

The Listening Post

"NEVER AGAIN WILL ONE GENERATION OF VETERANS ABANDON ANOTHER"



Chapter 35 President's February 2016 Situation Report



The winter holidays are behind us and so far the weather has not shown too brutal a face, compared to the past two years. Already with this New Year we have encountered both glad and sad news. I am very glad to report that many of you have begun to accept my previous challenges to step forward and offer the use of your particular talents! That adds to our strength and ability to better serve the veteran needs in our community. We especially greet Clyde Appleby as Interim Secretary!

I am also glad to announce that, as I write this, our finance records are undergoing a much delayed independent review! Our internal Audit Committee (we need replacements for several vacancies) has done an excellent job. This type of action helps protect the integrity of the Treasurer and all others authorized to expend funds from our chapter's treasury. Several of our recent Treasurers have expressed their concerns for assuming that responsibility in the long absence of such a review. I am confident that the results of this objective appraisal will put to rest any future interpretations.

However, it is my sad duty to once again announce the passing of Life Member, Robert Jones, from our membership. Sadder yet is the fact

that I was only now made aware that he had passed away... last May, via return mail! He was the member who contributed the custom-made corn hole set and several other items that were a part of our Christmas Potluck's Silent Auction. We are now in the process of trying to contact Bob's next of kin to determine what further assistance we can render the family and/or their desires for the traditional memorial we can provide.

We also offer Honor Guard member, Jim Davis and his wife Jan, our sympathies on the recent passing of Jan's sister. Our thoughts and prayers go with their family during this time of loss. Please remember to avail yourself of the resources that our chapter's chaplain can bring to your aid when faced with such tough family trials.

You may be aware that I have been struggling for some time with developing a system that will help our chapter stay in closer communication with each other. Then we should all but eliminate being out of touch with each other's specific needs. Then we can be there in a timely manner to assist your family members, particularly at the time of demise.

By this time next month, I hope to unveil a plan that can be embellished by the dictates of future need to better stay in touch with each other. In the interim, it is extremely important that you make your relatives and friends aware of how to reach us via our chapter phone, address, or website in the event you become incapacitated, either temporarily or permanently! Meanwhile you're able, please let us see your smiling face soon! How about at our next scheduled meeting?

2015-2016 Officers

Gene Shurtz / Pres.

Dick Nolte/ V. Pres.

George Hart / 2nd V.P

Clyde Appleby/Secretary

Al Meadows/Treasurer

Board Members

Bob Stewart / till 2018

Steve Benner / till 2016

Ralph Wineland/till 2016

Tom Loomis/till 2017

AVVA/Jerry Eversman

Office (419)-242-4293

Chaplin/419.350.4105

Interim Secretary Sworn In



Clyde Appleby takes oath of office after being appointed by board members to fill the vacant office until elections in April. At that time he will have to stand for office, following normal election procedure. Everyone that can should attend the March 2016 meeting to start election nominations, in April 2016 we will have more nominations and the election of officers and 2 board members.

February 2016 Meeting

Sunday February 14, 2016 at 7 p.m.

LAKE TOWNSHIP BUILDING

Corner, St. Rt. 795 and Cummings Rd.

Lake Township, Wood County

"Coffee and fellowship at 6:30 p.m."

Vietnam By Rick Rogers VVA

All was silent: the rain came down
Thoughts of her and his home town
He faced the thought of no return
And for his girl his heart did yearn

In the stillness and the rain
He longed for home; yet he refrained
Friends and brothers both alive and dead
Filled his mind, his heart, and his head

A tracer round clears his head
His friend, his brother lays there dead
Roll to the left and shift to the right
Weapons blaze throughout the night

Hiss of rockets fill the air
Medics tend the men with care
They fight with passion; with heart and pride
Some survive while many died

Returning home the war behind
He faces a war of a different kind
No flags will wave; no tear filled eyes
Hateful words and hateful cries

Spurned and hated here at home
From town to town he's made to roam
Sounds of war far away
Here at home no place to stay

