



# THE OUTPOST

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 787, Tampa Fl.

**NATIONAL CHAPTER OF THE YEAR 2001, FLORIDA STATE COUNCIL,  
CHAPTER OF THE YEAR 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005  
FOR INFORMATION CALL BOB SILMSER (813) 220-7246 OR (813) 685-3483.  
WEB SITE: WWW.VVA787.COM**



Submitted By: Bob Silmsers

## Chapter Fund Raiser at Publix, Lumston Road.

We raised \$1379.40. Thanks to chapter President **Jim (Rambo) LaGarde**, chapter VP **Carl Harris**, chapter Secretary and Treasurer, **Bob Silmsers**, chapter members, **Tony Towers**, **Steve Williams**, and **Ron Murray** who donated their valuable time and energy to help out.

### Chapter Officers

President: Jim LaGarde  
Vice President: Carl Harris  
Secretary: Bob Silmsers  
Treasurer: Bob Silmsers

### Board of Directors:

Ron Schott  
Tom Hall  
Kevin Ruhl  
Jon Mueller

### State Council Delegate:

Kevin Ruhl

Newsletter Editor: Jon Mueller, E-mail: ParaSF68@aol.com

### Meetings

Chapter Meetings are held the 4th Thursday of each month.

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: Brandon Veterans Hall, 115 W. Clay Brandon Fl. 33510. See Map on last page. **Mail- ing address: P.O. Box 89247, Tampa Fl. 33689-0404.**



Pictured top L-R, chapter members **Tony Towers** and **Ron Murray**. Next chapter members **Carl Harris** and **Steve Williams**. Bottom picture is Ron Murray's scooter. We assume Ron's dog Duke rides on the back seat?

Chapter 787 also held a fund raiser on February 23rd, 24th and 25th, at the Wal Mart in Brandon. Also on hand to help was **Bob Silmsers**, **Carl Harris**, **Tony Towers** and **Don**

**Wallick**. Gentlemen, thanks for all your efforts on behalf of our chapter with over \$820 raised.

## Chapter 787 Donates Money to help Iraq Vet and Family

In February, Mary Shaboo from the local VA office for Homeless Veterans called and asked for help with an Iraq veteran who was have very serious financial difficulties which affected his wife and children. Many Tampa Bay vet groups stepped up to help including Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 787. We donated \$300 to support our fellow veteran and his family. That is what this chapter is all about. We hold fund raisers all year to support our financial donations to such causes as the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holiday Meal program, and events like bringing the "Moving Wall" to Tampa. In addition, there is always local area veterans from past and current conflicts who need temporary assistance and chapter 787 is proud and honored to be there for them.

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## Volunteers needed for JROTC Program

Chapter President Jim LaGarde, has asked for volunteers to help in the Chapter 787 medal award ceremony held at various Hillsborough County High Schools in the Tampa Bay area. The individuals would represent our chapter and attend selected JROTC award events which are normally held in April and May. Chapter 787 presents a local JROTC student from a list of applicants, to award our Vietnam medal and certificate. Both items are very professional in appearance and the students are very proud to receive them. You will be among a number of other local area veteran organizations who will also present their awards at the ceremony. Please contact Jim (Rambo) LaGarde at (813) 758-4547 or chapter Secretary and Treasurer, Bob Silmser at (813) 220-7246.

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## POW/MIA

[www.pow-miafamilies.org](http://www.pow-miafamilies.org)  
February 6, 2007

**U.S. PERSONNEL MISSING FROM THE VIETNAM WAR:** There are now 1,788 US personnel listed as missing and unaccounted for by the Department of Defense. Recently, the identifications of three Americans previously missing/unaccounted for from the Vietnam War were announced:

Lt Colonel Paul E. Getchell, USAF, ME, MIA 1/13/69, Laos, RR 12-16-05, ID 11/20/06

Major Benjamin F. Danielson, USAF, USA, MN, MIA 12/5/69, Laos, RR 11/12/03, ID 8/6/046

Sergeant First Class Lewis C. Walton, RI, MIA 5/10/71, SVN, RR 10/19/04, ID 10/23/06

The League extends best wishes to the families and friends of these men and hopes that these final answers bring long-awaited peace of mind. The accounting for these Americans brings to 795 the number of US personnel accounted for since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. Over 90% of the 1,788 still listed as missing were lost in Vietnam or in areas of Laos and Cambodia under Vietnamese wartime control.

