



In Service to America

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, CHAPTER STATE NEWSLETTER OF THE YEAR 2007, FOR INFORMATION CALL BOB SILMSER (813) 220-7246 OR (813) 685-3483. WEB SITE: WWW.VVA787.COM



Submitted By: Jon Mueller

New Chapter President Elected

Tom Hall, volunteered to help the chapter out once again but agreeing to take the job of President. He was elected by unanimous vote at the chapter meeting held on Thursday August 28th 2008. **Tom** replaces **Jim LaGarde**, who had to resign for health reasons. Rambo did an excellent job as President, winning state chapter of the year. Chapter 787 Secretary and Treasurer **Bob Silmsler** and VP **Carl Harris** stayed on in their current positions.

Tom Hall has spent many years supporting V.V.A. and chapter 787. He was the past President of chapter 787 from 1999 to 2004. Under his leadership the chapter won the coveted "National Chapter of the Year" award in 2001, and the Florida State Council Chapter of the Year award in 2000, 2002, 2003 and 2004. **Tom** currently is the Florida State Council's Treasurer and Editor of the national award winning State Council Newsletter, RECON.

 In Vietnam, **Tom** was with the Marine Air Base Squadron 16, Motor Transport Maintenance platoon at Marble Mt. In addition he spent time with the 7th Marines at Hill 55, and the 5th Marines at An Hor Combat base.

While in the Marines, **Tom** performed in a number of jobs, from mechanic to DI to MP.

He achieved the rank of CWO-2 as a Motor Transport Officer and Motor Transport Maintenance Officer.

Chapter 787 is very lucky to have two other distinguished men, VP **Carl Harris**, who won the Chapter Member of the Year Award and Scy/Tres. **Bob Silmsler** who not only won the Chapter Member of the Year Award but the State Member of the Year Award, as officers. These men bring serious credentials to the table. We have the best leadership of any chapter.

Chapter Officers

President: Tom Hall
 Vice President: Carl Harris
 Secretary:
 Treasurer: Bob Silmsler

Board of Directors:

Kevin Ruhl
 Steve Williams
 Jon Mueller

State Council Delegate:

Kevin Ruhl

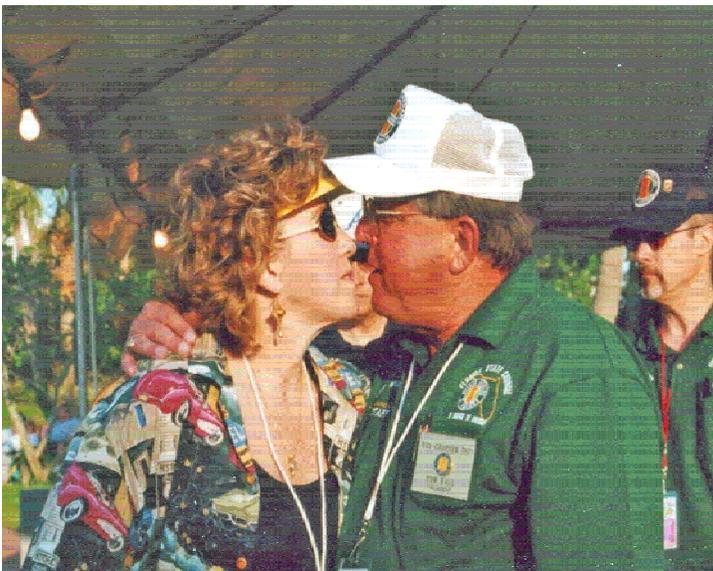
Newsletter Editor: Jon Mueller, E-mail: ParaSF68@aol.com

Meetings

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

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: Veterans Memorial Park & Museum
 3602 Hwy. 301 N.
 Tampa Fl. 33619. See Map on last page. **Mail-
 ing address: P.O. Box
 89247, Tampa Fl.
 33689-0404.**



Pictured above: **Tom** with his lovely wife **Peggy**.

Tom Hall's Big Adventure!

Tom Hall, our new (and former) chapter President, decided to make one last visit to his old war zone, Vietnam. Here are some pictures from that trip.



Pictured above left: Taken at the An Hoa Combat Base. Kids and old Momma San came out to see us from a little village. Momma San is rubbing Buddha's (**Tom Hall**) stomach. Buddha has returned alive. Pictured above right: Rush hour in Hanoi. This was taken at a major intersection that had a traffic light. Both streets are two lane. However, the way they drive is strictly be the rules of "there are NO Rules." A lot of dodging, weaving, hooking horns. It's a real trip to watch all this in motion.



