



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**



Chapter 787 and The Veterans Day Parade in Tampa

Pictures submitted By **Bob Silmsers**



Chapter Officers

President: Jim LaGarde
Vice President: Tom Hall
Secretary: Bob Silmsers
Treasurer: Bob Silmsers

Board of Directors:

Ron Schott
Carl Harris
Herman Rainey
Jon Mueller

State Council Delegate:

Kevin Ruhl

Newsletter Editor: Jon Mueller, E-mail: Jon-Mue@aol.com

Meetings

Chapter Meetings are held the 4th Thursday of each month.

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: Brandon Veterans Hall, 115 W. Clay Brandon Fl. 33510. See Map on last page. **Mailing address: P.O. Box 89247, Tampa Fl. 33689-0404.**

POW/MIA Memorial

Scott Silmsr, son of Chapter Secretary and Treasurer, **Bob Silmsr**, created the glass cover for the POW/MIA memorial which originally was shown at the Dignity Memorial Moving Wall in Brandon Florida last month. The display will be a permanent exhibit at the Veterans Memorial Park in Tampa. **Scott** is shown in the picture on the right. **Bob & Carl Harris** are shown (lower right) with the case during the Moving Wall event.



**PROUD TO BE A
VIETNAM
VETERAN**

**New bumper sticker created by
Bob Silmsr!**

Shown below, it is now available for only \$4.00. To get yours, contact Bob by phone at 813-220-7246 or by e-mail at Rafkirk64@tampabay.rr.com.

Also available through our web site,

Submitted By: **Tom Hall**

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TAPS



David Hellen

I talked with David's roommate this morning and obtain further information regarding David's death.

David was born on 5-4-51 and died 11-1-06 at his home of a massive heart attack. David has no living relatives. Only a cousin who lives in California.

David was a life member of VVA and was the President of VVA, Chapter 446 in Pasadena, CA and VVA, Chapter 943 in St. Petersburg. He was also very active with the CA State Council prior to moving to Florida.

Submitted By: **Kevin Ruhl**

Vietnam Vet's help our Current Fighting Men & Women Adjust



Camp Pendleton's post-deployment program seeks to help Marines and sailors adjust to life after war. Aiding in the effort are members of the American Combat Veterans of War, who use memories of their time in Vietnam to encourage Marines to seek counseling if they feel anxiety from their combat duty.



"We know what combat is about," said Bill Rider, a former Marine wounded three times in Vietnam and a veteran of the siege of Khe Sanh. At least 40 of his friends died in Vietnam, including several squad members.

"I'm going to address the guilt complex. If someone was hurt, and it was unavoidable, you must let it go," Rider said. "Your big enemy right now is post-traumatic stress disorder. It will attack you. It will kill you. It will make you beat the hell out of your wife or husband or girlfriend."

In the low light of a conference room yesterday, about 75 members of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force who returned just days ago from Iraq inched up in their seats to listen.

Marine Corps officials did not allow reporters to question the service members.

Mental health is a major concern among Iraq and Afghanistan veterans. Defense Department and Department of Veterans Affairs statistics suggest that one-third of all combat veterans suffer post-traumatic stress or some other mental illness. If not treated early, these can turn into lifelong, debilitating conditions.

"(Post-traumatic stress) is a progressive, fatal disease. If you don't get it off your chest, it will take you out," Rider told his audience, mostly young support staff members.

He told them to watch out for themselves and each other, and not to let pride or stigma keep them from getting help.

Symptoms of post-traumatic stress include being overly vigilant, as if anticipating an attack; sleep disorders; and self-medication through drugs or alcohol.

Col. Darcy Kauer, commander of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force's headquarters group, brought the veterans into the transition program six months ago. He said education is essential in treating the mental stress and keeping men and women ready to fight. So far, 1,200 to 1,500 Marines and sailors have gone through the transition program.

