



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
FOR INFORMATION CALL BOB SILMSER (813) 220-7246 OR (813) 685-3483.
WEB SITE: WWW.VVA787.COM**



Pictures Submitted By: Bob Silmsler & Carl Harris

Chapter 787 shows off in the 4th of July Parade, Brandon

Chapter Officers

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

Board of Directors:

Ron Schott
Tom Hall
Kevin Ruhl
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.

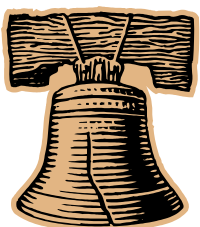
Time: 7:00 PM

Location: Veterans Memorial Park 3602 Hwy. 301 N. Tampa Fl. 33619. See Map on last page.

Mailing address: P.O. Box 89247, Tampa Fl. 33689-0404.



Pictured above, chapter 787 members stand in front of our float. At right, chapter state council delegate **Kevin Ruhl** (L) and VP **Carl Harris**, carry our banner.





Pictured at top of page, L-R: High Rollers Auto Club members, Carol Wagner, Ed Cullins, then our very own chapter 787 Board Member, Master of Ceremonies, Car Show coordinator, State Council Treasurer and RE-CON editor, **Tom Hall**, and finally, High Rollers member, Sandy Cullins.

Pictured at left is chapter 787 President **Jim (Rambo) LaGarde** showing the JROTC cadets how to do the Queen Ann Salute. Jim also presented all the awards to the show winners for each category.



These pictures were taken and submitted by: **Tom Hall**, chapter Board Member, state council Treasurer and editor of the state council newsletter RECON. Tom also organized the car show this year and handled the position of Master of Ceremonies for the awards.

This Month During the Vietnam War

August 1950: The United States commits a few dozen US Army advisors to the French in their war against the Vietnamese and agrees to pay for half of France's war effort. During the same year, the United States recognizes a French puppet regime in Vietnam. By 1954, the United States will bear three-quarters of the war's cost.



August 1954 First US Marine arrives in Vietnam. Lieutenant Colonel Victor J. Croizat as a liaison officer with the newly established United States Military Assistance and Advisory Group to the Republic of Vietnam



August 2 1964: The Gulf of Tonkin incident. North Vietnamese torpedo boats attacked the U.S. destroyer *Maddox* in the Gulf of Tonkin. A second attack allegedly occurs on August 4.



August 5, 1964: President Johnson asks Congress for a resolution against North Vietnam following the Gulf of Tonkin incident. Congress debates.

August 7, 1964: Congress approves the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution which allows the president to take any necessary measures to repel further attacks and to provide military assistance to any South Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) member. Senators Wayne L. Morse of Oregon and Ernest Gruening of Alaska cast the only dissenting votes. President Johnson orders the bombing of North Vietnam.

August 1965: Marines engaged in their first major offensives against the Viet Cong, Operation Starlite, which included the 7th Marines, the vanguard of the 1st Marine Division. The Leathernecks destroyed one Viet Cong battalion and badly mauled a second.



August 1968: Charlie Company of the 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 5th Infantry was conducting a sweep in the Ben Cui Rubber Plantation. Reports that to the east in the Michelin Rubber plantation, the NVA's 4th Battalion of the Phu Loi Regiment was located. The soldiers engaged the enemy over the next 24 hours. The Soldiers of the 5th Infantry lost 3 men KIA and 23 WIA. The enemy broke contact and fled the area.



August 1969: Soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division were involved in several Battles along Thunder Road (National Highway 13) as enemy forces tried to disrupt convoys or attack Fire Bases. In spite of almost daily attacks, the men of the Big Red One, kept the road open and the supply trucks moving.



August 1971: Paratroopers of the 173d Airborne Brigade are finally sent home. After six years of continues combat, with over 1700 of it's soldiers KIA, (the largest death toll per capita of any US ground combat unit larger then a battalion, in the war). The 173d was originally formed (and trained) in Okinawa and was the first US Army conventional ground combat unit deployed to Vietnam.



Quote



"One negotiates with his enemy with a knee to chest, and knife to throat. I was there during all of the 11 days of the bombing of Hanoi during Linebacker II. We let them off the hook!"