**VIETNAM APPROVES USE OF U.S. NAVY SHIP FOR UNDERWATER RECOVERIES:** After more than a decade of consistent League efforts, reinforced in more recent years by the current and former Commanders of the US Pacific Command, ADM Tom Fargo (now retired) and ADM William J. Fallon, the Vietnamese leadership approved using US Navy vessels. The detailed approval process utilized for recent official USN port calls will be necessary, as will details of the specific mission proposed for such a recovery. Utilizing this US Navy asset won't be required for most shallow-water recoveries, but commitment from both governments to support the process if needed is a significant policy change by Vietnam and deeply appreciated by the League. We were pleased that ADM Gary Roughead, Commander of the US Pacific Fleet, raised this issue during his recently concluded visit to Vietnam as part of the evolving military-to-military bilateral relationship, as did Ambassador Charles Ray, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/MIA Affairs.

**DASD AMBASSADOR CHARLES RAY RETURNS FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA:** Ambassador Ray recently completed his first visits to Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam since being appointed DASD late last year. Southeast Asian government officials, US Ambassadors and JPAC were known to be eagerly anticipating his involvement and leadership on the issue. Ambassador Ray plans to hold a briefing on his trip in mid-February for family and veterans group representatives. Earlier last year, he visited Moscow to reinforce to the Russian Government the importance of naming a Russian Chairman as counterpart to US Chairman General Robert H. Foglesong, USAF (Ret).



## Major Changes Coming to Tampa's Veterans Park

Hillsborough Veterans Council unveils proposed improvements to the Tampa Veterans Park complex. Over the next few years it is anticipated that the Veterans Council will receive millions of dollars in funding for these major improvements which will honor our U.S. Military in all major conflicts and wars. Thanks to Veterans Council President and chapter 787 member, **Dave Braun** for these diagrams.



## Election of Chapter Officers at the April 26th Meeting



### Come and Vote.

Anyone who wants to run for chapter President, Vice President, Secretary, or Treasurer



Please contact **Bob Silmser** at 813-220-3031 or e-mail: [Rafkirk64@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:Rafkirk64@tampabay.rr.com).

Those of you who have different thoughts regarding the management of chapter 787 and how things have been handled in the past, now have a chance to step up and take charge!

## This Month during the War in Vietnam

**March 1968:** The U.S. Army's Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 11th Brigade, Americal Division, and the incident at My Lai, South Vietnam.

**March 1969:** Nixon ordered the secret bombing of Cambodia. Intended to wipe out North Vietnamese and NLF base camps along the border with South Vietnam in order to provide time for the buildup of the ARVN, the campaign failed.

**March 1972:** When North Vietnam launched the offensive in 1972 it had every reason to be confident of victory. US forces had been gradually withdrawing from South Vietnam for the previous three years, mass demonstration against American involvement in the conflict, and South Vietnamese failure during [Operation Lam Son 719](#) added to the DRV's confidence. However, it was during this offensive that the North Vietnamese failed as the Army of the Republic of Vietnam ([ARVN](#)) put up heavy resistance and inflicted much damage on their opponents, the result was a military disaster for North Vietnam.

The offensive began on 30 March 1972, when 200,000 [People's Army of Vietnam](#) (PAVN) troops under the command of General [Vo Nguyen Giap](#), crossed the [Demilitarized Zone](#) and attacked the three northernmost provinces of South Vietnam. Rolling over the border outposts, PAVN then attacked the city of Quang Tri from the North and West. This wave of attacks was followed by offensives against Kontum Province on 12 April and the city of [An Loc](#), in Binh Long Province on 19 April. The second wave of the offensive was designed to split South Vietnam in two by driving through the Central Highlands to the sea. The attack on Quang Tri was met by heavy aerial bombardment by aircraft of the [United States Navy](#). [B-52 Stratofortress](#) bombers were used to extend the air strikes against North Vietnamese forces in the DMZ zone on 4 April, and into areas of North Vietnam on 10 April, in a bombing campaign unprecedented during the Vietnam War. The capital of [Hanoi](#) was bombed on 15 April.