Pictured above, L-R, **Tom Hall** standing at the Khe Sanh village township sign. A road across the street which can't be seen in the photo leads up the Khe Sanh combat base. Next picture Tom is standing next to his former enemy. Tom did not specify if he was VC or NVA.

Chapter aids St. Francis House



Chapter 787 donated 275 bottles of water to The St. Francis House and their care of the Aids/HIV homeless. Pictured above L-R, chapter 787 Secretary & Treasurer **Bob Silmser**, the director of St. Francis House, **Joy Winheim**, and then chapter President, **Jim LaGarde**. **Bob Silmser** said that we met this organization in August at the Homeless Health Fair.

Submitted By: Jon Mueller

Quote

"When they read the book they will understand," Galloway said. "Do you hate someone forever when the war is over? The battle happened 43 years ago. You can't live on hate and what we found is that the veterans of a war even from opposing sides have more in common than any veteran has with any civilian who's never known war."

War correspondent, Joe Galloway commenting on how both the US and NVA commanders met and shared their experiences with each other as they walked the battlefield of LZ X-RAY and the Ia Drang valley this year.

The Armed Forces Military Museum
Inc.
Largo, Florida

On Friday, August 22nd, chapter members, **Bob Silmsler**, **Dave Braun**, and Jon Mueller, traveled to Largo Florida and checked out the new Armed Forces Military Museum there. Thanks to the expert knowledge of the area provided by Dave, we were able to zero in on the A.O. with little difficulty.

This museum is first class. They currently are displaying the WWI and WWII theaters of war. Later conflicts to include Korea and Vietnam will be coming next. **Bob**, **Dave** and I were amazed at the variety of restored equipment on display. They include armored vehicles, and artillery, along with infantry weapons of all kinds. Some brought back fond memories like the 60 mm mortar and the 75, 90 & 106 mm recoilless rifle. A very rare infantry weapon, the Johnson automatic rifle, developed by a Marine officer (named Johnson), used in WWII with a very limited production, was on display.

Dave Braun, the old Army Missile man, described some of the more technical aspects of those Nike Ajax missile's that were on display. Not to be out done, **Bob Silmsler** who could not find the USAF S-1 display, instead gave a heroic account of his military campaign under some old WWII bob-wire barricades on the beaches of Scotland (contact Bob for further details).

All veterans and their families need to visit this fine display. Veteran groups on this side of the bay need to someday emulate their work, hopefully at the Veterans Park & Museum.



Pictured above: L-R, **Bob Silmsler** and **Dave Braun** stand next to the Founding Members & Community Partners plaque, next with one of the professional works of art on display. Both photo's are from the entrance way to the museum. The museum not only has visual displays but incorporates sound and also has a mock gas attack during trench warfare in the WWI display area.

For more information contact the museum at 727-539-8371 or their web site at www.armedforcesmuseum.com. Their address is 2050 34th Way N. Largo Fl. 33771.

Cost of the Iraq War Nearing Vietnam's

The U.S. has currently spent \$648 billion on Iraq war operations, putting it in range of the \$686 billion, in 2008 dollars, spent on the Vietnam War.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund



This year's delegation, which took place from Aug. 1-10, was co-hosted by Jan C. Scruggs and former U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam Michael W. Marine. During the trip, delegates had the opportunity to meet with Vietnamese government officials and military veterans. They also learned about the United States and Vietnam's collaborative efforts to identify Americans still unaccounted for as a result of the war in Southeast Asia during a briefing at the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command in Hanoi. One of the main objectives of the delegation was to raise awareness about VVMF's humanitarian efforts in Vietnam, namely its nearly eight-year-old mine-action program, Project RENEW™. The delegation spent two full days in Quang Tri Province, where Project RENEW is based. They were briefed on VVMF's mine action program; met officials from the Quang Tri Province People's Committee; visited the former Demilitarized Zone; visited an emergency ordnance disposal operation in the Cam Lo District; and took part in the dedication of a new cultural center in Ha Bac Village, sponsored by VVMF and funded by Vietnam veterans Jimmy Mosconis and Marshall Carter. The delegates also visited Project RENEW's new P&O Mobile Outreach project in the Huong Ha district. The funding for the mobile health care facility came from the U.S.

