



Vietnam Veterans of America Sammy L. Davis Chapter 295



March 2021 Newsletter



National Vietnam War Veterans Day is a US holiday observed annually on March 29. It recognizes veterans who served in the US military during the Vietnam War. It should not be confused with Veterans Day.

On March 28, 2017, President Trump signed the *Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017*. This act officially recognizes March 29 as National Vietnam War Veterans Day. The Act also includes the day among those days on which the US flag should especially be displayed.

March 29 was chosen as National Vietnam War Veterans Day because on March 29, 1973, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) was disbanded and the last U.S. combat troops departed the Republic of Vietnam. The last unit was elements of MACV's Infantry Security Force (Special Guard), actually special couriers.¹

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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
The January/February issue is out there now. There is a good article about the Chapel of Four Chaplains.**

Important Dates

March 10 VVA 295 Board Meeting at 6pm; Regular meeting at 7pm

March 14 Daylight Saving Time Begins

March 17 St Patrick's Day

March 20 VVA Indiana State Council Meeting

March 29 National Vietnam War Veterans Day

April 4 Easter

April 14 VVA 295 Board Meeting at 6pm; Regular meeting at 7pm

THIS DATE IN HISTORY

Mar 3, 1953 Soviet leader Joseph Stalin dies and is succeeded by Georgi Malenkov and Nikita Khrushchev.

Mar 20, 1954 The National Security Council tentatively approves the Radford Plan, which calls for massive B-29 airstrikes from the Philippines and carrier strikes from the Gulf of Tonkin.

Mar 4, 1961 Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with "1960 Device" is authorized by the government of the Republic of Vietnam for members of the U.S. armed forces who serve in Vietnam for a minimum of six months.

Mar 15, 1962 U.S. Army Advisory Campaign officially begins.

Mar 23, 1962 The first U.S. Army regular unit, the 39th Signal Battalion, arrives in Vietnam.

Mar 5, 1964 The Joint Chiefs of Staff orders a U.S. Air Force air commando training advisory team to Thailand to train Lao pilots in counterinsurgency tactics.

Mar 6, 1965 The White House confirms that the United States in sending two battalions of U.S. Marines (3,500 men) at the request of South Vietnam to be deployed in security work at the Danang air base, freeing South Vietnamese troops for combat.

Mar 1, 1966 The U.S. Air Force's 366th Tactical Fighter Wing and 315th Air Commando Wings are deployed to Vietnam for combat operations.

Mar 11, 1967 U.S. 1st Infantry Division troops kill 210 North Vietnamese soldiers in one of the heaviest battles of Operation Junction City.

Mar 7, 1968 The U.S. Navy deploys a new plane, the A-7 Corsair II, to help repel enemy troops threatening Khe Sanh.

Mar 1-Apr 14, 1969 The U.S. 4th Infantry Division conducts Operation Wayne Grey in Kontum Province, II Corps.

Mar 1, 1970 The 26th Marine Regiment of the 5th Marine Division conducts its last patrol, stands down, and departs Vietnam.

Mar 29, 1971 Lieutenant William L. Calley is found guilty of premeditated murder at My Lai in U.S.



The Bunker

Hours 10am-2pm Sunday

Your purchases support VVA 295 and Fort Harrison Veterans Center. The Bunker is scheduled to be at the VA most of the year. Steve is still looking for another manager to help with the Bunker. Right now Steve and Wallace Vaughn take turns as manager at VA. Please consider volunteering or managing.. Steve 317-459-6255 or Holly 317-294-4607

President's Message:

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

As usual, hope that this finds you well or getting better, to the extent that you are completely well, or as good as can be expected.



March is here, and coming in like a lamb. Which means that we will be meeting this month on the 10th. Those of you who read the newsletter will know this, and plan to attend. Those of you who do not read the newsletter will not know this, or even care. Those who were elected to office, or sit on the board should notify the President if you do not plan to attend this, or any other Chapter Meeting, so that you maybe excused. No notification, means that you are absent at that meeting. Second hand notices through other members or officers does not count as an excused absents.

If you are watching and reading your e-mails, then you will already know that there is a sign up sheet for March and April needing help with the Bunker at the V.A.. They will be there every day that the V.A. is open Monday to Friday 7am-3pm. HELP is needed from ALL of us, not just a few. The attitude of letting some one else do it and not you, needs to stop, and STOP NOW. This Bunker is our only means of support. The sales from it, no matter how small keeps the doors of the building open. It pays for the heat, water, lights, trash pick up, snow removal, lawn mowing, insurance, taxes, CPA, postage, P.O. Box rent, etc.. You belong to this chapter, and this is what takes to run this chapter. Steve and Patty have been doing this mainly by themselves for years. If we can not have any other fundraisers than this, then we should all work together to make this one a success. So please do your part and not only sign up to help, but then show up to help. Thank you.