"I've seen what can happen when people don't transition well," Kauer said. "We are trying to find whatever tool . . . to prevent (drunken driving) or a marriage from falling apart.

"If we've got a weakness, let's take steps to improve it and make things right. The Marine Corps is serious about this."

This Month during the War in Vietnam

December 1966: The 9th Infantry Divisions Engineers entered the Mekong Delta to build the first division sized base camp just 20 miles northeast of Saigon. The remainder of the division officially entered Vietnam at Vung Tau on December 19, 1966. After again distinguishing itself in battle the division was inactivated on September 25th, 1969 at Scofield Barracks, Hawaii. However, the 3d Brigade comprised of the 2d/47th Inf.; 2d/60th Inf.; 5th/60th (M) Inf. remained and was reorganized as a separate brigade on July 26, 1969. This organization also had operations in Cambodia and was eventually deactivated at Ft Lewis, Washington on October 13, 1970.



December 1967: In a rare show of cooperation, US Marine Force Recon and US Army Ranger teams work together to track and destroy NVA units moving down the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The 4 to 6 man teams would share radio frequencies and areas of operation on cross boarder (Laos & Cambodia) movements. All Intel was sent to a central command. A standard operation would have teams further north count the NVA supply trucks and personnel entering the trail. Then teams in the south would see if those same trucks and personnel were still there or did they branch off at an earlier exit point. The idea was to pinpoint where the supplies were going. Once that was determined, air strikes or artillery were called in. Some teams were inserted at night by parachute from Huey's and fixed wing aircraft, staying from 10 to 20 days before "humping" it out on their own, to a pick up site across the boarder in South Vietnam.



December 1968: The 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry division (Mech) moved, to AO (Area of Operations) Napoleon Saline II in the vicinity of the city of Quang Tri. The AO was redesignated "Marshall Mountain" on December 10. The Brigade conducted strike operations in coordination with ARVN forces of the sector and with the 1st Regiment, 1st ARVN Division to support the pacification of the Quang Tri province. In addition to these operations, the 1st Brigade provided transportation for refugees, assisted in road construction and established Medcap visits to friendly villages.



December 1969: A most unusual and heroic medevac took place. While on alert at LZ Baldy, two H-46s and two Cobras were launched to pick up a critically wounded Marine located on Hill 845 in zero/zero weather. After many unsuccessful attempts to locate the LZ, the 46s climbed out of the weather to wait for a break in the overcast. The HML-367 Cobra flight leader, Capt. Roger Henry requested permission to attempt an approach up the mountainside to the LZ. The request was granted and Capt. Henry and his co-pilot, 1st Lt. Dave Cummings, proceeded upward through the ravines, just above the canopy, much of the time at low airspeeds. The Marines in the LZ who were listening for the sound of the Cobra's engine guided them. Three hours later, after five attempts, they found the LZ, and landed on the edge of a bomb crater. Without hesitation, Cummings climbed out of his seat; got the wounded Marine strapped in; then [straddled himself atop the starboard rocket pod facing backward](#), and gave Henry a thumbs up to launch. After a seemingly endless climb and then descent out of the weather, a safe landing was made at a nearby aid station LZ, with Cummings still clinging to the rocket pod, a little messed up by the elements, but otherwise OK. This was incredible airmanship and true heroism. The wounded Marine survived.



December 1970: F-100D/F's of the 357th Tac Fighter Squadron completed their transfer to the Royal Thai Air Force Base in Takhli Thailand along with all support personnel. They were part of the 355th TFW. The base was near the city of Nakhon Sawan. Takhli was a front line air base throughout the Vietnam War from 1965 to 1975 and came under the command of Pacific Air Forces. Most of the U.S. aircraft stationed there were: F-4D, F-105D/F/G, F-111, KC-135A, KB-50J, EB-66C, and E/RB-66C.