Why was he the enemy?
While he had fought to keep them free
He sees their faces one by one
and knows what each had really done

Some had come of free accord
Others came at Sam's own word
Not the same as when they came
Battle proven: some dead some lame

Lasting thoughts of friend and brother
They had fought to save each other
Black or white no one cared
Life and death is what they shared

Village by village they passed on by
Praying, hoping that none would die
Midnight came and all survive
Weary and worn, yet still alive

Test of will these men had shown
The kind of men that they've become
Doing what they had to do
Old Glory waves for me and you

Each name is etched upon the wall
Of young and old who gave their all
Men and women had stood war's grim test
These were soldiers America's best

**A Message From Chris Roper
AVVA Chapter 35 Member**

Fellow Airborne troops, My name is Chris Roper. I am currently the Secretary/Treasurer of the 82nd Airborne Division Association - Toledo Chapter and a AVVA member. We are undertaking a challenge to revitalize our local chapter of the 82nd Airborne Division Assn., for the benefit of all airborne active duty and veteran 82nd Div. Assn. members, which they deserve.. Membership is open to all branches of the US Military that have/had held verifiable jump status. I would like every members input by contacting me either by email ropetchris2@gmail.com or call [419-205-2702](tel:419-205-2702) or [419-727-3176](tel:419-727-3176). I would appreciate all your help in this endeavor. I am also looking forward to meeting you at a future meeting. Some of our 2016 goals are:

Tonight's chapter re-organizational meeting was represented by airborne troops from WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Cold and Iraq wars. Our 2016 chapter officers and trustees were elected.

A summer FAMILY fun day open to chapter members and other veteran organizations is in the planning stages, with range time at the Camp Perry (location of the CMP and NRA National Matches) Gary Anderson Air Gun Range with swimming at the public access and a picnic. Perhaps a friendly competition between chapters and the areas' various posts is in the making??? Date and time TBA.

Our chapter participation at the All Ohio Days and at the National Convention was also discussed. Local outreach to past and present airborne veterans of all branches of service and their families is a chapter priority.

Meetings are the first Thursday of each month at 7pm and held at the AmVet Post 222 on Summit Street, Toledo Ohio.

Like us on Facebook: 82nd Airborne Division Association Toledo Chapter

Electronic Newsletter

Not only would you help Chapter 35 cut expenses and save money, you would get more pages with stories of Vietnam and more if you converted to paperless newsletter in your e-mail. If you would like a paper copy to save then you could just print it. You can save to your computer for future reading, forward to prospective members, your family members and friends. This newsletter has 6 pages, some have had up to 12 with chapter news and stories. If you would like to help us out and receive your newsletter electronically, please contact Al Meadows (Editor) by e-mail at alm108wal@aol.com or call at 419-666-4924

**Chapter Honor Guard
Help Needed**

The chapter is still looking for members to help with Honor Guard. President Gene Shurtz says an offer still stands from an anonymous donor who will pay the first year's dues for up to 10 new members that will commit to becoming part of the Guard, for that year. Associate membership is also included in this offer, if the prospect is honorably discharged.

Anyone who knows of someone interested should contact President Gene Shurtz

Heroes...

Heroes may not be braver than anyone else. They're just braver 5 minutes longer. —Ronald Reagan

March 2016 Meeting
Sunday March 13, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.
LAKE TOWNSHIP BUILDING
St. Rt. 795 & Cummings Rd.
Lake Township, Wood County
Fellowship at 6:30pm

U of D Jesuit High School Students Serve As Pallbearers At Funerals For Homeless Veterans



Too many veterans die alone without family or friends to mourn their passing. Sometimes it happens because of age, but too often it happens because they are homeless.

Junior and senior students at the [University of Detroit Jesuit High School and Academy](#) decided no veteran should be buried without recognition for his or her military service to our country. To make sure these men and women receive the honor and dignity they deserve at death these students are acting as pallbearers for those who might otherwise have no one at their graveside or funeral.