Do not forget to change your clocks on the 14th, or you may miss some appointments, or meals. But skipping a few meals would not hurt some of us.

On the 17th, St. Patrick's Day, practice your Irish and cut a jig. Some might take a wee bit of a swig, and then cut a jig.

On the 20th, First day of SPRING, let's hope old man winter stays out of the way.

Also on the 20th will be the VVA and AVVA State Council Meetings in our building.

March 29th, Vietnam Veterans Day. A day to honor those who were there. It is a day to celebrate making it back to the real world. Your family, home, friends, and job. every thing that you went through is in the past. That was yesterday. We are here for today and tomorrow. Yet we remember. Have you told your family or friends what you went through? You should, because that is history. You are a big part of history. People today want to tear down statues, and rewrite history. But each of you has a story to tell about your life in the military, and Vietnam. What it was like. what you did. What you saw. Your wives and family's that waited for your return has a story to tell. Especially the one about what it is like to live with a Vietnam Veteran. If you have never told your story, please share it with your family. If you don't have any family tell a friend. It will make you feel better, it will help explain why you act, feel, drink, or get angry as fast as you do. They need to know, and life might get easier for all of you. If you still feel that you can not open up to them, then find yourself another veteran and talk with him. Hopefully, next year this pandemic will be over, and we can really celebrate. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE ,and WELCOME HOME! I hope that you have found the peace that you wanted after Vietnam.

Stay safe. Don't over exert shoveling snow, watch for ice, drive slower as there maybe black ice, and check on your neighbors, especially those that live alone. Make sure they have food, water, heat , and electricity. Be sure to check on those that have loved ones deployed.

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

In Comradeship,

Larry Shaw

President VVA 295

765-618-4067, comdshaw@yahoo.com

Important VA Number

VA has a new national phone number to call if you get medical care at a non-VA facility in a urgent or emergency situation. That number is 844-724-7840. You have 72 hours to call this number once you are treated so that the VA will pay that medical bill. They will give you an assigned number for your case that starts with 9000 and includes the date. Later, if you receive a medical bill, you tell them this assigned case number so VA will pay the bill.

May your pockets be heavy and your heart be light. May good luck pursue you each morning and night.

Irish Blessing

New Conditions Added to Agent Orange List

Three medical conditions were added to the VA's Agent Orange presumptive conditions list after approval of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2021 on New Year's Day. The law (P.L. 116-92) now requires VA to add bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinsonism to the list of conditions caused by Agent Orange exposure to troops in the Vietnam War.

The addition of these conditions comes after the introduction of the Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act of 2020 (S.3444). A portion of the bill was added to the NDAA.

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine in recent years has published two studies linking Agent Orange exposure to the three approved conditions. Since then, veterans organizations have advocated for VA to add the conditions to the list, which lowers the amount of evidence veterans need to provide for disability benefits connected to Agent Orange exposure.

Veterans need to contact their Service Officer to discuss whether they are eligible to file a VA claim.

17 Presumptive Agent Orange Conditions

To qualify for Agent Orange related benefits, a veteran must have one or more of the 17 conditions which are:

Chronic B-cell Leukemia	Chlorance
Hodgkin's Disease	Diabetes Mellitus Type 2
Multiple Myeloma	Ischemic Heart Disease
Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma	Parkinson's Disease
Prostate Cancer	Early onset Peripheral Neuropathy
Respiratory Cancers	Porphyria Cutanea Tarda
Soft Tissue Sarcomas	Bladder Cancer
AL Amyloidosis	Hypothyroidism
	Parkinsonism

VFW Podcasts

Last year, VFW launched its official audio platform which has continued to release an episode twice a month since the beginning of the year. Listeners can expect to have a new episodes on the first and third Wednesday of every month.

The VFW Podcast, hosted by the VFW Communications Department, covers current information on key veterans' legislation, as well as education and financial assistance programs, national veterans' services and other critical VFW initiatives.

The VFW Podcast is available at www.vfw.org/podcast. It also can be found on:

Google Play	Apple Podcasts
Pandora	Spotify
Stitcher	Deezer

VVA Service Officers

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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/>

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, 765-621-5515 to sign up.