Submitted By: Jon Mueller

Quote

"I mean, it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter how we got there. It doesn't matter how you think you were lied to. It doesn't matter if you think there was a connection between Saddam and Al-Qaeda. The only thing that matters now is that both Al-Qaeda and Iran and the terrorist groups they back and inspire believe that Iraq is their decisive battle. They have chosen it as the place where they will defeat America, and unlike the Viet Cong, they will not stay put. They will follow us home."

Dan Gordon, Writer, www.americanthinker.com

Submitted By: Jon Mueller

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Back (again) from Indian Country



Sgt. Zack Mueller, son of chapter member, Jon Mueller, returned home (Ft. Carson Colorado) to his wife and 1 year old son on November 14th.

This was Zack's second deployment. That's 24 months of ground combat operations, in the last three years. It has taken it's toll on him and his family. At this time, his unit, the U.S. Army's 4th Infantry Division is due to go back to either Iraq or Afghanistan in November 2007 for it's third, 12 month, deployment.

Special Chapter Meeting & Christmas Party

Mark your calendars for Thursday December 14th at 6:00 PM. The location will be the Brandon Veterans Hall 115 W. Clay Ave. Brandon Fl. 33510.

All members, family and friends are invited. Share the Veteran Holiday spirit with your fellow members.

Prior to the party, a short chapter meeting will be convened to vote on an amendment to our Chapter Bylaws, in accordance with the V.V.A. constitution. The annual Christmas Dinner will begin at 7 PM.



Check Out Our New Web Site at www.VVA787.com

Chapter Secretary and Treasurer, Bob Silmsler coordinated the development and got the site up and running. Some of the features include: the ability to download past copies of the chapters newsletter (OUTPOST), purchase chapter items for sale like T-shirts, coffee mugs, hats, Vietnam stickers and much more. You can also e-mail chapter officers directly from the web site.

Medal of Honor Winners of the Vietnam War.



DAY, GEORGE E.

Rank and organization: Colonel (then Major), U.S. Air Force, Forward Air Controller Pilot of an F-100 aircraft. Place and date: North Vietnam, 26 August 1967. Entered service at: Sioux City, Iowa. Born: 24 February 1925, Sioux City, Iowa. Citation: On 26 August 1967, Col. Day was forced to eject from his aircraft over North Vietnam when it was hit by ground fire. His right arm was broken in 3 places, and his left knee was badly sprained. He was immediately captured by hostile forces and taken to a prison camp where he was interrogated and severely tortured. After causing the guards to relax their vigilance, Col. Day escaped into the jungle and began the trek toward South Vietnam. Despite injuries inflicted by fragments of a bomb or rocket, he continued southward surviving only on a few berries and uncooked frogs. He successfully evaded enemy patrols and reached the Ben Hai River, where he encountered U.S. artillery barrages. With the aid of a bamboo log float, Col. Day swam across the river and entered the demilitarized zone. Due to delirium, he lost his sense of direction and wandered aimlessly for several days. After several unsuccessful attempts to signal U.S. aircraft, he was ambushed and recaptured by the Viet Cong, sustaining gunshot wounds to his left hand and thigh. He was returned to the prison from which he had escaped and later was moved to Hanoi after giving his captors false information to questions put before him. Physically, Col. Day was totally debilitated and unable to perform even the simplest task for himself. Despite his many injuries, he continued to offer maximum resistance. His personal bravery in the face of deadly enemy pressure was significant in saving the lives of fellow aviators who were still flying against the enemy. Col. Day's conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Air Force and reflect great credit upon himself and the U.S. Armed Forces.

Submitted By: Jon Mueller

Marine earns the 2nd Medal of Honor issued in Iraq War



First Medal of Honor by a U.S. Marine since the Vietnam War

One day in April 2004, Cpl. Jason Dunham and his men were patrolling an insurgent stronghold near the Syrian border when an Iraqi leapt out and grabbed the 22-year-old Marine around the neck. Dunham, seeing his attacker had dropped a live grenade, snatched off his helmet and put it over the explosive.