“The men we honored put their lives on the line for our country and now they deserve our dignity and service in return,” said senior-year student Leonard Froehlich. “There is no better way to pay our respects than by being pallbearers. We honor these service members by being with them in their last moments on earth, and that in itself is a privilege.”

Their respect and service goes much farther. Before each funeral, the student pallbearers pray for the deceased.

They travel by student carpool, take part in funeral procession, carry the casket to the grave and share in the prayers of committal. After returning to school, students reflect prayerfully on their experience.

The program began on October 20 when six senior-year students served as pallbearers for the funerals of three unclaimed veterans at the [Great Lakes National Cemetery](#) in Holly. A.J. Desmond & Sons Funeral Directors conducted the three veterans’ funerals.

“The pallbearer program at U of D Jesuit says a lot about the school and the young men who attend there,” said Terry Desmond, president, A.J. Desmond & Sons Funeral Homes. “Their service to the less fortunate honors the dignity of individuals who are mostly out-of-the-view of our society.”

The need is great. A report released in 2014 by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) found there were about 50,000 homeless veterans in America. To put it another way, right now, the number of homeless Vietnam-era veterans is greater than the number of service

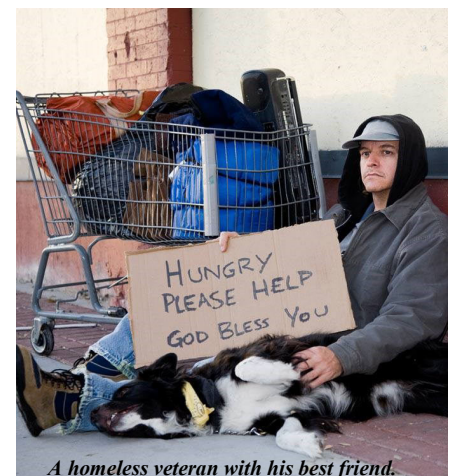
persons who died during that war, according to [Volunteers of America](#). Already, veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan are appearing among the homeless population.

Before they began their program the U of D Jesuit students went to St. Ignatius High School in Cleveland, which runs a similar program, to gather information and to train. They also received additional training from Desmond Funeral Directors.

“Community service by our students is part of our school’s DNA and a hallmark of a Jesuit education,” said school President Karl J. Kiser, S.J. “Preserving the dignity of the human soul is important to all human beings, regardless of a person’s situation at death.”

The idea for a student-led pallbearer program started with informal student discussions about ways the student service team could better help the community, especially the marginalized and those persons forgotten by our society.

Other U of D Jesuit community service outreach programs include the annual entire 900 student-body service project in Detroit called “[Pledge Detroit!](#)” The goal is to beautify city landmarks and help in community centers. *jesuit.org/News*



A homeless veteran with his best friend.

Families In Hanoi In 1965 Evacuated... Often Separated For Months And Years

HANOI, Vietnam — Do Dinh Thuy grew up as one of five siblings in a prosperous Hanoi family. The northern capital remained relatively peaceful in the late 1950s and early 1960s, even as thousands of United States military advisers aided the Saigon government in the escalating war to the south. In 1965, the U.S. began Operation Rolling Thunder, an air campaign aimed at encouraging the beleaguered South, while reducing the communist North's morale with targeted bombings. By the end of the year, more than 180,000 U.S. troops were at war in Vietnam. Thuy was in fifth grade when his teacher told him that school in Hanoi was canceled.



As difficult as the family breakups were, Do Dinh Thuy and other Vietnamese today largely view the evacuation of Hanoi as a triumph of organization and resolve. (Erik Slavin/Stars and Stripes)

In the months that followed, Hanoi's children, elderly and other citizens considered nonessential to the war effort were evacuated to the countryside. Thuy's father, a doctor, was sent to one province; his mother and siblings moved to three others. "There was no choice where you got to live," Thuy, now 62, said. "At that time, everybody had to do it." As difficult as the family breakups were, Thuy and other Vietnamese today largely view the evacuation of Hanoi as a triumph of organization and resolve. Far from the crippling morale blow that U.S. planners had hoped for when Rolling Thunder began, many of Hanoi's citizens came out of 1965 and 1966 steeled for the war's escalation.