"During the last day(s) of Desert Storm when our enemy was fleeing up the 'Road of Death' back to Baghdad, we quit before destroying them completely and have spent the last 12+ years paying for that decision." **James Jackson, Sr. Chief USAF Ret.**

Annual Holiday Meals & Toy Drive For Homeless Women Veterans And their family

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 787, Tampa, Florida has launched their annual fundraising drive to accept donations to purchase Holiday Meals for Homeless Women Veterans and their family at Thanksgiving and Christmas. This will be our 9th year in providing a holiday meal for both holidays that feeds a family of four with a nutritious and festive dinner. This fundraising drive runs from now through December 3, 2007.

Each year we purchase meals and distribute them to homeless Women veterans who are enrolled in the Tampa VA Healthcare for Homeless Veterans program. They are placed in housing by the VA and undergo retraining to become a productive worker in the community and provide a stable environment for their children. Many of these women veterans come from a battered environment, serious health issues from their service and other factors that contributed to their homelessness.

In order for us to meet the ever increasing demands for holiday meals at Thanksgiving and Christmas we must solicit donations. Donations are an additional source of income to meet the needs. Each year the number of meals required for each holiday has increased. As a result of the war in Iraq and Afghanistan we are seeing more homeless veterans from this war. To meet our demands for this holiday we are asking for a donation of \$25.00 to pay for a holiday meal. Your donation is tax-deductible. Please make your checks payable to: VVA, Chapter 787 and memo "holiday meal." You may send your checks to VVA, Chapter 787, P.O. Box 89247, Tampa, FL 33689. Our first payment for holiday meals is November 2, 2007 for Thanksgiving meals and December 3, 2007 for Christmas meals.

Additionally, we have seen a need each year for the need of toys at Christmas time for the children of the homeless women veterans whose financial position do not provide enough for Santa. We are asking everyone to consider making a donation for toys. Just note on your check memo, "Christmas Toys."

For information regarding this program, please contact Bob Silmsler at 220-7246 or Jim LaGarde at 758-4547. You may visit our Chapter web site at www.vva787.com.

Submitted By: Kevin Ruhl & Dan Cullen

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Seeks Volunteers for Reading of the Names!

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund has put out a call nationwide for volunteers to help read the more than 58,000 names inscribed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in the days leading up to the 25th anniversary. The *Reading of the Names* will take place at The Wall for 65 hours over a four-day period, beginning with an opening ceremony on Wednesday, Nov. 7, at 3:00 p.m.

For more information and to volunteer your help, go to the following web site: <http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=582>

To see a reprint of the full article go to the following web site: <http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=1>

Medal of Honor Winners of the War in Vietnam

The Bravest of the Brave



ESTOCIN, MICHAEL J.



Rank and organization. Captain (then Lt. Cmdr.), U.S. Navy, Attack Squadron 192, USS Ticonderoga (CVA-14). Place and date: Haiphong, North Vietnam, 20 and 26 April 1967. Entered service at: Akron Ohio, 2() July 1954. Born: 27 April 1931, Turtle Creek, Pa. Citation. For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and

beyond the call of duty on 20 and 26 April 1967 as a pilot in Attack Squadron 192, embarked in USS Ticonderoga (CVA-14). Leading a 3-plane group of aircraft in support of a coordinated strike against two thermal power plants in Haiphong, North Vietnam, on 20 April 1967, Capt. Estocin provided continuous warnings to the strike group leaders of the surface-to-air missile (SAM) threats, and personally neutralized 3 SAM sites. Although his aircraft was severely damaged by an exploding missile, he reentered the target area and relentlessly prosecuted a SHRIKE attack in the face of intense anti-aircraft fire. With less than 5 minutes of fuel remaining he departed the target area and commenced in-flight refueling which continued for over 100 miles. Three miles aft of Ticonderoga, and without enough fuel for a second approach, he disengaged from the tanker and executed a precise approach to a fiery arrested landing. On 26 April 1967, in support of a coordinated strike against the vital fuel facilities in Haiphong, he led an attack on a threatening SAM site, during which his aircraft was seriously damaged by an exploding SAM; nevertheless, he regained control of his burning aircraft and courageously launched his SHRIKE missiles before departing the area. By his inspiring courage and unswerving devotion to duty in the face of grave personal danger, Captain Estocin upheld the highest traditions of the U.S. Naval Service.

Taps



5th sergeant major of the Marine Corps dies at 90 on July 5 2007.

