



Perimeter Report

Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard, Inc.

www.vietnamandallveteransofbrevard.com

Together Then – Together Again

Volume 31—Issue 12 **March/April 2011**

The Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard, Inc., established in 1986 in Brevard County, Florida is a non-profit, non-partisan organization of veterans, their families and supporters dedicated to perpetuate the spirit of patriotism, service and remembrance to and for those who have served our nation honorably, risking life and status to insure its principles endure.

President's Message

It is now March and time for an update on what is happening with the organization, at least from my perspective.

I will first of all take this opportunity to thank Denise Wassmer for assuming the responsibility of publishing our newsletter. This is a big job and one that requires a great deal of time. The only change is that you will now only see a newsletter every two months instead of monthly.

We have a great many activities ongoing with the biggest one being the upcoming 24th Annual Reunion. Our Wall is currently being refurbished and Greg Welsh, Ralph Earrusso, Jim Day and others are in the middle of this project. Due to some issues with the lamination of the panels to the frames it is not going as smoothly as Greg would have liked but it is a sure thing that the Wall will be ready for the Reunion. And even though I missed the meeting where it occurred, I am advised that Ralph has been told that he will be in charge of the next ten Reunions. Well, maybe not quite that many, but close.

Jennifer Day has completed and, by the time that you read this, will have submitted a proposal to the Veterans Administration for a grant that will provide Supportive Services for Veterans' families. This grant will enable our organization to assist veterans and their families in a much wider manner than we are now able to do. We will have funding to help veterans and their families who are about to become homeless to lessen the immediate threat of losing their place to live. This program also will become an extension of the services we already offer in the Transitional Facility and will benefit veterans in that program. Jennifer has accomplished this "solo" so to speak and we truly appreciate her involvement. One other comment regarding Jennifer, during a seminar that she attended regarding preparation for writing this proposal she had some contact with the person who is in charge of the HUD/VASH program for the VA. This program is intended to provide housing assistance for veterans and had been at a standstill in Brevard County for several months due to staffing issues at our VA Clinic. Jennifer mentioned this issue to the "in charge" person and within a few days the program began to produce additional VASH vouchers for the veterans in Brevard County. Job well done!

I am constantly amazed at what this organization accomplishes with such a small number of members really involved. I would just say to all who are working hard to make us a success "take a bow" you all certainly deserve it!

In closing I would like to thank the organization for the support provided for my wife and I during a recent medical issue with our family. It is comforting to know that people really do care and are ready and willing to do whatever it takes. Thank you all so much.

Floyd Merckle



Florida's 24th Annual Vietnam and All Veterans Reunion

On Sunday May 1, 2011, the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall, the Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom Tribute Panels will be escorted from Brevard Community College Cocoa Campus, Clearlake Road at 10 am. Please be there one hour earlier for line-up. We are going to need help selling T -Shirts, flags, pins, and with the parking lot control. If you would like to help, please contact Greg at 321-501-6896 or e-mail at vets2gether@cfl.rr.com.

BCC has always been a big supporter of the Reunion and we can use their parking lot forever if we clean it up when we are done, so please help clean it up before you pull out. There will be coffee & donuts available for a donation courtesy of the USA River Rats. More than 1500 motorcycles and vehicles participated in the escort last year and several joining in along the way. The escort route will be south on Clearlake to 520, east to US 1 and south to Parkway Drive in Melbourne. Arriving at Wickham Park around 11:00 a.m

The VVB will host a covered dish picnic with grilled hamburgers & hot dogs to feed volunteers that help set up the memorial displays on Sunday after the Escort arrives at Wickham Park. Please bring a covered dish or snack food to share. Anyone with large drink container is asked to please bring it filled with iced tea, lemonade, Kool-aid or even water to share with the many workers. We will have plenty of cups, plates and napkins. There is so much to do, but with everyone pitching in it is easily accomplished.