The helmet did help blunt the explosion -- and saved the lives of others. But Dunham suffered serious injuries from flying shrapnel. Eight days later, he died from his wounds. His actions earned him a Medal of Honor nomination.

Thank You to Those Who Have Given Generously to Chapter 787's Holiday Meals Program!



Many Individuals have opened up their wallets again this season and our chapter owes you all a big salute. Without your generosity, we could not continue this important work. See the pictures on the next page.

Chapter 787 donates funds to buy Thanksgiving meals for those in need!

Each year during Thanksgiving and Christmas, your chapter supports the veteran community with complete meals. This year your chapter donated 60 holiday (Thanksgiving) meals to those less fortunate. The number of Christmas meals should be about 55 as of this writing. Pictured below top picture top row L-R; chapter Board Member **Ron Schott**, chapter President **Jim (Rambo) La-Garde**, **Ronnie Shaw** HCHV (Hillsborough County Homeless Veteran Program), **James Smith** (CWT), and chapter member **Richard Nye**. Second row, L-R; chapter Scy/Tres **Bob Silmsr**, chapter member **Tony Towers**, chapter member of the year **Carl Harris**, **Wendy Hellickson** HCHV program coordinator, and at bottom is chapter member **Mickey Taylor**. Picture bottom left shows **Tony Towers**, **Mickey Taylor** and **James Smith** loading the meals. Bottom right is **Wendy** with **Rambo**.



Christmas Tree at The Wall



A few days before Christmas each year, the Memorial Fund staff and volunteers decorate a tree at the apex of The Wall. The tree is decorated with thousands of holiday messages sent to the Memorial Fund to honor those who served with the U.S. Armed Forces in Vietnam and other military conflicts and their families.

For more information about the Christmas Tree, please contact the Memorial Fund at (202) 393-0090 or via email at vvmf@vvmf.org.



Submitted By: Jon Mueller

Circle Of Sacrifice



By: Seth Gitell, New York Sun, November 2006

With President Bush arriving in Hanoi for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, news broke of a casualty in Iraq. His name was Tung Nguyen, 38, a Sergeant First Class and a member of the U.S. Army Special Forces. Nguyen had died in a firefight in Baghdad on Tuesday November 14.

There have been 2864 fighting men and women killed in Iraq, and a story lies behind each and every one of them. But the arc of Nguyen's life, which began in Vietnam and ended in Iraq, says as much about sacrifice and what it means to be American as any of them. He was born the year of the Tet offensive, the great turning point in Vietnam on two fronts.



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.

Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Time
<u>December 2006</u>		
14th Thursday	Special Chapter Meeting and Chapter Christmas Party, Brandon Veterans Hall	6:00 PM
<u>January 2007</u>		
11th Thursday	Board of Directors Meeting, Jon's House	6:30 PM
25th Thursday	Chapter Meeting, Veterans Hall, Brandon Fl	7:00 PM

Submitted By: Jon Mueller

Chapter 787 and it's Public Affairs Radio Spots

In an ongoing effort to generate new members and get our message across, your chapter has been interviewed three times in the last two months for local radio stations and their public affairs programs. While the half hour radio broadcasts are usually aired in the early morning ours on Sundays, and thereby do not "capture" a large listening audience, we do not want to look a gift horse in the mouth. These spots do not cost our chapter anything and whatever benefit we get from them is well worth the price.

Pictured at right is chapter Secretary and Treasurer, Bob Silmser and our host D.J. Joel Weiss at our interview with Cox radio on November 21st.

Chapter member Herman Rainey originally set up our contacts with Cox radio.