Quang Tri fell to PAVN on 1 May. In response, the US and South Vietnamese withdrew from the [Paris Peace Talks](#) three days later, although talks resumed on 13 July. PAVN soon pressed the attack southward from Quang Tri southward toward Hue, where they were rebuffed with the assistance of American air support on 5 May. The US military reinforced aircraft by shuttling squadrons in from as far away as Japan and the continental US. The aerial armada continued to provide support to South Vietnamese troops, and began [Operation Linebacker I](#)

Simultaneously, the US continued to withdraw combat troops from South Vietnam, culminating in the departure of the last US combat troops from South Vietnam on 23 August. With *Linebacker I* underway, the PAVN offensive was slowed by supply shortages. PAVN withdrew from the offensive on Kontum on 30 May, and An Loc, which had been besieged unsuccessfully by the communists, was relieved on 11 July.

ARVN launched an offensive to re-take Quang Tri on 28 June, finally recapturing the city on 16 September. One-tenth of the DRV's air force was destroyed during the bombing campaign by the end of September.



Submitted By: Jon Mueller

### Quote

April 1775, village green at Lexington, 200 British infantry led by Major John Pitcairn of the Royal Marines found its way blocked by a line of fifty American militiamen. The militia commander, John Parker, gave his orders: "Stand your ground. Don't fire unless fired upon. But if they want to have a war, let it begin here."

At nearby Concord, the British fired on the local militia and the American volley came back in force. Lt. Col Francis Smith of the British 10th Regiment of Foot, in command while on the return march home, was fired upon by American muskets from behind trees, rocks, fence posts, and all along the route, as militiamen from town after town turned out to fight the lobster backs. That these Americans were Indian fighters became apparent when the British troops found one of their own lying by the roadside: he had been scalped, ears severed, and brains removed, perhaps for a stew. *From the Book "Don't Tread on Me" by H. W. Crocker III.*

## Anheuser-Busch Extends Heres to Heroes

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AnHeuser-Busch has announced that, through 2007, members of the active-duty military representing all five service branches may enter any one of Anheuser-Busch's SeaWorld, Busch Gardens or Sesame Place parks with a single-day complimentary admission. The offer includes active members of a reserve or National Guard unit and up to three direct dependents.

Dependents do not have to be accompanied by their service member, although an adult must accompany minor dependents. Parks available: SeaWorld Orlando, San Diego, or San Antonio; Busch Gardens Tampa Bay or Williamsburg; Sesame Place; Water Country USA; and Adventure Island. Park operating schedules and registration forms are available at [www.herosalute.com](http://www.herosalute.com).

Participants also can gain admittance at the entrance plaza of a participating park. A Defense Department photo ID will be required.

Patrick W. Welch  
President - Chapter 77  
Vietnam Veterans of America  
VVA New York State Council - Chairman Membership Committee  
VVA Region 2 - Alternate Director to Fred Elliot  
VVA National - Vice Chairman Government Affairs Committee  
VVA National - Member Public Affairs Committee  
[www.vva77.org](http://www.vva77.org)

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## Help a Gold Star Mother

Chapter 121 is has launched a campaign in conjunction with Georgie Carter, Gold Star Mother of Bruce W. Carter, to have the Miami VA Hospital named in honor of her son who received the Medal of Honor.

We are asking all VVA members, students, teacher, the public or any other individual who would like to support this effort. The is an effort that must come to reality to place a fitting honor of this hero.

Address you letters to "Whom It May Concern" and send them to the following address and then the letters of support will be given to the appropriate officials.

**Frank Kovac**  
**11161 S.W. 57 Ave.**  
**Miami, Florida**  
**33173-1103**

This is a combined effort by all VVA Chapters which is in keeping with our founding principle of "Never Again shall one generation of veterans abandon another generation of veterans."

Thank you in advance of your support.