Opening Ceremony is Monday evening May 2nd starting with the Wreath presentations beginning 6 PM, followed by the presentation of colors, several speakers whom support the Vietnam and All Veterans Reunion, a rifle salute and taps beginning at 7 PM. The memorials will be open to the public 24 hours a day through Sunday May 8th.

It will be a busy week and we will need a lot of help this year to set up the tents, generators and lights.

The Reunion kicks off on Thursday, May 5th, at 5 pm. We are proud to announce that we will have two special guests joining us **May 7th at the Massing of the Colors. Mr. Ross Perot will be joining us on stage as well as the VA VISN 8 Network Director, Mr. Nevin Weaver.**

“Honor Our Heroes Support Our Troops”

Tentative Schedule of Events:

Sunday – May 1

10:00 AM Wall Escort from Brevard Community College
Cocoa Campus to Wickham Park
12:00 PM Covered Dish Picnic and Wall Set Up

Monday – May 2

6:00 PM Presentation of wreaths
6:45 pm Florida Air Academy Marching Band
7:00 PM Opening Ceremony at the Wall

Thursday – May 5

6:00 PM DJ Doc Holiday
7:00 PM **JQB Band**
8:30 DJ Doc Holiday
9:00 PM **Open Fire**

Friday – May 6

12:00 PM DJ Doc Holiday
1:00 PM **Two of Diamonds**
2:00 DJ Doc Holiday
2:30 PM **Elgin Hooper**
4:00 PM DJ Doc Holiday
4:30 PM **Absolute Blue**
6:00 PM DJ Doc Holiday
6:30 PM **Atlantic Bluegrass Band**
7:30 PM DJ Doc Holiday
8:00 PM **Chain Reaction**
9:00 PM DJ Doc Holiday
9:30 PM **Viva Rock Band**

Saturday – May 7

10:00 AM **Nevin Weaver VISN 8 Director**
10:30 AM **Ross Perot**
11:00 AM Opening Ceremonies / Massing of the Colors
12:00 PM LZ Helicopter Landing
1:00 PM **Two of Diamonds**
2:00 PM DJ Doc Holiday
2:30 PM John Steer
3:30 PM D J Doc Holiday with **Caitlan Wherly**
3:30 PM Patience Mason, at the Wall Pavilion Recovering
From the War PTSD
5:30 PM Suncoast Vietnam Vets “The Last Patrol”
6:00 PM DJ Doc Holiday
7:00 PM **Sweet Water Junction Band**
8:30 PM DJ Doc Holiday
9:00 PM **Viva Rock Band**

Sunday – May 8

10:00 AM Church Services - Reverend John Steer
10:30 AM Patience Mason, at the Wall Pavilion Recovering
From the War PTSD
11:00 AM DJ Doc Holiday
11:30 **All About Nothing Band**
1:00 PM DJ Doc Holiday
1:30 PM **Absolute Blue**
3:00 PM DJ Doc Holiday
4:00 PM **Biker Tribe**
6:00 PM Melbourne Municipal Band at the Wall
7:00 PM Closing Ceremony at the Wall

Monday – May 9

9:00 AM Cleanup Wickham Park and Wall Take Down
Brought to you by the Vietnam and All Veterans of
Brevard, Inc.
**PLEASE - NO COOLERS, GLASS OR PETS IN
REUNION AREA**

Reunion Report



Well it won't be long and the 24th Annual Reunion will be here! The escort is still at BBC Cocoa campus and leaves at 10AM. Linda and Donna will be there selling shirts and pins and they can always use some help. Also as in the past the USA River Rats will work parking and of course have coffee and donuts for a donation. Ted Whitlock will be at the park working the beverage trailer and will need help.

One big change this year will be in the Wall area where we will move a few things around to open up the area and make walking around easier. The locator area will move to where the break area was and the break area to the large pavillion. The Purple Heart display will move over to the pavilion, and the Some Gave All Tribute will move down to the other side of the locator pavilion. Also the state flags will be moved back toward the road. We're hoping these changes will also allow the wreaths to be spread out again making it easier for the visitors to get to the Wall.