After relocating to a village 20 miles from Hanoi, Thuy enrolled in a new school.

The classroom was built about three feet underground, using earth and bamboo for construction materials. About 50 children crowded inside for lessons. There was little distinction between rich and poor, Thuy recalled while talking recently at a café just outside of Hanoi's Old Town. Once each month, his family reunited in Hanoi. Thuy's parents bicycled 30 to 40 miles to get there, he said. "We didn't talk much about war," Thuy said. "We just spent time together as a family, because the next day we had to go back."



Tran Thi Thao, 62, discussed the war years while fanning herself on a hot September afternoon near Trúc Bạch Lake in central Hanoi. She happened to be standing behind the area where John McCain was hauled out of the water and taken prisoner in 1967. Today, the lake is a backdrop for coffee shops and high-rise apartments. "Looking back, we couldn't have imagined how well we could overcome the hardship," Thao said. Thao saw her parents once each week at the evacuation camp where she lived, she said. They brought her mostly rice and vegetables and cooked it over a wood fire. Meat was scarce for average citizens, who received 300 grams of pork once per month, said Le Hong Dang, 83. War-related workers received 750 grams, while South Vietnamese soldiers like Dang received a full share of 1.5 kilograms. Dang retired as a colonel from the Army in 1991, after nearly 43 years of service. He and his wife saw their three children once each month.



Pho Thi Dang, 79, and Le Hong Dang, 83, sit in their Hanoi apartment on Sept. 30, 2015. The couple married in 1958 and had three children, all of whom were evacuated from Hanoi by 1966, after the escalation of the war with the United States. (Erik Slavin/Stars and Stripes)

"We saved all of the good food to bring to the evacuation camp for the children," Dang said at his apartment next to Army Central Hospital 108, where he worked during the war. "At that time, nobody complained about anything. We accepted it because we wanted to save everything we had for the battlefield." Dang remained in Hanoi during the evacuation. An infantryman during the war with the French, then a Hanoi recruiter for fighters headed south in the 1950s, Dang served as a political officer at the hospital in the 1960s. Hospital 108 was considered one of the best in Vietnam, so it received soldiers with some of the most severe injuries. Dang's job was to "maintain their nationalism," he said. The general evacuations left few distractions at the time, Dang said. "In the daytime, we were working," Dang said. "At night, we prepared to shoot, along the river. We were ready to fight."

Despite preparations, the fight never came directly to Hanoi in 1965. President Lyndon B. Johnson viewed Operation Rolling Thunder as a political resource for negotiating peace, according to excerpts of his memoirs published in Doris Kearns' 1976 biography, "Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream" In Johnson's view, limiting the bombing to areas 30 nautical miles outside of Hanoi kept the war under control.

“But this control — so essential for preventing World War III — would be lost the moment we wrote. “The Chinese reaction would be instant and total.” The restrictions loosened in the ensuing years. In 1966, the U.S. bombed Hanoi’s oil reserves. U.S. aircraft struck at more of the North on heavier runs, though civilian centers in Hanoi were generally spared, for a time.

Nguyen Tien Thanh, 63, who runs a small, roadside snack shop in Hanoi, knew little about the war in 1965 and 1966. He mostly remembered his amazement at how quickly the city was evacuated, and the first time he saw the effects of a targeted bombing. “When they bombed the oil stores and I saw all of the fire coming out — the memory is so vivid to me,” Thanh said. By 1971, he volunteered for the Army and marched to the south. Air-strikes hit Thanh’s unit hard at the Thach Han River, in heavily contested central Vietnam. Thanh was ordered to swim across the river, between the floating bodies. Thanh was still fighting in 1972, when Operation Linebacker II began. For 12 days in December, U.S. B-52s and other aircraft pummeled the North’s capital in what was said to be President Richard Nixon’s attempt to hasten the end of the war. Hanoi’s people finally saw the destruction they had anticipated in 1965. On Jan. 27, 1973, the U.S. and the North signed the Paris Peace Accords, which ended direct U.S. military combat. The withdrawal of troops began. Everyone who spoke of their lives during the 1960s and 1970s recalled witnessing war. Some saw it firsthand, while others felt the rumble of bombs and the fear that came with it. Despite those memories, each person said generally positive things about the United States today. There is no sense holding a grudge about the past; the U.S. can help the economy; partnership with the U.S. could benefit Vietnam’s contentious dealings with China, they said. Few people talked much about the ideological struggles of the day. Nearly all reflected on how Hanoi’s families persevered, even when separated. (Erik Slavin/Stars and Stripes)

