



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: **Bruce Burnham**

Chapter 787 Members Speak at the Local High Schools

Chapter Officers

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

Board of Directors:

Tom Hall
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.**



On March 4 & 5, chapter member **Linda Pugsley** was the guest speaker at Mr. **Bruce Burnham's** 2nd period class. **Bruce** is also a chapter 787 member. **Linda** (shown in military utilities above) was a Nurse in Vietnam, one of those Angels of Mercy we all loved to see.

Chapter 787 has a number of members who volunteer their time to share their Vietnam experiences with the local High School students. This program was started years ago by chapter members **Tom Hall** and **Ron Dykes**. **Tom Hall** also spoke to Bruce's class on another date, see next page.

Chapter 787 Fundraiser, A BIG Thank You to our Volunteers



Chapter members (L-R) **Gerard Abbett** and chapter VP **Carl Harris**, man the fundraiser table at the Brandon Wal-Mart store in February.

Chapter 787 Members Speak at the Local High Schools

Submitted By Armwood High School Teacher and Chapter Member, **Bruce Burnham**

Pictured Below, Chapter Member, Board Member, Past President, award winning State Newsletter Editor (RECON) and State Council Treasurer **Tom Hall** (center) is shown with **Bruce Burnham's** 2nd period class on March 20th.



Chapter 787's Annual Car Show

Mark your calendars for **Saturday May 31st at the Hillsborough Veterans Park & Museum**. This is always a big event for the chapter with lots of fun and camaraderie, not to mentioned some great looking older cars.

Tom Hall needs some volunteers to hand out our car show flyers at the following dates and location. He is also requesting volunteers to help set up the booth space at the event. **Contact Tom at (813) 655-7129.**



April 6 time unknown VA Bay Pine Hospital Car show

April 19 4-9 Plant City Annual Strawberry Car Show



May 3 3-8 Dade City Car Show

May 17 4-9 Plant City Car Show

Car Show Business Sponsors needed.

The business's would sponsor the event trophies. Price range is \$400 to \$500. These are very good quality trophies and the presentation to the winners is a popular part of the show with lots of people so the business name gets a great deal of exposure. Any local business owner would be proud to be part of this event. Contact Tom Hall at (813) 655-7129

Volunteers Needed to help Set Up

Quotes

Submitted By: Jon Mueller

“There is no avoiding war; it can only be postponed to the advantage of others.”

Niccolo Machiavelli 1514

“When war does come, my advise is to draw the sword and throw away the scabbard.”

General Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson 1863

Street Named in Honor of local Marine

These pictures are from a street dedication for a young Marine, but the motorcycle belonged to a soldier which his dad took and made it a tribute to his son. The Marines name was Lea (pronounced Lee) Mills and the soldier was Mike Rowe.

The two families were the first to ride across the road. Lea Mills mom and dad are seen cutting the tape. Mr. Rowe is in the white shirt and vest is a Vietnam Veteran Mrs. Rowe is setting on the motorcycle holding Mike's daughter, I don't believe he had ever seen her.

As sad as the event was the parents wanted this to be an up beat event, and that was the atmosphere even though it was done with extreme HONOR..



Pictured at left is chapter member **Ron Murray**. **Ron** is well known for his personal visits to local area military recruiters thanking them for their hard work and dedication to support our military.



Think About Children

Think About the Children was created by Tom Murray, a Teach Viet Nam Teachers' Network inaugural member to allow USA teachers and students to have an impact on the poorest children in Viet Nam.

Think About the Children was organized in 2005 and incorporated in 2006 as an IRS recognized 501(C)(3) foundation. 2007 was a break-out year for **Think About the Children**. A volunteer group of three former students now live in Hue, Viet Nam. A group of 17 from the College of Charleston traveled to Viet Nam in December to work in villages where parents are illiterate, starving and desperate. The students distributed food to families who were victims of child trafficking. The students also took rice, meats, vegetables, fruit and infant formula to Duc Son Orphanage where the children had nothing to eat but rice for over three months. The College of Charleston girls raised \$11,100 dollars and went to Viet Nam to help. The unused funds are planned for a library or school, but we have to wait for government approval before we can confirm the actual use of those funds.