Remember this is a Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard event and we can always use help through the week as we are setting up in the park, and especially Monday May 9, 2011 as we pack everything away for the next year. If you need any other information give me a call. See you at Wickham Park. Greg Welsh

The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall



The Wall refurbishing is coming along and will be done for the Reunion. The 2011 schedule is set with 14 events and one pending which makes 15. This will be the first time we have ever done that many events in a year and because of that we are taking reservations for 2012 and we have 6 events ready to book. This year we'll have another first as we will be set up in Florida 4 times and that includes the Reunion, we'll also go to Michigan for the first time and doing repeats in Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Nebraska. We will wind the year up in Temple, AZ for Veterans Day. It will be a busy year but we will give a lot a people an opportunity to see the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall. Check our web site for more info www.travelingwall.us See ya on the road. Greg Welsh

New Look for the VVB Mobile Museum

We have begun a total renovation of the Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard mobile museum. At this time CSI Signs of Titusville and the Minton Road Service Center of Palm Bay have completed the exterior cosmetic work. This project is intended to be a presentation of military memorabilia from veterans of all eras. The next step will be to upgrade the interior with improved display capability by Bansbach Easylift of Melbourne. We are presently looking for de-militarized post Vietnam-era military artifacts and would welcome donations from anyone who would like to share them with the public.

The museum is a very important part of the VVB's educational program and is displayed at our annual veterans reunion, Palm Bay's Support Our Troops Rally, Cocoa's Memorial Day celebration and other events as they arise. It is taken to many Brevard schools when our members are invited to talk with the students about our country's history throughout the year.

The trailer that houses the museum was originally purchased with funds donated by, Mr. Floyd Roberts and the renovation has been made possible by a donation from past member, Mr. John Brown. We are very grateful for the services that have been provided by the Minton Road Service Center, CSI Signs and Bansbach Easylift. If you have anything you would like to contribute to the museum, please contact Don Wassmer at 321-446-1119.

POW/MIA

AMERICANS IDENTIFIED: There are now 1,698 Americans listed by the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) missing and unaccounted-for from the Vietnam War. DPMO just posted the news that the remains of **LCDR William P. Egan, USN** have been identified. remains were recovered December 22, 2009 and DPMO posted the news that the remains of **CDR USA, and SFC James Moreland, USA**, have North Vietnam on July 10, 1972, was recovered identified November 1, 2010. MSgt Reno was were identified as part of a group on October 5, was identified October 13, 2010. The number of of the Vietnam War in 1975 is now 885; another 63 identified before the end of the war, bring the total to 947. Of the 1,698 American POW/MIAs from the Vietnam War, our unreturned veterans, 90% were lost in Vietnam or in areas of Laos and Cambodia under Vietnam wartime control: Vietnam 1,301 (VN-477, VS-824); Laos 332; Cambodia 59; Peoples Republic of China territorial waters 7. Over 450 were over-water losses.



Previously listed as missing in Laos, his identified February 11, 2011. In mid February, **Frank Green, Jr., USN, MSgt Ralph Reno, Jr.**, been identified. CDR Green, listed as MIA in December 9, 2008, and his remains were recovered August 29, 2000, and his remains 2010. SFC Moreland, recovered April 12, 1995, Americans returned and identified since the end US personnel, recovered post-incident and

Support Our Troops Rally

We are in the planning stages for this year's Support Our Troops Rally to be held on Saturday, 14 May, 1300-1500, at Veterans Memorial Park, Palm Bay. Gen Ed Wilson, the 45 Space Wing Commander, Patrick AFB will be our keynote speaker. We will have a massing of the colors, patriotic music, K-9 Demonstration, Explosive Ordnance Disposal exhibition, static display of military weapons, huge American Flag raised between two ladder fire trucks, live music, flyover, etc. We will have a very patriotic event again this year. It is NOT a political event. We invite all to attend. Cold bottled water will be provided. Submitted by Ted Whitlock.