Department of State. Click links below:



[VVMF-Sponsored Community Center to be Dedicated in Ha Bac Village, Vietnam](#)

[Delegates Get Up-Close Look at VVMF'S Humanitarian Program, Project RENEW™, with Two Days in Quang Tri Province](#)



Submitted By: Jon Mueller

Not the same old Da Nang

HA NOI — An agreement with the World Bank was signed yesterday to help Da Nang become a greener, cleaner and more eco-friendly coastal city, according to the State Bank of Viet Nam.

The Da Nang Priority Infrastructure Investment Project will cost US\$218 million, of which the World Bank will provide US\$152 million, and aims to improve the efficiency and sustainability of urban services in the city. The project will invest in upgrading urban areas, environmental infrastructure improvement and road construction.

The project is also expected to strengthen institutional capacity in investment planning and upgrade the low income urban areas, which are considered the most vulnerable part of the city.

"This project will help improve the quality of life in a city with a very strong track record in terms of urban development," said Martin Rama, the World Bank Viet Nam Director.

"It also shows our solid working relationship with Da Nang, one of the fastest growing cities in Viet Nam, in the middle of the country's central economic triangle," said Rama.





Medal of Honor Winners of the War in Vietnam

The Bravest of the Brave

Specialist 4th Class Larry G. Dahl, US Army



Rank and organization: Specialist Fourth Class, U.S. Army, 359th Transportation Company, 27th Transportation Battalion, U.S. Army Support Command. Place and date: An Khe, Binh Dinh Province, Republic of Vietnam, 23 February 1971. Entered service at: Portland, Oreg. Born: 6 October 1949, Oregon City, Oreg. Citation: Sp4c. Dahl distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity while serving as a machine gunner on a gun truck near An Khe, Binh Dinh Province. The gun truck in which Sp4c. Dahl was riding was sent with 2 other gun trucks to assist in the defense of a convoy that had been ambushed by an enemy force. The gun trucks entered the battle zone and engaged the attacking enemy troops with a heavy volume of machine gun fire, causing a large number of casualties. After a brief period of intense fighting the attack subsided. As the gun trucks were preparing to return to their normal escort duties, an enemy hand grenade was thrown into the truck in which



Sp4c. Dahl was riding. Instantly realizing the great danger, Sp4c. Dahl called a warning to his companions and threw himself directly onto the grenade. Through his indomitable courage, complete disregard for his safety, and profound concern for his fellow soldiers, Sp4c. Dahl saved the lives of the other members of the truck crew while sacrificing his own. Sp4c. Dahl's conspicuous gallantry, extraordinary heroism, and intrepidity at the cost of his life, above and beyond the call of duty, are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on himself, his unit and the U.S. Army.



From the July 6th Haley and Fisher House Picnic.

Pictured at left, L-R, **Toney Towers, Lori Abbett, Gerard Abbett, Beverly Thomas, Bob Silmser, Dave Braun, Margaret Silmser, Kevin Ruhl, Elaine Harris, Mickey Taylor, Carl Harris, Marie Taylor and Tom Hall.**

Names supplied by Bob Silmser.

P.S. At the last chapter meeting, it was noted that this picture, shown in the August newsletter, was missing a number of names. The fault laid with the editor. As punishment, the OUTPOST Editor, was dragged outside by the chapter officers, and shot.

Marine Parents Walk & Run Event



On August 24th chapter 787 helped the Marine Parents with their Walk & Run Event at the Hillsborough County Veterans Park & Museum. Your chapter supplied water and banana's for the participants.

Pictured above, L-R, **Margaret Silmsler**, **Elaine Harris**, chapter VP **Carl Harris**, Board Member **Steve Williams**, then chapter President **Jim (Rambo) LaGarde**, and **Tony Towers**. **Bob Silmsler** took the picture. Chapter 787 is lucky to have these frequent volunteers.

Fla. town designated Purple Heart City

The Associated Press

Posted : Friday Aug 8, 2008 13:00:59 EDT

DUNEDIN, Fla. — The Gulf Coast city of Dunedin is celebrating its designation as America's first "Purple Heart City."

Officials dedicated a park and monument in the city's downtown Thursday to recipients of the Purple Heart. The medal is awarded to members of the U.S. military who are wounded or killed in action.

Vietnam veteran and Dunedin resident Danny Sowder — a two-time Purple Heart recipient — brought together veterans and groups and worked with the city to raise more than \$11,000 for the downtown park.

Dunedin, west of Tampa, was designated the first "Purple Heart City" in 2006 by the Military Order of the Purple Heart. The awarding of the medal dates back to the Revolutionary War.

Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Time
<u>September 2008</u>		
5th Saturday & Sunday	Fund Raiser, Publix, Causeway Blvd. Brandon	
11th Thursday	Board of Directors Meeting, Jon's House	6:30 PM
25th Thursday	Chapter Meeting, Hillsborough Veterans Park & Museum	7:00 PM
<u>October 2008</u>		
9th Thursday	Board of Directors Meeting, Jon's House	6:30 PM
23rd Thursday	Chapter Meeting, Hillsborough Veterans Park & Museum	7:00 PM

Check out our EVENTS page on the chapter web site. Go to www.vva787.com, click EVENTS then Calendar of Events.

Submitted By: **Kevin Ruhl**



POW/MIA



Sailor Missing from The Vietnam War is Identified

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that a U.S. serviceman, missing from the Vietnam War, has been identified.

He is **Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Manuel R. Denton, U.S. Navy, of Kerrville, Texas**. He will be buried as part of a group on Thursday in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C.

On Oct. 8, 1963, Denton was one of six men who crewed a UH-34D Choctaw helicopter that was on a search-and-rescue mission. While over Quang Nam Province, Vietnam, the helicopter came under intense enemy ground fire and crashed. There were no survivors. Over the next several days, the remains of four of the crewmen were recovered, however the remains of Denton and one other crewman, U.S. Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Luther E. Ritchey Jr., were not recovered.

Between 1991 and 2000, several joint U.S./Socialist Republic of Vietnam (S.R.V.) teams, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), traveled to Quang Nam Province to investigate the incident and interview witnesses. Teams also surveyed the crash site and found wreckage consistent with a UH-34D.

In 2000 and 2001, human remains associated with this incident were turned over to U.S. officials. In 2002, a joint team excavated the crash site and recovered human remains.

As a result of the remains turned over in 2000 and 2001, and of those recovered from the crash site in 2002, Ritchey's remains were identified in 2003. Some of these remains could not be individually identified, and they are included in a group representing the entire crew. Denton's remains are in this group, which will be buried together in Arlington.

JPAC used forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence in Denton's identification.

Operation Stand Down

Here was another event to help the local Homeless Veterans. Many of us in chapter 787 are still wondering why it was named "Stand Down." The St. Francis House reps and the Tampa Vet Center, were in attendance.



Pictured above, L-R, chapter 787 table where coffee and donuts were served. It was manned and womaned by **Margaret Silmsr, Bob Silmsr, Art Jorgenson, and Bill Bettison**. The next picture is of the St Francis House, women at left is unidentified (the editor is in trouble again), and next is Director **Joy Winheim**.



Financial Status of Chapter 787 as of August 2008

Total.....\$12,165.57 (Moving Wall Fund..\$6,683.82, General checking \$2,826.37.... Holiday Meals Fund \$2,125.73)

Total.....\$2,421.64 (Household Goods.....\$1,059.80 Convention Fund.....\$1,361.84)

All Accounts Total: \$14,587.21 Thanks to our Treasurer **Bob Silmsr**

TAPS

Medal Of Honor Recipient Dies

[NBC, August 21, 2008]

Ed Freeman, who was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions in Vietnam, has died at the age of 80. He earned the medal at a place called Landing Zone X-ray during the battle of the Ia Drang Valley — later dramatized in the Hollywood film “We Were Soldiers.”

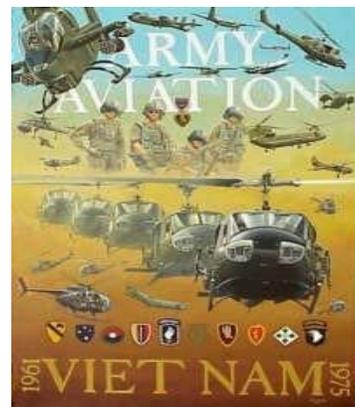


Captain Ed W. Freeman, United States Army, distinguished himself by numerous acts of conspicuous gallantry and extraordinary intrepidity on 14 November 1965 while serving with Company A, 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile). As a flight leader and second in command of a 16-helicopter lift unit, he supported a heavily engaged American infantry battalion at Landing Zone X-Ray in the Ia Drang Valley, Republic of Vietnam. The unit was almost out of ammunition after taking some of the heaviest casualties of the war, fighting off a relentless attack from a highly motivated, heavily armed enemy force. When the infantry commander closed the helicopter landing zone due to intense direct enemy fire, Captain Freeman risked his own life by flying his unarmed helicopter through a gauntlet of enemy fire time after time, delivering critically needed ammunition, water and medical supplies to the besieged battalion. His flights had a direct impact on the battle's outcome by providing the engaged units with timely supplies of ammunition critical to their survival, without which they would almost surely have gone down, with much greater loss of life. After medical evacuation helicopters refused to fly into the area due to intense enemy fire, Captain Freeman flew 14 separate rescue missions, providing life-saving evacuation of an estimated 30 seriously wounded soldiers -- some of whom would not have survived had he not acted. All flights were made into a small emergency landing zone within 100 to 200 meters of the defensive perimeter where heavily committed units were perilously holding off the attacking elements. Captain Freeman's selfless acts of great valor, extraordinary perseverance and intrepidity were far above and beyond the call of duty or mission and set a superb example of leadership and courage for all of his peers. Captain Freeman's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.