Tom Hall, Treasurer  
Vietnam Veterans of America  
Florida State Council

**Medal of Honor Winners of the Vietnam War.**

**The Bravest of the Brave**



**OUELLET, DAVID G.**

Rank and organization: Seaman, U.S. Navy, River Squadron 5, My Tho Detachment 532. Place and date: Mekong River, Republic of Vietnam, 6 March 1967. Entered service at: Boston, Mass. Born: 13 June, 1944, Newton, Mass. Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. As the forward machine gunner on River Patrol Boat (PBR) 124, which was on patrol during the early evening hours, Seaman Ouellet observed suspicious activity near the river bank, alerted his boat captain, and recommended movement of the boat to the area to investigate. While the PBR was making a high-speed run along the river bank, Seaman Ouellet spotted an incoming enemy grenade falling toward the boat. He immediately left the protected position of his gun mount and ran aft for the full length of the speeding boat, shouting to his fellow crewmembers to take cover. Observing the boat captain standing unprotected on the boat, Seaman Ouellet bounded on to the engine compartment cover, and pushed the boat captain down to safety. In the split second that followed the grenade's landing, and in the face of certain death, Seaman Ouellet fearlessly placed himself between the deadly missile and his shipmates, courageously absorbing most of the blast fragments with his body in order to protect his shipmates from injury and death. His extraordinary heroism and his selfless and courageous actions on behalf of his comrades at the expense of his life were in the finest traditions of the U.S. Naval



**Vietnam Vet to Get Medal of Honor**

Army Times February 26 2007

A retired Army officer whose wing man in a Vietnam helicopter mission was awarded the Medal of Honor in 2001 has also been named to receive the nation's highest award for valor.

Retired Maj. Bruce P. Crandall, a native of Olympia, Wash, will receive the award from President Bush in a February 26 ceremony at the White House.



Crandall's heroics at Landing Zone X-Ray on November 14 1965, at Ia Drang, Vietnam were depicted in the 2002 film "We Were Soldiers." He flew an unarmed helicopter on 14 missions to rescue soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry regiment, and resupply them with ammunition, despite intense enemy fire.

Crandall used three different helicopters, two were shot up so bad they would no longer fly.

**Resolution Creates Medal of Honor Day**

Week of February 26, 2007

A resolution passed recently by the U.S. Senate designates March 25, 2007 as "National Medal of Honor Day." The day is set aside to acknowledge the more than 3,400 individuals who have received the nation's highest honor. According the Medal of Honor Society, there are presently only 111 living individuals who have received the Medal of Honor. For more information, visit the [Home of Heroes website](#) and the [Congressional Medal of Honor Society website](#).



Letter from our U.S. Congressman



Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Michael Bilirakis  
Ninth District  
Florida

September 20, 2006

Vietnam Veterans of America  
Chapter 787  
PO Box 89247  
Tampa, FL 33689-0404

Dear Comrades:

Long before I ever served in the House of Representatives, I felt a deep sense of commitment to our community. Having grown up during an era when families and neighbors had to rely on each other, I witnessed firsthand the transforming results of the generosity of volunteers. While those experiences served to motivate me initially, volunteering has since become its own reward! The more volunteer opportunities I accept the more I desire to give.

In that same vein, year after year, the members of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 787 have generously given of their time, talents, and resources. In fact, the dedication of your members has been an inspiration.

Former President Ronald Reagan, once commented, "No matter how big and powerful government gets, and how many services it provides, it can never take the place of volunteers." Your community service truly honors the dead by helping the living build better lives and a better nation.

In appreciation, I am pleased to present Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 787 this Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition. I salute you for your service and thank you for your continuing patriotism and comradeship.

Sincerely yours,

*Mike*  
Michael Bilirakis  
Member of Congress

Chapter Membership Rewards



Any member of Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 787, in good standing, who sponsors a new V.V.A. or A.V.V.A member to Chapter 787 will be rewarded with his or her yearly dues paid for up to a maximum of three years.

Therefore, if you know of any Vietnam Vet, Era Vet, or any other person (non-vet) who may be interested in joining our select group under the General Membership or A.V.V. A. program, now is the time to contact them and save some money on your next annual due's payment.



## Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Time
<b><u>March 2007</u></b>		
8th Thursday	Board of Directors Meeting, Jon's House	6:30 PM
9th Friday	Fund Raiser, Publix Bloomingdale & Lithia Pinecrest Rd.	11:00 AM to 7:00 PM
9th—11th	Florida State Council Meeting, Orlando Fl.	
10th Saturday	Fund Raiser, Publix Bloomingdale & Lithia Pinecrest Rd.	8:00 AM to 4:00 PM
22nd Thursday	Chapter Meeting, Veterans Hall, Brandon Fl.	7:00 PM
<b><u>April 2007</u></b>		
6th Friday	Fund Raiser, Publix, Fish Hawk Blvd. and Lithia Pinecrest	11:00 AM to 7:00 PM
7th Saturday	Fund Raiser, Publix, Fish Hawk Blvd. and Lithia Pinecrest	8:00 AM to 4:00 PM
12th Thursday	Board of Directors Meeting, Jon's House	6:30 PM
26th Thursday	Chapter Meeting, Vote for Officers, Veterans Hall, Brandon Fl.	7:00 PM
28th Saturday	Annual Chapter Auto Show, location and time, to be determined	

Submitted By: Jon Mueller

## Social Security and Military Service

Week of February 12, 2007

If you served in the military from 1940 through 1956, including attendance at a service academy, Social Security may credit you with \$160 a month in earnings for military service from September 16, 1940, through December 31, 1956, if (1) you were honorably discharged after 90 or more days of service, or you were released because of a disability or injury received in the line of duty; or (2) you are applying for survivors benefits based on a veteran's work and the veteran died while on active duty. When you apply for Social Security benefits, you will be asked for your DD Form 214 or information about your reserve or National Guard service. For more information, visit the web site at <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10017.html>.

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## Financial Status of Chapter 787 as of February 8 2007

Checking Account.....\$5,752.50 (Moving Wall Fund..\$3,743.00, Merch/Misc..\$1386.50, Holiday Meals Fund...\$634.00)

Household Goods.....\$2709.02 (Convention Fund.....\$2114.54 Household.....\$ 593.92)

**All Accounts Total: \$8,538.32**

**Thanks to our Treasurer Bob Silmsr**



# Membership Application

Membership is open to U.S. armed forces veterans who served on active duty (for other than training purposes) in the Republic of Vietnam between February 28th 1961 and May 7, 1975, or in any duty location between August 5, 1964 and May 7, 1975.

## Vietnam Veterans of America

Send to: VVA Chapter 787, P.O. Box 89247, Tampa Fl. 33689-0404



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. # \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work or Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter #787 Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_

## Membership Type:

Individual: 1 year \_\_\_\_\_ \$20 3 years \_\_\_\_\_ \$50. Associate: 1 year \_\_\_\_\_ \$20 3 years \_\_\_\_\_ \$50

Life Member Options: \_\_\_\_\_ Life Member Ages 49 and Under: \$250, \_\_\_\_\_ Life Member Ages 50-55: \$225, \_\_\_\_\_ Life

Member Ages 56-60: \$200, \_\_\_\_\_ Life Member Ages 61-65: \$175, \_\_\_\_\_ Life Member Ages 66 +: \$150

\_\_\_\_\_ I am already a V.V.A. member and want to become a life member. My V.V.A. Member number is \_\_\_\_\_.

Optional Time Payment plan: \$50 down, and \$25 per month until paid in full.

Payment Method: Check \_\_\_\_\_

Money Order \_\_\_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_\_\_ MasterCard \_\_\_\_\_ If using a credit card: Card

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

This newsletter is not the official publication of the Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 787, Tampa Bay Florida. All opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of Chapter 787, the VVA State Council, the VVA National or the Chapter members.

You can receive a copy of the OUTPOST each month at no cost. Contact Jon Mueller via e-mail at JonMue@aol.com and provide your e-mail address. You will need to have an Adobe Acrobat Reader on your PC to open the newsletter. You can also receive it by US mail. The cost is \$12 per year. Make your check payable to V.V.A. Chapter 787 and mail it to P.O. Box 89247, Tampa Fl. 33689-0404. Make sure you identify the payment for the OUTPOST.

## THE OUTPOST

### Help Your Chapter Grow

Bring a New Member to the Next Chapter Meeting.

Come and Join Us. Give us your Ideas.

Chapter meetings are held at the Brandon Veterans Hall. 115 W. Clay Ave, Brandon Fl. See map below.