Patrick AFB ID Cards

Effective 1 May, ID Cards issued by Patrick AFB will be issued via appointments. Walk-ins will be strictly on a standby basis. To make an appointment, call 321-494-6144 or 6147. Pass the word.

BAR ASSOCIATION TO EXPAND HELP FOR VETERANS

The nation's top lawyers are expanding plans to help troubled veterans. The American Bar Association is creating a nationwide network of attorneys who provide free legal services to veterans, especially those who have been homeless and suffer from chronic legal problems. The homeless veterans program was on the agenda for the group's nationwide meeting held Atlanta on Feb. 9-15. For example, ABA volunteers help veterans who may face numerous arrest warrants for low-level misconduct in different states or jurisdictions. The attorneys also work with the Veterans Affairs Department to assist veterans who may have their benefits garnished due to unpaid child support or other debts, said Kenneth Goldsmith, the ABA's legislative counsel in Washington. *Andrew Tilghman/Military Times*

Defense Department's Announcement of the Vietnam War 50th Commemoration

Washington, D.C.-- The Department of Defense announced to move forward with plans to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. The Defense Department will move forward with plans to fulfill the intent of the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act and support a full range of events to achieve the objectives outlined in the legislation. These include: "Thank and honor veterans of the Vietnam War, including personnel who were held as prisoners of war or listed as missing in action, for their service and sacrifice on behalf of the United States and to thank and honor the families of these veterans; "Highlight the service of the armed forces during the Vietnam War and the contributions of federal agencies and governmental and non-governmental organizations that served with, or in support of, the armed forces; "Pay tribute to the contributions made on the home front by the people of the United States during the Vietnam War; and "Highlight the advances in technology, science, and medicine related to the military research conducted during the Vietnam War."

VA Publishes Final Reg to Aid Vets Exposed to Agent Orange in Korea

WASHINGTON – Veterans exposed to herbicides while serving along the demilitarized zone (DMZ) in Korea will have an easier path to access quality health care and benefits under a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) final regulation that will expand the dates when illnesses caused by herbicide exposure can be presumed to be related to Agent Orange.

“VA’s primary mission is to be an advocate for Veterans,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki “With this new regulation VA has cleared a path for more Veterans who served in the demilitarized zone in Korea to receive access to our quality health care and disability benefits for exposure to Agent Orange.”

Under the final regulation published today in the *Federal Register*, VA will presume herbicide exposure for any Veteran who served between April 1, 1968, and Aug. 31, 1971, in a unit determined by VA and the Department of Defense (DoD) to have operated in an area in or near the Korean DMZ in which herbicides were applied.

Previously, VA recognized that Agent Orange exposure could only be conceded to Veterans who served in certain units along the Korean DMZ between April 1968 and July 1969.

Eligible Veterans who have specific illnesses that the VA presumes to be associated with herbicide exposure do not have to prove an association between their illness and their military service. This “presumption” simplifies and speeds up the application process for benefits and ensures that Veterans receive the benefits they deserve.

Additional information about Agent Orange and VA’s services for Veterans exposed to the chemical is available at www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange. The regulation is available on the Office of the Federal Register website at <http://www.ofr.gov/>.

VVB Transitional Facility

Recently, the Veterans Transitional Facility has been the home of some new faces. The most interesting of the faces is the newest family to enter the program. Rena and Jay Miller moved in last month with their son Cody who is a highly functioning autistic who is being homeschooled and says his favorite subject is dinosaurs.

In other news, many of the residents have been working toward receiving VASH and a few have already received certificates. While most are out of work, they are adamantly looking for jobs and expect to be working soon. Overall, the VTF has had a seemingly productive two months.