One of the College of Charleston graduates is doing amazing photo documentation and oral histories of children, nuns and alumni at Duc Son Orphanage near Hue. We will keep you informed of her work. The photos are so powerful. You can read her blog and access her photos at

<http://ahimsaphotography.blogspot.com/>

Think About the Children is starting to take its place among the many who are helping the poorest children in Viet Nam. Students are the reason. Diana Bogart

raised over \$400 by selling bottled water in her school. Bryce Kelley held a raffle and raised over \$900 in two weeks. Maureen Marullo simply put a big glass jar on her desk and the students filled it with over \$100. Westhampton Beach high school held a fast and raised over \$4,000. They donated half of that to us.

We are upgrading our web site and initiating regular email newsletters to those of you who want to follow our growth. The web site will have two blogs so you can follow more frequently if you wish.

Sometime soon we hope to have an online store through our web site to sell orphan oil paintings and Eva's photos to take a lot of time and effort, but we are confident we can succeed.

It's an exciting time from **Think About the Children**. The truth is we can't meet our goals unless teachers and students in the USA care enough to make a difference. When Education and Compassion mix with Action lives are changed.

Thank your so much. Education can change the lives of a child in Viet Nam in the midst of generational poverty. Visit us at WWW.ThinkAboutTheChildren.com. Please encourage your students to help.

Sincerely, Thomas E. Murray, Ph. D. Think About the Children

Medal of Honor Winners of the War in Vietnam

The Bravest of the Brave



ELLEY, THOMAS G.



Rank and organization: Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy, River Assault Division 152. place and date: Ong Muong Canal, Kien Hoa province, Republic of Vietnam, 15 June 1969. Entered service at: Boston, Mass. Born: 13 May 1939, Boston, Mass. Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty in the afternoon while serving as commander of River Assault Division 152 during combat operations against enemy aggressor forces. Lt. Comdr. (then Lt.) Kelley was in charge of a column of 8 river assault craft which were extracting 1 company of U.S. Army infantry troops on the east bank of the Ong Muong Canal in Kien Hoa province, when 1 of the armored troop carriers reported a mechanical failure of a loading ramp. At approximately the same time, Viet Cong forces opened fire from the opposite bank of the canal. After issuing orders for the crippled troop carrier to raise its ramp manually, and for the remaining boats to form a protective cordon around the disabled craft, Lt. Comdr. Kelley realizing the extreme danger to his column and its inability to clear the ambush site until the crippled unit was repaired, boldly maneuvered the monitor in which he was embarked to the exposed side of the protective cordon in direct line with the enemy's fire, and ordered

the monitor to commence firing. Suddenly, an enemy rocket scored a direct hit on the coxswain's flat, the shell penetrating the thick armor plate, and the explosion spraying shrapnel in all directions. Sustaining serious head wounds from the blast, which hurled him to the deck of the monitor, Lt. Comdr. Kelley disregarded his severe injuries and attempted to continue directing the other boats. Although unable to move from the deck or to speak clearly into the radio, he succeeded in relaying his commands through 1 of his men until the enemy attack was silenced and the boats were able to move to an area of safety. Lt. Comdr. Kelley's brilliant leadership, bold initiative, and resolute determination served to inspire his men and provide the impetus needed to carry out the mission after he was medically evacuated by helicopter. His extraordinary courage under fire, and his selfless devotion to duty sustain and enhance the finest traditions of the U.S. Naval Service.

Flight Nurses

Submitted By: Bob Silmsner

L-R, Mrs. Shirley (McCord)

Parsons and chapter 787 member Linda Pugsley.

Shirley served in Vietnam during 1968-1969, and Linda served in 1968, 1969 and 1972.

They are standing next to a framed picture portraying the many rolls women served in during the Vietnam War. The wood frame was hand made by chapter 787 President Jim LaGarde. The wood came from a tree that Jim's wife Cathy played on as a child.

Its beautiful.