#### Contact E-mail Addresses:

**President** Jim LaGarde:

cLaGarde@tampabay.rr.com

**VP** Carl Harris: c-e-harris@tampabay.rr.com

**Secretary & Treasurer** Bob Silmsner:

Rafkirk64@tampabay.rr.com

**State Council Delegate** Kevin Ruhl:

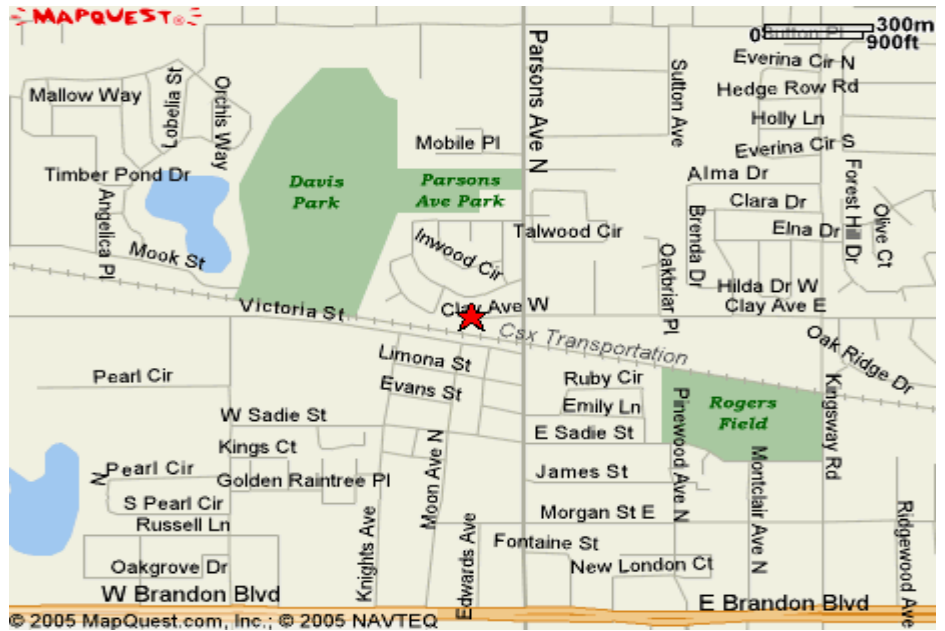
MSgtMCRet@aol.com

#### Board of Directors

**Ron Schott:** RonD1120@aol.com

**Kevin Ruhl:** MSgtMCRet@aol.com

Jon Mueller: ParaSF68@aol.com



## Important Web Sites

- Vietnam Veterans of American, Chapter 787, Tampa Bay Florida..... <http://www.vva787.com>
- Vietnam War Statistics.....<http://my.eiis.net/cmart/vietwarstats.html>
- Vietnam, Yesterday & Today.....<http://servercc.oakton.edu/~wittman/chronol.htm>
- Vietnam Veterans Legacy Foundation.....[www.vvlf.org](http://www.vvlf.org)
- National League of Families of American POW's/MIA's.....[www.pow-miafamilies.org](http://www.pow-miafamilies.org)
- V.V.A. National Office on the World Wide Web.....[www.vva.org](http://www.vva.org)
- U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs.....[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)
- OPM Veterans Hiring Preference.....[www.opm.gov/veterans](http://www.opm.gov/veterans)
- Uniformed Services Family Health Plan (USFHP).....[www.usfhp.com](http://www.usfhp.com)
- U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.....[www.vetapp.uscourts.gov](http://www.vetapp.uscourts.gov)
- Children of Vietnam Vets.....[www.geocities.com/pentagon/9125](http://www.geocities.com/pentagon/9125)
- The Center for Women Veterans.....[www.va.gov/womenvet](http://www.va.gov/womenvet)
- Vietnam Women Memorial Foundation, Inc (formerly "Project").....[www.vietnamwomensmemorial.org](http://www.vietnamwomensmemorial.org)
- The Moving Wall—Vietnam Combat Veterans LTD.....[www.themovingwall.org](http://www.themovingwall.org)
- The Virtual Wall.....[www.virtualwall.org](http://www.virtualwall.org)
- Get a Copy of your DD-214 on-line.....<http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs/index.html>