

The Listening Post



Fallen Hero And Chapter 35 Comrade Was Chapter Leader



Edward S. Willmarth, 67, of Toledo, Ohio passed away Wednesday, January 22, 2014, at The Toledo Hospital. He was born in Toledo to William and Mina (Roos) Willmarth. He served his country in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam war, being awarded the Bronze Star. He was a life member of Vietnam Veterans Chapter 35 Toledo, formally an Officer and serving as a board member. He worked for General Motors for over 30 years, retiring in 1998, he was a member of the UAW. Ed was a member of the VFW, Christ Dunberger Post, the Dusters Quad and Search Lights D Btr 5/2. In his spare time, Ed enjoyed fishing, hunting and target shooting.

February Meeting

Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014 at 7 p.m.

LAKE TOWNSHIP BUILDING

Corner, St. Rt. 795 & Cummings Rd.

Lake Township, Wood County

“Coffee and fellowship at 6:30 p.m.”

President's Message

Dick Wilson, chapter president, announced at the Jan. 12th meeting, if the health of his wife doesn't improve, he will not be able to run for office in the next election. He also encouraged every member to consider running for one of the officer positions. Likewise, he said, we need to begin considering people to nominate.

FYI Announcements

Member Bob Hickok, has a hospital bed, wheelchair, and other items to donate to members in need of them. Call Bob direct for info 419-345-5667.

Fund Raising Ideas

At the Jan. 12th meeting several Ideas were brought up, to raise funds for the chapter.

Gene Shurtz said we could raffle off Medal of Honor collector stamps and other items in conjunction with the 50/50 raffle.

Bob Stewart said he has access to bomber jackets that we could raffle off, also shirts both with VVA logo.

Al Meadows thought we could do business card ads in our newsletter.

All are good, we need more ideas and we need members to help work them.

Members Spotlight, Monthly

We want to feature members in the newsletter. We'd love to have a photo of you while you were in the service along with a short story, in your own words, about your time in Vietnam. Tell us what unit you served with and the year or years in country, any special awards or decorations, etc.

Email to: Al Meadows: alm8wal@aol.com

2013-14 Officers

Dick Wilson / Pres.

Larry King / V. Pres.

George Hart / 2nd V.P

Jess Cogle / Secretary

Gene Shurtz / Treasurer

Board Members

Ed Willmarth/till 2014

Bob Stewart / till 2015

Dick Nolte / till 2016

Ralph Wineland/till 2016

Office (419)-242-4293

Senator Ayotte Requests Plan For Restoration of Cemetery In Phillipines

U.S. Sen. Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire is asking for a detailed plan to restore, operate and maintain a cemetery in the Philippines where more than 8,300 American veterans are buried, a year after President Barack Obama signed into a law a bill to restore it.

The Clark Veterans Cemetery was neglected following a volcanic eruption in 1991 and abandonment of a U.S. Air Force base. The cemetery was left covered in ash and overgrown by weeds.

Ayotte said on Dec. 16, the United States and the government of the Philippines signed a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in restoring the cemetery. She recently wrote to the American Battle Monuments Commission provide her with a detailed plan on the restoration work.

Bugler Still Playing Taps, Few Others Continue Tradition

By Craig Smith Stars and Stripes

GREENSBURG, Pa. — John Massari started playing taps at military funerals when he was 15.

“They used to get me out of school,” said Massari, 74, of South Greensburg, who is one of the few buglers still playing live at veterans’ funerals.

A shortage of buglers has resulted in the use of digital recordings of the song, the final salute to veterans since the Civil War.

“These people deserve that honor. Who is going to do it if we don’t?” said Massari, who has played at more than 900 military funerals during the past 10 years. He started playing “Taps” 59 years ago for veterans of the Spanish-American War.

As World War II veterans and others pause on Saturday to remember the day 72 years ago that catapulted a generation into war, those available to play their final salute are in short supply.

It was just before 8 a.m. Dec. 7, 1941, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, sinking or badly damaging 21 ships and destroying or damaging nearly 350 aircraft. American deaths numbered 2,403, including 68 civilians. More than 1,100 military personnel and civilians were wounded.

Before the war ended in 1945, millions of American soldiers fought on the continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa and in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

Today, the military is struggling to keep up with the funerals of those veterans, who are in their 80s and 90s, and has begun asking civilians in some parts of the country to volunteer as honor guards.

Families of honorably discharged veterans are entitled to a two-person uniformed funeral honor guard, the folding and presentation of the U.S. flag and a rendition of “Taps.”

Military funerals are often handled by service organizations, but they too, are turning to digital versions of taps

to fill the bugler void.

About 600 World War II veterans die each day, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs. In Pennsylvania, more than 8,000 died in the last year. Those numbers will strain the demand on buglers even more.

“It’s pretty much standard practice to have the electronic (version) ... There’s not a whole lot of buglers available,” said Ron Hestdalen, director of the National Cemetery of the Alleghenies, Bridgeville, where 25 to 30 military funeral services are held each week.