Vietnam Jungle — Hot, Humid And Forbidding



BIEN HOA — “Come on, come on. Pour down . . .”

The young soldier, his face dripping with perspiration and his uniform soaked by it, looked up at what sky he could see from his vantage point on the jungle floor. He heard thunder, then heard the drops that were stopped by the leaves overhead. Then he felt the water drip on his face. He removed his helmet to let the drops cool him. The rain had come — at least for a few minutes — and the more that fell on him the better.

The soldier — a member of the 173d Airborne Brigade — was getting his first taste of the Vietnam jungle: Hot, sultry and dangerous; where you walk 10 yards to go forward five; where the enemy can be 30 feet away, hidden by the foliage; where you pick your feet up almost to your knees to keep from tripping on vines; where you sit down for a break only to be covered by insects, such as ants a quarter-inch long. And where you hope for rain one minute, then are waist deep in water the next, fording a river or stream.

You wonder where the mortar team is, envying its members because many are already set up for the operation and are in the clear, free from the humid blanket of green. You hear them firing in the distance, and hear the rounds whistle overhead. They land seconds later, giving off an explosion at your destination — and that explosion seems a long way away. Your feet are wet and your pants muddy, for you crawled up the river bank on hands and knees, trying to grip something to keep from sliding back into the water.



You look to the sky and see a helicopter moving across the treetops effortlessly, making more than a mile a minute when the patrol is lucky to make a mile an hour, and you wonder why you didn’t become a door gunner instead. Then you find a camp deserted by the Viet Cong, perhaps deserted because you were coming, and it makes it seem worthwhile. Next time you might find the enemy. There will be little sleep tonight, for you are on a patrol. And it will probably rain. Rain is great in the day time, but you can do without it at night. You laugh at some of the things, though. You remember how someone grabbed you to help you up the slippery river bank, and how you said, “Thanks buddy,” before you realized it was the lieutenant. You “sirred” him when you realized who he was, but he didn’t hear you. He was too busy helping the next man get out of the slosh. This is the jungle of Vietnam, where you long for a cold bottle of beer but are thankful you’ve got water in your canteen.

By Mike Mealey *Stars and Stripes*

Published: May 28, 1965



Widow of 1 of 5 Sullivan Brothers Killed In WWII Dies At Age 93



Katherine McFarland – widow of Albert Sullivan, the youngest of the five Sullivan brothers killed during World War II and the only one who married – died New Year's Day at the Western Home Communities in Cedar Falls, Iowa. She was 93. Facebook photos

The Sullivan brothers, from left to right, Joseph, Francis, Albert, Madison and George, are seen on the USS Juneau on Feb. 14, 1942. U.S. Naval Historical Center

WATERLOO, Iowa (Tribune News Service) -- The widow of one of Waterloo's five Sullivan brothers killed during World War II has died.