Sergeant Major. Joseph Dailey USMC, a veteran of WW II, Korea, and Vietnam, was the most highly decorated Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps in history, winning the Navy Cross in Korea, the Silver Star in WWII and the Navy Commendation medal with a "V" device in Vietnam. He served with the 5th Marines in Korea and the 3rd Marine Division in Vietnam. He held the post of sergeant major of the Marine Corps from 1969 to 1973.



Wayne A. Downing, an Army four-star general and special operations commander who became a prominent terrorism advisor to the U.S. government, died July 19th. He was 67.



General Downing spent 34 years in the Army, was a West Point graduate, and served two tours in Vietnam with the 173d Airborne Brigade and the 25th Infantry Division.

A former Ranger regiment leader, he commanded the special operations of all services during the 1989 invasion of Panama that led to the surrender of then-President Manuel Noriega.



A few years later, he oversaw a joint special operations task force that destroyed Iraqi Scud missile sites behind enemy lines during the Persian Gulf War.

His military decorations include two Distinguished Service Medals, two Silver Stars, four Legions of Merit and the Purple Heart. He also received West Point's 2006 distinguished graduate award.

Vets fighting over Vietnam memorial replicas

By Jessica Gresko - The Associated Press
Posted : Tuesday Jul 3, 2007 16:12:20 EDT

MELBOURNE, Fla. — They fought together in Vietnam, but now two veterans groups are battling with each other over a symbol both deeply respect — the Vietnam wall.

Some of the former troops are grandparents now, but they can still hold their ground. It comes down to this: on one side a veterans' group based in Michigan, on the other, a Florida group.

Both have built replicas of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington — Michigan's two walls constructed more than a decade ago and Florida's unveiled last year. In the past few months, however, the groups have fired off volleys of e-mails over a trademark dispute and threatened each other with legal action.

The Michigan-based Vietnam Combat Veterans Ltd. says Florida's group has used its name, "The Moving Wall," on a commemorative coin it sold and on other literature. The Florida group, Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard, says any use was a mistake and has stopped selling the coins. Both groups agree only on that they're trying to honor the same 58,000 names.

So why not just settle the conflict? It's not that easy, the groups say.

"They're using our name to make money. That's desecration of the name of every man and woman on the wall," said Channing Prothro of Vietnam Combat Veterans. On behalf of the group, he's demanded a return of some of the Florida group's profits.

Ken Baker, a past president of the Brevard group, says only about \$600 was made from the coin and calls the conflict "a shame."

The pair of walls aren't the only ones traveling the country. A half-scale version called "The Wall That Heals" is managed by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, the nonprofit group that built the Washington wall. A company that sells funeral services sets up its "Dignity Memorial Vietnam Wall" in cemeteries. And another organization, the American Veterans Traveling Tribute, includes a wall with several memorials to American soldiers.

The traveling walls can be easier to get to than the Washington original and, at a fraction of the size, more manageable for veterans like Arizona resident Greg Cook. He visited the Florida wall in April but said visiting Washington's wall is difficult, comparing facing it to confronting a hand grenade.

"It's like somebody put a hand frag in your gut and a hand frag in each of your ears and pulled the pin, and Boom!" Cook said.

Veterans in Florida have been able to visit a traveling wall during their annual reunion for almost two decades. By tradition, some of the same people help set it up every year, carrying wall panels that contain names of people they knew. During the week of the reunion, some veterans visit early in the morning or late in the evening when it's quiet, often bringing a beer to drink and another to set at the wall's base for a friend. In April, a pack of cigarettes and a deck of playing cards had been left along with wreaths and flowers, and both Florida and Michigan groups save anything that gets left.

"It's more than just an empty beer bottle," said Greg Welsh, who manages and travels with the Florida wall. "It's somebody sharing with a fellow comrade."

For many years, Florida veterans like Welsh paid to bring "The Moving Wall" to their reunion. The Moving Wall's founder, John Devitt, built the replica after attending the 1982 dedication of the Washington memorial, adding a second wall and — for a time — a third.

A few years ago, however, Devitt's walls stopped coming to Florida. Whether it was a scheduling or a personality conflict, it's hard to untangle. But Devitt was frustrated by the Florida group, and the Florida veterans felt betrayed by the short notice they had to find a replacement.

Since then, the two groups have been at odds. In 2005, the Florida veterans built "The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall" so they would never have to rely on others. But "The Moving Wall" name still appeared — unintentionally, the group says — on some of its literature and a gold commemorative coin it sold, one produced before the two groups parted ways. The coin incensed Devitt's group, which says it doesn't sell any wall memorabilia.