Munhall funeral director Michael Perovich can’t remember the last time he heard “Taps” played live at a funeral. “I haven’t heard a real bugler in years,” he said.

The honor guard at VFW Post 33 in Greensburg, of which Massari is secretary/treasurer, does two to three military funerals a week, more than 100 a year.

“The voice of the bugle really makes that service ... these guys are dedicated, rain or shine,” said Post 33 Commander Cliff Smith, 67, of Greensburg. At least 13 people normally participate in the graveside ceremony that includes a 21-gun salute, folding the flag that holds three spent shells from the gun salute and the playing of “Taps.”



March Meeting
Sunday, Mar. 9, 2014
7:00 p.m.

LAKE TOWNSHIP BUILDING
St. Rt. 795 & Cummings Rd.
Lake Township, Wood County
Fellowship at 6:30pm

Veteran Homelessness

The VA has made ending Veteran homelessness by the end of 2015 a top priority, undertaking an unprecedented campaign to dramatically increase awareness of VA services available for homeless Veterans and Veterans at risk of becoming homeless. Learn more about VA’s award-winning programs and partnerships that help Vets and their families find homes.

We have more work to do and will not be satisfied until no Veteran has to sleep on the street. The success we have achieved is directly attributable to the hard work by all of our staff, and the federal, state, and community partners who are committed to ending Veteran homelessness.

~ Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki

The 2012 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress, prepared by HUD, estimates there were 62,619 homeless Veterans on a single night in January in the United States, a 7.2 percent decline since 2011 and a 17.2 percent decline since 2009.

While the number of homeless people in the U.S. dropped by less than 1 percent, according to the 2012 AHAR, Veteran homelessness has shown a more robust decline.

Each year, VA provides health care to almost 150,000 homeless Veterans and other services to over 112,000 Veterans through its specialized homeless programs.

This year, VA announced the availability of \$300 million in grants as part of the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program for community organizations, estimated to serve approximately 70,000 Veterans and their family members facing homelessness.

Through September 2012, SSVF has aided approximately 21,500 Veterans and over 35,000 individuals., 8,826 children were also assisted, helping Veterans keep their families housed and together.

Women Veterans "Sister Soldiers" who served in Vietnam

Approximately 11,000 American military women were stationed in Vietnam during the war. Close to ninety percent were nurses in the Army, Navy, and Air Force. Others served as physicians, physical therapists, personnel in the Medical Service Corps, air traffic controllers, communications specialists, intelligence officers, clerks and in other capacities in different branches of the armed services. Nearly all of them volunteered.

By 1967, most all military nurses who volunteered to go to Vietnam did so shortly after graduation. These women were the youngest group of medical personnel ever to serve in war time.

Because of the guerilla tactics of Vietnam, many women were in the midst of the conflict. There was no front, no such thing as "safe behind our lines." Many were wounded; most spent time in bunkers during attacks. The names of the 8 military women who died in Vietnam are listed on the "Wall."

Medical personnel dealt with extraordinary injuries inflicted by enemy weapons specifically designed to maim and mutilate. During massive casualty situations, nurses often worked around the clock, conducted triage, assisted with emergency tracheotomies and amputations, debrided wounds and inserted chest tubes so surgeons could get to the next critical patient. Over 58,000 soldiers died in Vietnam; 350,000 were wounded.

It is estimated that approximately 265,000 military women served their country during the Vietnam war all over the world in a variety of occupations. Thousands of women served in Japan, Guam, the Philippines, Hawaii, and other stateside hospitals caring for the wounded and dying who had been stabilized and flown out of the war zone. Many Navy women were stationed aboard the USS Repose and the USS Sanctuary, hospital ships stationed off the coast of South Vietnam. Air Force nurses served both "in country" and on air evacuation

missions.

An unknown number of civilian women also served in Vietnam as news correspondents and workers for the Red Cross, the USO, the American Friends Service Committee, Catholic Relief Services and other humanitarian organizations. Like their military counterparts, many of these women were wounded in the crossfire. More than 50 civilian American women died in Vietnam.

Many Vietnam women veterans have never told their friends, colleagues or even loved ones about their tour of duty in Vietnam. The majority of them were only in their early 20s when they returned to a country that did not understand what they had just experienced. Although most were there to save lives, they received the same hostile treatment as the returning combat soldiers.

When the Vietnam Women's Memorial Project was started in 1984, Project leaders (all volunteers) were struck by the lack of information about the women who served during the Vietnam era. Veterans groups and the government had few records of them – there were no networks established and no easy way to find out where these women were. Although the Foundation is making steady progress in researching available documentation there is still no official, accurate record of the number of women who served during the Vietnam era.

According to a recent Veterans Administration report, 48% of the women who served during the Vi-

etnam conflict will suffer from some form of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) during their lives. Yet, few have sought documented help for it. Many women also have suffered health problems associated with Agent Orange exposure. Some have committed suicide.