Community Guest Speaker at Meetings

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

Membership Report

As of January 31, 2021 the VVA membership total is 342.

By Steve Anderson

AVVA membership total as of January 31, 2021 is 33.

By Holly Tookolo

Update on Indiana HB1264 & SB316 (from last month's article)

Senate bill SB316 was read at the Appropriations Committee on Thursday February 11th. The Military/Veterans Coalition of Indiana provided opposition testimony to the bill for the two provision. The Appropriations Committee passed the bill through. The bill was amended to change the deduction from **15% to 10%** and it can now only be used for **advertising**. The **Under Conditions Other Than Dishonorable** provision was not changed.

SB316 will go to the Full Senate on Monday February 15th for the second reading, then Tuesday will be 3rd which is passage to the other chamber.

These two provisions are unacceptable. Contact your State Senators today to let them know that these two provision are unacceptable and should be removed from SB316.

The House of Representatives is holding HB1264 to see what the Senate does with bill SB316.

Congress Passes Veterans' Omnibus Bill

Congress passed a veterans' omnibus bill on Dec 16 but it has not been signed into law yet.

The Johnny Isakson & David P. Roe, MD Veterans Health Care & Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 (HR 7105) was passed by the House and Senate. One section of HR 7105 was the Deborah Sampson Act.

If signed into law, the Sampson Act would require VA to improve its health care policies for women veterans, including privacy concerns and a lack of health care access for women veterans. The bill gives new mothers more time to find health care coverage for their newborns. It also would examine outcomes to women veterans' services by requiring studies and reports on barriers to receipt of care, gap analysis on services for homeless women veterans and the availability of prosthetics for women.

HR 7105 contains other bills that were introduced to Congress earlier in 2020. These bills would:

- Require VA to make disability benefits questionnaires available for public use again. These forms are used in the VA's evaluation process.
- Lower the age from 57 to 55 to remarry without incurring penalties for surviving spouses receiving Dependency & Indemnity Compensation (DIC).
- Modernize the Service Disable Veterans Insurance (SDVI) program.
- Require VA to study incidents of cancer and other illnesses experienced by service members who served at Uzbekistan's Karshi Khanabad Air Base from Oct 1, 2001 to Sept 30, 2005.
- Change the statutory definition of a Vietnam Veteran to include individuals who served in the country from Nov 1, 1955 to Feb 27, 1961.
- Increase veteran funeral benefits and authorize VA to add spouses and eligible dependent children to VA furnished headstones.
- Increase the maximum amount VA may grant in a fiscal year to states and tribal organizations for maintaining veterans' cemeteries from \$5 million to \$10 million.
- Require VA to create a database on its website to explain public institution requirement for in-state tuition.
- Create educations, employment and housing protections for veterans impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Allow veterans to remove a dependent on the eBenefits website.
- Change the SDVI program to allow veterans to receive life insurance coverage through the VA, even if they were denied coverage from insurance providers.
- Expand VA services for homeless veterans during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Allow specialty care providers to conduct disability exams in other states.
- Expand eligibility for the VA Home Loan Guarantee Program to members of the National Guard and Reserve who have been activated by governors in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, civil disturbances and natural disasters.



Saint Patrick's Day, feast day (March 17) of St. Patrick, patron saint of Ireland. Born in Roman Britain in the late 4th century, he was kidnapped at the age of 16 and taken to Ireland as a slave. He escaped but returned about 432 to convert the Irish to Christianity. By the time of his death on March 17, 461, he had established monasteries, churches, and schools. Many legends grew up around him—for example, that he drove the snakes out of Ireland and used the shamrock to explain the Trinity. Ireland came to celebrate his day with religious services and feasts.

Bunker Schedule at VA in March & April

Well, it looks like we will be at the VA most of the year. Steve Mabrey and Wallace Vaughn taking turns being manager. Below is the schedule for the next four weeks. We could still use more volunteers.

Hours are 7am-3pm.

Managers get there about 6:30am.

March 1	Andy Thimlar
March 2	Terri Anderson
March 3	Mike Dolan
March 4	Don & Carol McFarland
March 5	Don & Carol McFarland
March 8	Andy Thimlar & Bob Parsons
March 9	
March 10	Mike Dolan
March 11	
March 12	
March 15	Andy Thimlar & Bob Parsons
March 16	
March 17	Mike Dolan
March 18	
March 19	

March 22	Andy Thimlar
March 23	
March 24	Mike Dolan
March 25	
March 26	Roy Ayers (PM)



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

Thank you to all the volunteers.

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