NORTHWEST CRACKDOWN ON FAKE VETERANS IN “OPERATION STOLEN VALOR” Phony Vets Scam more than \$1.4 Million and Damage Image of Honorable Veterans

United States Attorney’s office, Western District of Washington

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney Jeffrey C. Sullivan today announced some of the results of “Operation Stolen Valor,” a year long effort to investigate and prosecute those who lie about their military service for financial gain or other reasons. Sullivan and Doug Carver, Special Agent in Charge of the Veteran’s Affairs Office of Inspector General detailed eight prosecutions in the Veteran’s Affairs Northwest Region in 2007.

“As a Vietnam Veteran, and the father of a decorated Army officer currently serving, I feel very keenly the damage done by Jesse Macbeth and these other fakes,” said Jeff Sullivan, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Washington. “Macbeth’s lies fueled hostility to our servicemen in Iraq and here at home. Those who falsely claim medals for heroism, cheapen the recognition of our true war heroes.”

“The ‘phony war hero phenomenon’ plagues the American landscape and tarnishes the service of thousands of veterans who have served honorably. It strangles VA resources from providing critical care and benefits to deserving veterans returning from war,” said Douglas J. Carver, Special Agent in Charge of the VA Office of Inspector General, Western Field Office. “It all boils down to this: these phonies submit claims to the VA for compensation and medical benefits they are not entitled to, and it takes away valuable resources from those who are entitled.”

In a dozen cases under investigation in the northwest, the fraud totals more than \$1.4 million. Eight of the cases have been publicly filed and are in various stages of being adjudicated:

***Jesse Macbeth, 23**, Tacoma, Washington, sentenced today in connection with his fraudulent claims of military service. Macbeth sought medical benefits claiming to suffer from PTSD related to service in Iraq and Afghanistan, in fact, Macbeth was discharged from the Army about a month after he joined. Macbeth never traveled outside the U.S. with the Army. Macbeth duped reporters, claiming to be a decorated Army Ranger who had witnessed war crimes.

***Reggie Buddle, 60**, Puyallup, Washington, sentenced July 30, 2007, for Unlawful Wearing of United States Military Medals and Decorations. Buddle posed as a decorated Marine Corps Chaplain presiding over weddings, funerals and baptisms. Buddle was sentenced to 500 hours of community service and two years of probation.

***Larry Lewis Porter, 52**, Seattle, Washington, sentenced April 19, 2007, for Mail Fraud in connection with a scheme to fraudulently obtain disability benefits from Veterans Affairs. Porter was sentenced to 37 months in prison. Porter claimed he suffered PTSD from experiences in the Navy, however investigation revealed the events were fabricated. Loss Amount: \$134,000

Continued on page 9.....

Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Time
<u>April 2008</u>		
4th & 5th Friday & Saturday	Chapter Fund Raiser, Publix, Bell Shoals & Bloomingdale	
10th Thursday	Board of Directors Meeting, Jon's House	6:30 PM
12th Saturday	Field of Honor Ceremony, Hillsborough Count Veterans Park & Museum	10:00 AM
24th Thursday	Chapter Meeting Hillsborough County Veterans Park & Museum	7:00 PM
28th Monday	Hillsborough County Veterans Council Meeting, Veterans Park & Museum	6:00 PM

May 2008

2nd & 3rd Friday & Saturday	Chapter Fund Raiser, Publix, Bell Shoals & Bloomingdale Rd.	
8th Thursday	Board of Directors Meeting, Jon's House	6:30 PM
22nd Thursday	Chapter Meeting, Hillsborough County Veterans Park & Museum	7:00 PM
26th Monday	Hillsborough County Veterans Council Meeting, Veterans Park & Museum	6:00 PM

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

Book Report

Former Marine, Ted Arthurs, who in 1949 left the Marines and volunteered to be an Airborne Infantry Soldier, wrote the book, **Land With No Sun**, recently published by Stackpole Books. Ted fought in Korea and Vietnam, and was seriously wounded at the battle for Hill 875 at Dak To. He retired as a Command Sergeant Major.