Members Ill and Distressed

Michael J Martin, Joe Clark, Frank Marhon, Sue Merckle, Brenda Lancaster, Peggy Ritchie, Marie Godfrey, Paul Whitmore, Billy Valashinas; Our most heartfelt sympathy to The John Family.

Last WWI veteran dies

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Feb. 28, 2011) -- America's last known World War I veteran, Cpl. Frank Buckles, died Feb 27th at the age of 110. Buckles died of natural causes at his home in Charles Town, W.Va., according to a family spokesman.

Buckles enlisted at the age of 16 by reportedly convincing an Army captain that he was older. He was the last living American doughboy to have served in France during World War I and the last of 4.7 million U.S. troops who signed up to fight the Kaiser 94 years ago. Buckles later spent three years as a Japanese prisoner of war during World War II after being captured in the Pacific while serving as a U.S. contractor.

Buckles enlisted Aug. 14, 1917 and his serial number was 15577. He was only 16 when the United States declared war on Germany in 1917 and Buckles had to lie about his age several times to enlist -- although he insists "lie" is too strong a word. The Marines rejected him because he was too small and by the Navy because he had flat feet. An Army recruiter in Oklahoma finally took him after Buckles said the only record of his birth was in the family Bible in Missouri.

An old sergeant had told Buckles that the fastest way to get to the action in France was to join the ambulance corps, as ambulance drivers were desperately needed at the front, but to Buckles' dismay, his unit was rerouted and he found himself in Winchester, England, driving officers on a motorcycle with a side car. After pestering everyone he could think of and several unsuccessful schemes to simply fall in line and board a troop ship across the channel, Buckles eventually made it to France, but never near the trenches. As an ambulance driver, he saw plenty of casualties, but never any combat. He did get to see Paris, however.

After the war, Buckles helped escort hundreds of German prisoners of war home before returning to Oklahoma and meeting Gen. John "Black Jack" Pershing, commander of U.S. forces during World War I. Buckles said the meeting was one of the highlights of his life.

"After I'd given the general a snappy salute and passed on," Buckles said Pershing asked him to come back. "He knew about the four gold bars on my sleeve, which indicated I'd been in Europe two years," Buckles said, adding that he probably also recognized his Missouri accent. Buckles was born on a farm in Harrison County, Mo., and Pershing was born in Linn County, just 43 miles away.

Buckles was in Manila when Japan invaded the Philippines in 1941. He had turned down a job in Buenos Aires and expected to be in the Philippines for only six months working as a shipper. Instead, during three years of incarceration, he nearly starved as he ate each small, mush-like meal from a tin cup the size of a coffee mug. Buckles said he lost more than 50 pounds in the prison camp and he kept the tin cup as a remembrance of his struggle.

Home Front

- **Stand Down Brevard** is coming up in March. This event provides homeless veterans a respite from the tedious and depressing lifestyle. People care and this is where they show it. Past President Bill Vagianos heads our participation at the event.
- Both the **Color Guard**, commanded by Bill Sauerwine and the **Rifle Team**, headed by Bob Bodine are constantly searching for new members. Both units perform at about 6-8 events each year and are always featured at our Reunion.
- It looks like Greg Welsh packed out the 2011 season for the **Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall**. The Wall is about halfway to completion on its refurbishment and will make its fresh debut at our **Reunion**; speaking of which, is coming up on us fast. To help out, come to a Reunion Committee meeting and find out how.
- The VVB has a **Blood Bank** that is available to VVB members and their kin. When you give blood please specify it is to be held in the VVB account **#A48**. Of course, if you need it tell you medical caretakers where to get it as well. **A48**. Several members have had to use it recently and it is a lifesaver.

Perimeter Report is published bi-monthly by the Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard, Inc. We welcome submissions from members and others interested in the VVB. Please note our website address on the front page where you will find back issues and links to other relevant sites.

All submissions, comments, delivery problems or other matters related to this publication should be forwarded to dmwassmer@yahoo.com. All submissions are subject to editing.