Continued on page 9.....

Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Time
<u>August 2007</u>		
12th Thursday	Board of Directors Meeting, Jon's House	6:30 PM
26th Thursday	Chapter Meeting, Veterans Memorial Park & Museum, Tampa Fl New Location	7:00 PM
<u>September 2007</u>		
13th Thursday	Board of Directors Meeting, Jon's House	6:30 PM
27th Thursday	Chapter Meeting, Veterans Memorial Park & Museum, Tampa Fl, New Location	7:00 PM

Chapter Picnic will Celebrate our 10th Anniversary

President **Jim LaGarde** asked that chapter 787 hold a picnic for all members and their families so set your calendars for Saturday October 27th from 11:00 A.M. to 3:00 PM, Veterans Memorial Park & Museum, Tampa Fl. The same location as where we now hold our chapter meetings. President Rambo will be cooking his world famous ribs. Rambo also wanted to make sure everyone brings their children and grandchildren out to the event.



Submitted By: Jon Mueller

POW/MIA

A US Marine who went missing in the Vietnam War more than 40 years ago was buried in his hometown with full military honors July 18. Cpl. Jim Moshier was one of 11 men on a CH-46A Sea Knight helicopter that came under enemy fire in South Vietnam on June 11, 1967, according to the Defense Dept.

After the helicopter crashed, pilots nearby who witnessed the incident reported that no one could have survived, and ground patrols never recovered any remains, the Pentagon said.

Then, in May 2005, Vietnamese officials notified the U.S. that they had confiscated possible human remains, including Moshier's dog tags. They turned over the items to U.S. military officials who used DNA to link them with Moshier. Moshier's wife had given birth to the couple's only child just two months before he was killed. Eric Moshier was later killed by a drunk driver during his senior year of High School. Jim the father was buried next to his son Eric, who he never met.

Financial Status of Chapter 787 as of July 10 2007

Checking Account.....\$11,106.38 (Moving Wall Fund..\$4,692.80, Available Funds \$4,780.44,

Holiday Meals Fund...\$2,330.66*) Household Goods.....\$837.25 Convention Fund.....\$1,591.89

All Accounts Total: \$13,535.52

Thanks to our Treasurer Bob Silmser

***It is estimated that we will need \$3,540 to cover this years Veteran Holiday Meal Program.**

Florida State Council's RECON Newsletter wins award!

Your Florida State Council's newsletter "The Florida RECON Report," along with Editor **Tom Hall**, who is also a chapter 787 member and the State Council Treasurer, has won the prestigious "State Council Newsletter of the Year 2007" award issued by V.V.A. National during the national convention held in Springfield Il this month. **Tom Hall** and his crack reporting team, deserve a lot of applause.

Continued from page 7.....

Vets fighting over Vietnam memorial replicas.

The result: e-mails setting a deadline for the coins to be removed from Florida's Web site and posted warnings about the Florida group on the Michigan Web site. A taped phone call between them was also briefly posted on The Moving Wall's site. The Florida group, took the coins off its site but did not send any money it made back. Now, the conflict is at a sort of stalemate.

Both groups say it shouldn't affect people coming to the various walls, though many attending Florida's reunion know the story. What's important is that people visit, the groups believe.

And when it comes to diminishing what the other is trying to do, neither has a parting shot.

Submitted By: Jon Mueller

Hillsborough County Veterans Memorial Park & Museum, Tampa. Operation Field of Honor!

On July 7th, chapter member, and Hillsborough Veterans Council President, Dave Braun and four other individuals, read the names and planted American Flags for over 333 service members who were killed in the Iraq and Afghanistan war zones during the months of April, May and June 2007. These Flags were added to the existing "Field of Honor" which has over 3,000 in place from past years.

Even though the event was publicized by the media, no one showed up. Dave said, "it's sad that we had no one in attendance, but we completed our mission by reading their names and planting their Flags."

VA Brings Mental Health Programs to Primary Care Settings

WASHINGTON -- Addressing a special mental health forum with the top clinicians and researchers from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson announced plans to begin locating some of the Department's mental health programs closer to places where primary care is provided.

"Given the reluctance of some veterans to talk about emotional problems, increasing our mental health presence in primary care settings will give veterans a familiar venue in which to receive care -- without actually going to an identified mental health clinic," he said.