Chapter to Elect Officers

Chapter 787 will hold it's annual election for officers at the April meeting (24th). Anyone who wants to run for the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer or the Board of Directors, please contact any of the current officers or board members ASAP. Their e-mail addresses are shown on page 12 of this newsletter. You can also call chapter President Jim LaGarde at H-(813) 689-6921 or C-(813) 758-4547 .



Financial Status of Chapter 787 as of March 2008

Total.....\$7,959.65 (Moving Wall Fund..\$4,692.80, General checking \$1,846.04.... Holiday Meals Fund \$1,420.81)

Total.....\$1,886.93 (Household Goods.....\$131.70 Convention Fund.....\$1,754.86)

All Accounts Total: \$9,846.58

Thanks to our Treasurer Bob Silmser

Stolen Valor, Continued from page 7.....

***Roy J. Scott, 71**, of Port Angeles, Washington pleaded guilty August 31, 2007, to Use of an Altered Military Discharge Certificate to obtain VA Compensation and Medical Benefits, and Unlawful Wearing of United States Military Medals and Decorations. Scott claimed he had served in the Marine Corps in Korea, that he was wounded in combat in Korea, and that he had been awarded the Korea Defense Medal, Korea Star Medal, and a Purple Heart (due to alleged gun shot wounds sustained during combat in Korea). Scott claimed to be honorably discharged, when in fact, he never earned those medals, never served in Korea or any foreign country and was Court-Martialed out of the Marine Corps. Loss Amount: \$21,960.

***Merrick K. Hersey, 64**, of Vancouver, Washington, Hersey was indicted August 1, 2007, for Use and Possession of Forged or Altered Military Discharge Certificate and False Statements. Hersey is a fugitive and is being sought by law enforcement. Hersey applied for benefits claiming he served in 1967-68, was awarded two Purple Hearts (for wounds sustained in active combat) and the Bronze Star (awarded for heroism). Hersey claimed he suffered from PTSD and sought benefits. In fact, Hersey never served in the Marine Corps at all. Loss Amount: \$2,688.

***Michael D. Heit, 58**, of Harrington, Washington, pleaded guilty yesterday (September 20, 2007) in U.S. District Court in Spokane, Washington to Use and Possession of a Forged or Altered Military Discharge Certificate and False Claims of Military Medals. Heit claimed he was a Vietnam vet who was held as a prisoner of war. He claimed to have been awarded three Purple Heart medals and the Silver Star. None of that is true. Loss Amount: \$3,500

***Elvin J. Swisher, 70**, of Idaho, is charged with Wearing Unauthorized Military Medals, False Statements, and Theft of Government Funds. Swisher falsely claimed he was wounded in Korea and that he had been awarded the Silver Star, Purple Heart and other medals for valor. Loss Amount: \$95,000.

***Carlos Riosvalle, 83**, of Portland, Oregon, was sentenced April 9, 2007, in Multnomah County for multiple counts of Theft by Deception. Riosvalle collected benefits claiming to have been "shot down while a pilot in World War II." In fact Riosvalle never served in the armed forces. Loss Amount: \$22,818.

These cases were all investigated by the Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General VA-OIG. The VA Office of the Inspector General operates a HOTLINE for the public to confidentially and safely report crimes like "Stolen Valor" involving VA or its programs. Call 800-488-8244, or fax to 202-565-7936, or e-mail to vaointline@va.gov, or write to VA OIG HOTLINE, PO Box 50410, Washington, DC 20091-0410.

The cases filed in the Western District of Washington are being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Ronald J. Friedman. For additional information please contact Emily Langlie, Public Affairs Officer for the United States Attorney's Office, at (206) 553-4110.

Medical

Received from the "Sky Soldier" Magazine, Vol. XXII, written by Mrs. Edward S. (Pete) Harrison

My husband, who was otherwise healthy, passed away on January 20, 2006, from cholangiocarcinoma, cancer of the bile duct of the liver. It is very rare in the U.S. but it is very prevalent in Vietnam. There are two known causes of this type of cancer: from contracting hepatitis C and from ingesting a parasite from the water supply in Vietnam. My husband did not have hepatitis C; it was the parasite. The VA has certified that it was service related.