The Foundation's Sister Search program is dedicated to locating all American women, both military and civilian, who served during the Vietnam era. The purpose of the Search is to facilitate healing among these veterans, allow them to network with each other, share their stories with the public, and complete essential research on this virtually undocumented veterans group. So far about 12,000 Vietnam women veterans have been located by the Foundation.



SISTER SOLDIER

By Sarge Lintecum

*Sister soldier, sister soldier
She went to Vietnam
Sister soldier, sister soldier
An angel among the bombs
Sometimes just to see her there
Would really mean a lot
She was the last look at an American girl*

That some boys ever got

*Sister soldier, sister soldier
She served our nation well
Sister soldier made you wonder
What's an angel doin' here in hell
Sometimes just to see her there
Would really mean a lot
We remember she was there with us
'Tho folks at home forgot*

*In the Air Force, and in the Army
In the Navy and the Marine Corps
Sister soldier was a bright light
In the darkness of the Vietnam War
Sometimes just to see her there
Would really mean a lot
She was the last look at an American girl
That some boys ever got*

"Sister Soldier" is from the recording *Vietnam Blues - Combat Tested Blues For Peace* on CD and cassette by Sarge Lintecum. Copyright by Sarge Lintecum 1990-1998.



Who was Ho Chi Minh?



Ho Chi Minh, North Vietnam's leader, spent only a few days in the city that now bears his name.

Born in central Vietnam in 1890, he left his country while in his early twenties and traveled everywhere from Hong Kong to Russia to Africa to New York—washing dishes at a Boston hotel, toiling as a photo retoucher in Paris by day and meeting leading Communist agitators by night.

Anguished missives sent to Western leaders show Ho Chi Minh trying to convince the U.S. to support a free and democratic Vietnam, but to no avail. Only the Soviet Union offered assistance.

Ho Chi Minh returned to Vietnam for good in 1941, establishing guerrilla bases in the mountains. After declaring independence in 1945, he would spend the next twenty years leading the Communist north through twenty years of war. His ruthless determinism shocked the West, and his statement to the French in the 1940s that “You can kill ten of my men for every one I kill of yours, but even at those odds you will lose and I will win,” proved eerily prescient.

Ho Chi Minh died in 1969, before he could see his dreams of a unified Vietnam come true. But “Uncle Ho,” as he’s known, remains an enigmatic figure in Vietnam today. Officially revered almost as a saint, his Hanoi mausoleum (built against his express wishes) remains a pilgrimage site for Vietnamese—some of whom spend days walking in from the countryside to pay their respects.

New Zealand Says Sorry to their Vietnam Vets

PROTESTER-TURNED-PM:
TREATMENT AFTER RETURN
FROM WAR 'INADEQUATE'

The government of New Zealand expressed regret today over its unfair and harsh treatment of Vietnam veterans upon their return, Reuters reports. Prime Minister Helen Clark, who protested the war as a student in the 1970s, made the apology before parliament to the 37 killed and 187 wounded as a result New Zealand's mid-60s involvement with US forces in the conflict.

"The Crown extends to New Zealand Vietnam veterans and their families an apology for the manner in which their loyal service in the name of New Zealand was not recognized as it should have been, when it should have been, and for inadequate support extended to them and their families after their return home from the conflict," Clark said.



ROK Forces of Vietnam

Very early in the U.S. involvement in Vietnam, the Republic of Korea joined in the effort to stop the spread of communism into South Vietnam. In 1964, the 1st ROK Mash unit was deployed to Vietnam. In 1965, the ROK Army's Capital (Tiger) Division, the 2^d ROK Marine (Blue Dragon) Brigade, the Construction Support Group and the 100th Logistic Command were deployed. In 1966, the ROK Army's 9th (White Horse) Division, the Naval Support Group, and the Aerial Support Group were deployed. In all, over 320,000 fighting men and women joined the fight, alongside their U.S. comrades. Today, Vietnam veterans in both the U.S.A. and the Republic of Korea remember their shared experiences in Vietnam. The internet has made it possible for many old friends to find one another, even though they may live on opposite sides of our planet. The Republic of Korea Forces of Vietnam (ROKfV) website helps to accomplish this objective. We foster the camaraderie between the Korean and American veterans who supported one another in Vietnam. We strive to document our shared history with both official and unofficial accounts of the battles that occurred.

Both English-speaking and Korean-speaking veterans can easily share memories and photos on our website. The user may select either the English language or the Korean language area of the website. Mr. Jae-sung Chung is our webmaster for the English and Korean language. We work diligently to facilitate communication between our Korean and American brothers in arms. Through these efforts, several old comrades have been able to reconnect.

We pay tribute to all the Vietnam veterans who fought to stop communism from spreading to South Vietnam free. Whether you served with Koreans in Vietnam, or you would like to know more about Korea's contributions to the war, you can read more at www.rokfv.com.