Katherine McFarland, 93, the widow of Albert Sullivan, youngest of the five brothers and the only one who married, died New Year's Day at the Western Home Communities in Cedar Falls, where she had been staying the past several months, said her granddaughter, Kelly Sullivan, a Cedar Falls elementary school teacher. Sullivan said her grandmother passed peacefully, fulfilling her granddaughter's wish to see in the New Year with her. "She was my best buddy," Sullivan said. McFarland was popular at the Western Home cottage where she stayed, sang karaoke and was referred to as "Kate the Great" by staff. That's also what Albert "Al" Sullivan thought too, on May, 11, 1940, when he married McFarland, then Katherine Roof, the daughter of Bulgarian and Irish immigrants, known as "Keena" to family. However, Al Sullivan passed out cold at the altar at their wedding Mass, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church. "No kidding. Balk! Down he went. He was so nervous," Katherine recalled with a laugh in a 2012 interview. Albert was standing next to his best man, Leo Roof, Katherine's cousin, who 30 years later would become mayor of Waterloo. Albert's sister, Genevieve Sullivan, was maid of honor. "We just looked at him, What could we do?" she said. But Albert came to and the ceremony went on without incident from that point. Albert, or Al as he was known to friends, and Katherine had wed after about a year's courtship. They had met during outings at a park in the Riverview area off what is now La Porte Road and East Mitchell Avenue. "It

really was nice at that time. It was nice and clean years ago. That was really a nice place to live," McFarland recalled. The sand pits there, now part of the Riverview Recreation Area, were a popular area for recreation and swimming. She went for bike rides there. Katherine went to West High School; Albert attended Crosstown East High. The school rivalry did not impede their courtship. "I don't know, we just got acquainted," she said, adding modestly. "You know how things go." She paused a moment before breaking out laughing. They both worked at The Rath Packing Co. in different areas of what was then Waterloo's largest employer. "I worked in the lard room," she said. "That was a mess." Albert also worked for a time in the Civilian Conservation Corps, a New Deal-era jobs program, doing construction work at Backbone State Park. "They were a real close family," Katherine said of the household of Thomas and Alleta Sullivan, the boys' parents. "Every Sunday around Sunday dinner, everyone was there, just a lot of fun. They were really a happy-go-lucky family." One Sunday dinner in late 1941 was different. "We had the radio on Dec. 7," Katherine recalled, and the family heard of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Some mention was made of Bill Ball, a friend of the brothers from Fredericksburg, who was on the battleship USS Arizona. It was later learned he died in the attack. "My goodness sakes, that was something. It wasn't too long after that that they enlisted in the Navy," Katherine said. Katherine and Albert hadn't yet been married two years when Albert and his brothers enlisted, and they now had their son, Jim. Albert, with a young family and older brothers enlisting, had the option of not

going. Katherine encouraged him to go. "They really wanted to go, those boys. They wanted to be together. He wouldn't have been happy at all with his brothers gone in the service. You don't think anything is going to happen to them," Katherine said. "That's the sad part of it. Being young you don't know what it means to be in war. You think, 'Oh they're going to be back.' And all of a sudden, they're not back." Katherine recalled the day a military officer notified the family the brothers were missing. "They came to the house," she said. That was January 1943. "It wasn't too long after we got the news that they were gone, dead." George, Francis, Joseph, Madison and Albert Sullivan died Nov. 13, 1942 when their ship, the USS Juneau, was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine and sunk while returning with other battle-damaged American ships from the naval Battle of Guadalcanal. All but 13 of the Juneau's crew of 700 perished. The surviving Sullivans never got over the loss. Katherine carried on. "When you're young, you say, 'what the hell,' " she said. "I went on with my life. Gotta go on." For years McFarland remained in the background during various events honoring the five brothers, because she had a full life after their passing. She raised her and Albert's son, Jim, now retired and living in Waterloo. And she enjoyed a nearly 40-year marriage to Dean McFarland, a World War II veteran and United Auto Workers Local 838 president, who died in 1986. However, Kelly Sullivan said she brought crew members of the USS The Sullivans, the second of two Navy destroyers named for the brothers, to visit McFarland earlier this year, as she had in previous years. She also participated in the dedication of the Grout Museum District's Sullivan Brothers Iowa Veterans Museum in 2008.

During a 2012 interview, McFarland was critical of the 1940s-era Hollywood movie about the brothers, "The Fighting Sullivans." She indicated it was overly dramatic. She also said, only half jokingly, that the actress who played her wasn't pretty enough.

"She was a looker," Kelly Sullivan said of her grandmother.

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