there every day that they are open. This was too constrictive on Steve and Patty, who need a life of their own. So Steve agreed to do two (2) weeks a month. This month we are there for three (3) weeks, as we were not there at all in December.

This means if everything goes right that we will be set up in the VA one hundred and twenty (120) days this year. With a membership of both groups totaling more than Three hundred an seventy (370) this should be pretty easy to cover, but it doesn't seem to be that way. The hours are 6:30 am to 3pm, Monday through Friday. If you can volunteer one or two days, or a week at a time contact Holly, as she is scheduling the dates as to who can work and when. Steve has just received new merchandise. If you are helping to sell, you will be one of the first to see it, and have a chance to buy it. This helps Steve, the Bunker, and the chapter. We need you. **THE BUNKER NEEDS YOU, APPLY NOW! PLEASE!**

Think back to when you were young. Maybe you were still in school, or the service. But you had hopes and dreams of your future from the kind of car you had, to where you would live. Your occupation, number of kids, the sights you would see in your travels. The way you wanted to make your family's future bright. To build lasting friendships, and inspire others to go and exceed in their life plans. What ever field you chose to try; from farming to chemistry, police officer to judge, crook to congress, store clerk to store owner, mechanic to factory worker, etc.. You wanted a good life for you, your family, with a good retirement in the end. Here now 40, 50. or 60 years later most of us are retired maybe living alone again, with most of our dreams behind us. Do you have the lasting friendship that you had hoped for? The one that you can tell your problems, or talk about your past to? Just talk, pal around with, have a cup of coffee. I know some of you don't drink coffee. But those of us who were raised on a farm, served in the Army, and worked skilled trades did, and still do. We have a great deal of members that have things in common with you. Talk to them . Get their phone number. The best way to get a friend, is be one. What better way to build a friendship, than to spend quality time together, and what better place than by working side beside with that friend in the Bunker. It is a win win for everyone.

Have you ever wished that you could do more for your fellow veteran, his or her widowed spouse, or children? You can. You can learn to be a service officer. The best part of that is you do not need to operate at our building, or even in Indy or Marion County. There are veterans every where, and not just from Vietnam that have no idea what they are entitled to or how to go about obtaining that information.

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There are people out there that must choose between food, rent, gas, water, and doctors. You could be the one heaven sent person that could get their entitlements that they have earned, and have coming to them. You do not receive any money for this. Your reward is knowing that you just helped make someone else's life a little brighter. You took away their fears of what would become of them next. You would be a hero in their eyes.

May we each find a better life this year, in health, wealth, family, and friendship. Share a smile, a hand shake when possible, and your selves with others. Don't just make a meeting for an hour or so, and then put it behind you until the next month, get involved with the chapter, and each other. This is YOUR CHAPTER! It is only as good as you make it. Red Skelton said: "LOVE YOUR ENEMIES, AFTER ALL YOU MADE THEM." As MOH Sammy Davis says: "YOU NEVER LOSE, UNTIL YOU QUIT TRYING." You can take this as a threat or a promise, I WONT QUIT! Will you quit? Will you sit and not say or do anything to help the chapter? Or will you stand tall and make your, and ours the best chapter that it can be? Lets build a future together, and be a unit of one.

At our last meeting in December, I gave out Two Awards that are usually presented at our Christmas Party, but thanks to Covid we passed on that this year. But the VVA Chapter 295 Member Of The Year Award was presented to Don McFarland As our POW/MIA Chairman, serving on our Board, and helping in the Bunker, at the building, VA, and Kokomo Reunion. Thanks Don. Very well deserved. Next was the AVVA 295 Member of The Year Award to Terri Anderson for her help with the Bunker at the Building, Kokomo Reunion and the VA, and for being a loyal customer. Thank you Terri. We each have that opportunity to be Member Of The Year next year. Get involved!!!

May GOD bless AMERICA, our military serving around the world, and you.

In Comradeship,

Larry Shaw
President VVA 295
765-618-4067
comdshaw@yahoo.com

VA Vaccine Distribution

Many of our Veterans have been asking when and how they might have access to the COVID-19 vaccine.

To best stay informed and get the latest information is to do the following:

1. Click here: <https://www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/> (you can also link to it from [va.gov](https://www.va.gov/))
2. Let the VA know you are interested in updates on the COVID-19 Vaccine by clicking here:

[Sign up to stay informed] <<https://www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/stay-informed>>

If and when you're eligible to get a vaccine, your VA health care team will contact you. You don't need to re-serve a vaccine, go to a VA facility to request one, or receive a vaccine until the VA contacts you. The VA staff will only provide vaccines to Veterans who are currently eligible for one based on VA and CDC risk criteria.

Hope smiles from the threshold of the year to come, whispering 'it will be happier'.

— Alfred Lord Tennyson

VVA Service Officers

Dennis Smalling
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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/>

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).

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

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

Community Guest Speaker at Meetings

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

Camp Camby

Camp Camby is a 53 acre transition housing and job training community offering veterans and families in need a hand up instead of a hand out.

Camp Camby is complete with food, sanitation and clothing pantries, community meals, safe housing, activities, on-site church, and pain management clinic. We are able to facilitate up to 125 families at a time but to do so we need help. Find out what items are needed and more at <https://www.iamcampcamby.org/> 317-830-8297; office@activegrace.org; 10616 E County Road 700 S, Camby, IN 46113

Community Rebuilds Vietnam Veteran's Home

MUNCIE, Ind. (WISH) — John Holaday, a 77-year-old Vietnam veteran who lived without power and water for more than a year, has a new home. Volunteers led by students from the Muncie Area Career Center, the Delaware County Veteran's Service Office, Nathan Jones and some of the city's contractors, like Muncie Masonry and Concrete, rebuilt his house from the ground up. Holaday shared his gratitude to everyone involved in an emotional interview on Tuesday. "It's hard to put into words," Holaday said. "It's a blessing everybody went that extra mile for me." He shared the moment with family members, who were able to reunite with him for the first time in years.

<https://www.wishtv.com/news/allindiana/muncie-community-volunteers-rebuild-home-for-vietnam-veteran/>

Bunker Schedule at VA in January

Hours are 7am-3pm.

Managers get there about 6:30am.

Managers for week 1 are Steve Mabrey & Wallace Vaughn

January 4 Andy Thimlar – all day

January 5 Terri Anderson – all day

January 6 Mike Dolan – all day

January 7 Andy Thimlar – all day

January 8 Ron Ayres - PM

Manager for week 2 is Wallace Vaughn

January 11 Bob Parsons – all day

January 12 Terri Anderson – all day

January 13 Mike Dolan – all day

January 14 Don McFarland – all day

January 15 Don McFarland – all day, Ron Ayres - PM

Manager for week 3 is Steve Mabrey

January 18 MLK Day

January 19 Terri Anderson – all day

January 20 Mike Dolan – all day

January 21 Larry Shaw & Ron Jones – all day

January 22 Don McFarland – all day, Ron Ayres – PM; Joe Williams

Thank you to all the volunteers.

Steve 317-459-6255; Holly 317-294-4607 or htookolo@indy.rr.com



Steve is still looking for a manager. If we could have several managers, they could take turns at the VA.