Nicholson described VA as "a long-standing leader in mental health," with \$3 billion devoted this year to mental health services. The Department has the nation's largest mental health program and is internationally recognized for research and treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder ([PTSD](#)).

"The wounds of war are not always the result of explosions and rocket fire," he added. "They can sometimes be unseen and cloaked in silence. If left untreated, they can be just as lethal."

New Street Names Honor Vietnam Vets.

The Convention hotels are no longer on Adams Street in Springfield. Adams Street has been renamed VIETNAM VET AVE! The city of Springfield want to show just how much they wanted Vietnam Veterans of America in their city. They renamed the street in the area of the hotels and Convention center, for the entire time we are there. Signs have been replaced this Friday and will stay up until after we leave.

--
Wes Guidry, CMP
Director of Meetings
Vietnam Veterans of America



VA Must Pay Agent Orange Victims

Associated Press | July 20, 2007

SAN FRANCISCO - An appeals court chastised the Department of Veterans Affairs on Thursday and ordered the agency to pay retroactive benefits to Vietnam War veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange and contracted a form of leukemia.

"The performance of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs has contributed substantially to our sense of national shame," the opinion from the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals read.

For details go to the following web site: <http://www.military.com/NewsContent/0,13319,143021,00.html?ESRC=eb.nl>

Hospital Chairman

Attention Chapter 787 members, my name is Kevin Ruhl, as the Hospital Chairman, it is my job to inform the Board of Directors of any and all current members that are or have been hospitalized or have recently deceased. I need you or a family member to contact me or any Board Member so we can do what we can to help. I can be contacted by E-Mail at MSgtMCRet@aol.com or 813-695-6203 (leave a message),

Chapter Membership Rewards

Any member of Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 787, in good standing, who sponsors a new V.V.A. or A.V.V.A member to Chapter 787 will be rewarded with his or her yearly dues paid for up to a maximum of three years.

Therefore, if you know of any Vietnam Vet, Era Vet, or any other person (non-vet) who may be interested in joining our select group under the General Membership or A.V.V. A. program, now is the time to contact them and save some money on your next annual due's payment.

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 JonMue@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:

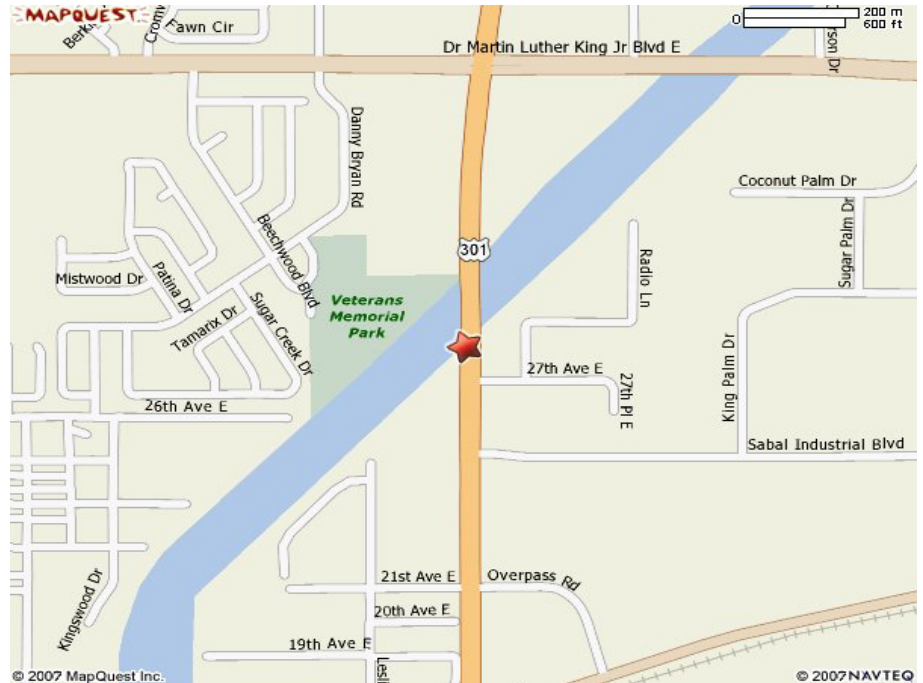
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Jon Mueller: ParaSF68@aol.com



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