The cancer does not manifest itself until later in life, when you are between 60 & 70 years old. The symptoms include jaundice. If you are having any gastrointestinal issues have the physician check for damage within the bile ducts, it may save your life.

Minn. House OKs Vietnam Vets Day bill

The Associated Press

Posted : Monday Mar 17, 2008 19:04:20 EDT

ST. PAUL — The Minnesota House has voted to honor Vietnam veterans every March 29 on the anniversary of U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam.

House members unanimously passed the Vietnam Veterans Day bill after debate that touched on the sacrifices troops made in the southeast Asian country and the poor treatment many got when they came home.

Representative Ron Erhardt asked why those veterans should get their own day.

Two House members who served in Vietnam said the honor is important because of how Vietnam vets were treated after their service. Representative Lynn Wardlow said vets like him were spit on when they came back.

Representative Doug Magnus remembered fellow soldiers who died or were disabled. He said having a day would mean a lot even though it's not an official holiday.

There were 1,072 Minnesotans killed in action in Vietnam.

Baby Carr Has Arrived!

Long time supporter of Veterans and Chapter 787, Freedom High School Teacher, Tiffany Carr, delivered a brand new beautiful baby girl Adriana Bella Carr on March 5, 2008 at 7:11 a.m. She is healthy and happy, weighing 6 lbs, 10 oz, and is 20 inches long.

Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Carr.



Chapter 787 Fund Raisers

It's that time of year again, and Chapter 787 needs volunteers to man or women, the fund raiser tables we set up at the local Publix stores. Please contact **Jim (Rambo) LaGarde** at H-(813) 689-6921 or C-(813) 758-4547 to help out.

Parris Island reactivates recruit training company

By Trista Talton, Military Times



A recruit training company that saw its end sometime around the height of the Vietnam War is being revived to train the newest generation of Marines.

Quebec Company is ramping up the Marine Corps Recruit Depot P.I. to help achieve the Corps' goal of growing the force to 202,000 Marines by 2012. It's the first company to be reactivated at Parris Island in four decades.

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

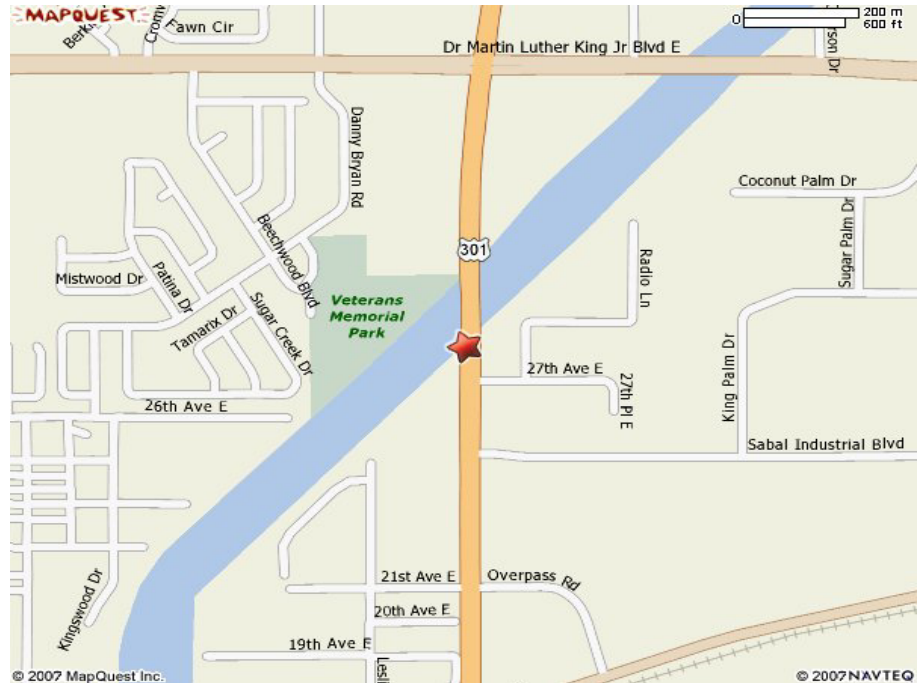
Board of Directors

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