Deadlines will be the Friday prior to the General Membership meeting (2nd Monday of the Month). This means that any event scheduled for the first two weeks of any month must be submitted **four weeks before the event**. The mailings go out on the day of the General Membership meeting. Net posting should be one week later.

Editor: **Denise Wassmer, 321 726 6752**; Associate Editors: **Jennifer & Katie Day**; Publication Assistants: Karen Templeton & Donna Rogers; Webmaster: **Bob Williamson**

2011 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL/CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard, Inc.
P. O. Box 237225
Cocoa, FL 32923-7225

Membership in the VVB is open to veterans, family and supporters at annual dues of \$15.00 on the calendar year. New member dues after July are \$10.00. Veterans should include a copy of your DD-214. Non-refundable Life Memberships are: Age 54 and under, \$175.00; 55-64, \$125.00; 65 and up, \$75.00.

New Member:___ Renewal:___ Change Address:___ Enclosed: Life:___ \$_____ Annual:___ \$15.00/\$10.00

Name:_____ Spouse:_____
Address:_____ St.:_____ Zip:_____

Primary Phone # (H, W, C):_____ e-mail:_____

Service Branch:_____ Rank:_____ Dates:_____
Units/Duty stations:_____

Birthdate:_____ Spouse:_____ Kids:_____/_____/_____/_____/_____/_____

Anniversary:_____ Sponsoredby:_____ (ID#):_____
___ I'd like some literature on the VVB sent to the above address before I make a decision to join_____

2011 VVB Officers

*President: Floyd Merckle 264 0581 *Vice Pres: Don Wassmer 726 6752 *Treasurer: Ralph Earrusso 453 7498
*Secretary/ Quartermaster: Linda Marhon 453 9824 *Sgt. @ Arms: John Schaefer 504 7680
*Membership Reps.: Billy Valashinas; Sue Merckle 264 0581; Rod Smith 632 6702 ; Bob Bodine 242 1904; Linda Sulzer 243-8755 *Membership Chairman: Billy Valashinas 323 6475 *Past President: Bill Vagianos 431 0364

Contacts and Locations

VVB Bunker: (Veterans Assistance Program)- Ph. 321 690 0805; Fax 321 690 0106
VVB Transitional Housing Facility: 700 Fee Ave., Melbourne 32901; Ph. 321 409 8167
Veterans Memorial Center/ Memorial Gardens: 400 S. Sykes Creek Pkwy., Merritt Island 329953; Ph. 321 453 1776
Legal Services: Shelly Campbell: 386 255 6573 X 2441; e-mail: shellyc@clsmf.org
Lawyers for Warriors: Michael Cook: 607 349 9658; e-mail: Michael.cook@lawyersforwarriors.org
Melbourne Vet Center: 2098 Sarno Rd., Melbourne 32935; 321 254 3410
VVB Annual Reunion: Wickham Park, Melbourne; Ralph Earrusso Ph. 321 453 7498; e-mail: Daydrmr333@aol.com
Brevard County Veteran Services Team: 321 633 2012
Veterans Administration, Viera: Benefits Information, Ph. 321 637 3693; Patient Advocate, Ph. 321 637 3788 X 3534
Rifle Team: Bob Bodine; 321 242 1904, kbob4wic@juno.com
Color Guard: Bill Sauerwine; 321 610 7650
School Speaker Program: Rod Smith; rsmith2580@bellsouth.net; 321 632 6702
Perimeter Report: Denise Wassmer, dmwassmer@yahoo.com



Florida's 24th Annual Vietnam & All Veterans Reunion May 5 - 6 - 7 - 8, 2011

Memorial Walls May 1- 8, 2011 at Beautiful Wickham Park, Melbourne, Florida

Wall Escort 10 AM May 1, 2011 - Web Page: www.floridaveteransreunion.com

Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall - Web Page: www.travelingwall.us

24th Annual Reunion

Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard, Inc.

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