Pictured above, L-R, Edward Freeman is receiving the Medal of Honor on July 16 2001 from President Bush.

Pictured at right is one of his medivac's, but not the one's at LZ X-Ray.



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 ParaSF68@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 Veterans Memorial Park & Museum, 3602 Hwy. 301 N. Tampa Fl. 33619.

Contact E-mail Addresses:

President Jim LaGarde:

cLaGarde@tampabay.rr.com

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

Secretary & Treasurer Bob Silmser:

Rafkirk64@tampabay.rr.com

State Council Delegate Kevin Ruhl:

MSgtMCRet@aol.com

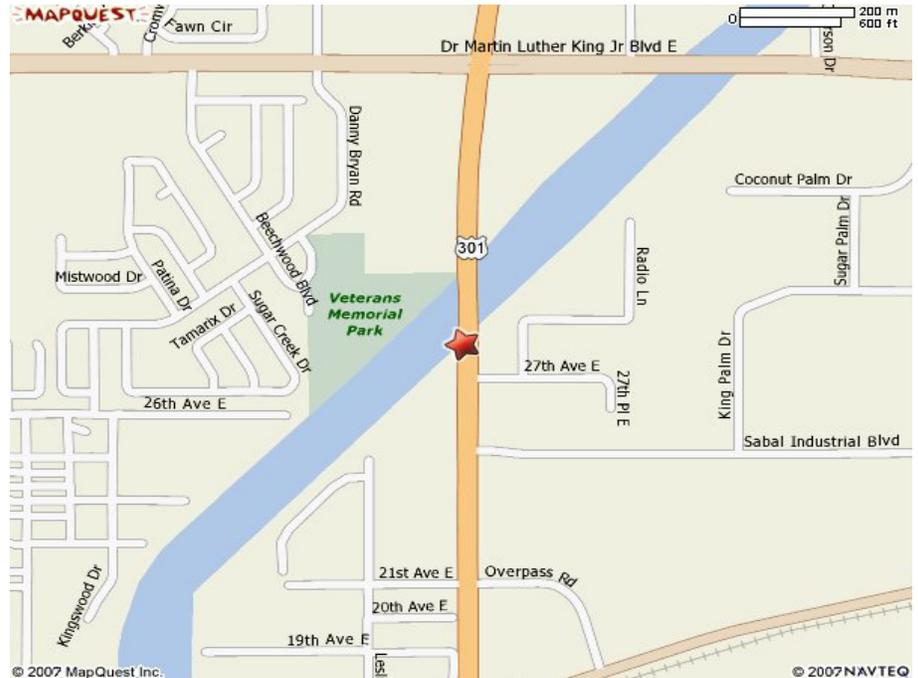
Board of Directors

Steve Williams: WilliamsPStv@aol.com

Kevin Ruhl: MSgtMCRet@aol.com

Tom Hall: MarineDI@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
National League of Families of American POW's/MIA's.....	www.pow-miafamilies.org
V.V.A. National Office on the World Wide Web.....	www.vva.org
U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs.....	www.va.gov
OPM Veterans Hiring Preference.....	www.opm.gov/veterans
Uniformed Services Family Health Plan (USFHP).....	www.usfhp.com
U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.....	www.vetapp.uscourts.gov
Children of Vietnam Vets.....	www.geocities.com/pentagon/9125
The Center for Women Veterans.....	www.va.gov/womenvet
Vietnam Women Memorial Foundation, Inc (formerly "Project").....	www.vietnamwomensmemorial.org
The Moving Wall—Vietnam Combat Veterans LTD.....	www.themovingwall.org
The Virtual Wall.....	www.virtualwall.org
Get a Copy of your DD-214 on-line.....	http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs/index.html
Florida State Council web site.....	www.vvafsc.org