Financial Status of Chapter 787 as of November 27 2006

<u>Checking Account.....\$2,549.04</u>	Moving Wall Fund.....\$3,743.00	Holiday Meals Fund.....\$216.00
<u>Household Goods.....\$ 458.24</u>	Convention Fund.....\$1,906.18	<u>Petty Cash.....\$ 76.70</u>

All Accounts Total: \$8,949.16

Thanks to our Treasurer Bob Silmser

National Museum of the Marine Corps Opens

Where: Quantico Va. Just off of Interstate 95 Hours: 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily Cost: Free Phone: 800-397-7585

Web Site: www.usmcmuseum.org Marine Corps Heritage Foundation

Current Exhibits: Timeline of 231 years of Marine Corps history; exhibits on boot camp, female Marines, black Marines and the global war on terrorism; immersion exhibits and galleries on World War II, Korea and Vietnam; Leatherneck Gallery featuring historic Marine Aircraft.



EGA installation final cleaning - June 2006



Early morning August 4 - August 2006



NMMC looking west - August 2006



1st re-enlistment ceremony to take place at the NMMC - May 2006

About The Marine Corp's Heritage Foundation

Established in 1979, the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation is a private, non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization that supports the historical programs of the Marine Corps through education, awards, publications, special projects, preservation, and the creation of the National Museum of the Marine Corps and Heritage Center.

Funding for study of Marine Corps history through Internships, Research Grants, Masters and Doctoral Fellowships.

Marine Corps Heritage Center, addition of battle honors to the Marine Corps War Memorial, rehabilitation and maintenance of the Commandant's House in Washington, DC and special funding for support of the Marine Band.

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 Brandon Veterans Hall. 115 W. Clay Ave, Brandon Fl. See map below.

Contact E-mail Addresses:

President Jim LaGarde:

cLaGarde@tampabay.rr.com

VP Tom Hall: MarineDI@aol.com

Secretary & Treasurer Bob Silmser:

Rafkirk64@tampabay.rr.com

State Council Delegate Kevin Ruhl:

MSgtMCRet@aol.com

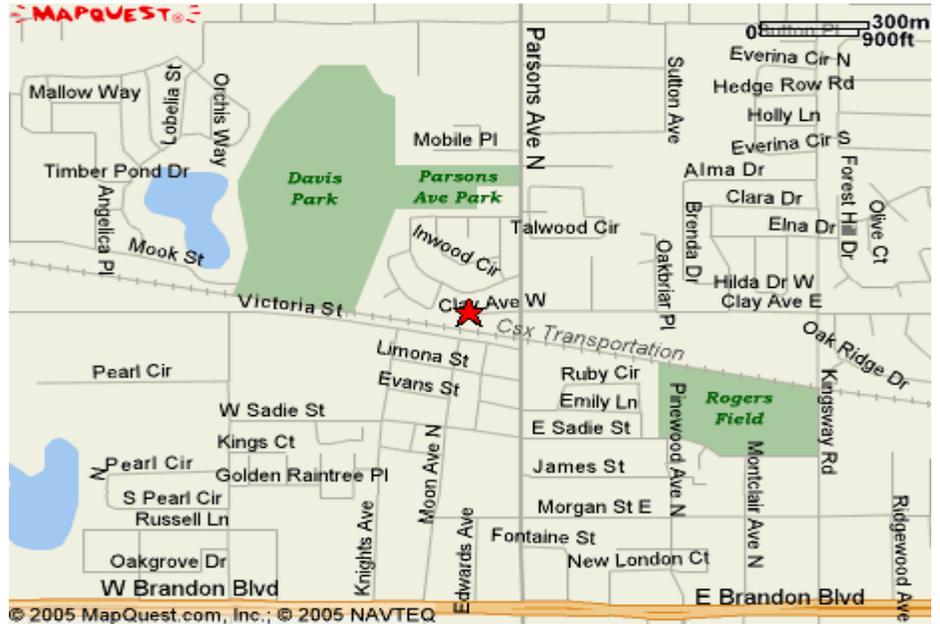
Board of Directors

Ron Schott: RonD1120@aol.com

Carl Harris: c_e_harris@ij.net

Herman Rainey: hjr173@hughes.net)

Jon Mueller: JonMue@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