



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: Tom Hall

Chapter 787 donates Holiday Meals

Chapter Officers

President: Tom Hall
Vice President: Carl Harris
Secretary: Bob Silmsers
Treasurer: Bob Silmsers

Board of Directors:

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 Saturday November 22nd at 4:30 AM, some of your chapter members dragged themselves out of their warm beds, met at a vacant parking lot, drove into Tampa, then proceeded to collect and bag the food. All to benefit the homeless female veterans and their families who because of circumstances, do not have a Thanksgiving meal this season.

Pictured above, L-R, new chapter member, **Faries Glayron**, Chapter 787 President, **Tom Hall**, **Jim (Rambo) LaGarde**, AVVA member, **Beverly Thomas**, Chapter 787 VP, **Carl Harris**, Chapter 787 Scy/Tres. **Bob Silmsers**, and last but not least, **Tony Towers**.

Town & Country, Veterans Day Parade.



Pictured above, L-R, chapter Scy/Trs. **Bob Silmsler**, past President **Jim LaGarde** and seated **Mickey Taylor**. These guys are shown at Rambo's house, loading up the trailer a few days before the parade. Next picture is Rambo's truck at the parade site.



Pictured above, chapter members, **Gerard Abbett**, **Richard Nye**, **Carl Harris** and **Harold (Kit) Carson**.

Submitted by: Jon Mueller

Special Tribute Paid To Women Lost In Wars, Veterans Young and Old Gather at Wall

[Washington Post, November 12, 2008, Pg. B2]

Several thousand people gathered at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to pay homage to the nation's veterans, both living and dead, from historic wars to present-day conflicts. The dominant theme of the event was the once-overlooked role of women, both military and civilian, who gave their lives in U.S. wars

Message from the President of Chapter 787

I'm sitting here in awe about what has transpired in the Chapter. I made an appeal to our membership so consider donating to the Holiday Meal project. The response was great. We had members who a sizeable donation and the employees at Stower's Funeral Home made a \$300.00 donation. With generous donation it is going to allow us to meet all the needs of women veterans by purchasing 50 meals for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

By the time you read this will have already distributed the Thanksgiving Meals. I want to thank the members who met at "Zero Dark Thirty" to pick up the meals and then assembly into complete meals ready for distribution. It's through their dedication that our Chapter continues to be successful and set the benchmark for other chapter to strive to meet.

Also, we've provide 2-\$100.00 gift cards to the St. Francis House so they can buy the food to fix meals at Thanksgiving and Christmas to homeless veterans who have AIDS or HIV positive.

In addition, we provided a Thanksgiving meal to the residents of the Fisher House who are residing there visiting their veteran whose was injured during the war on terrorism. We will also be doing the same at Christmas.

Please don't forget our Chapter Christmas dinner at Golden Corral on December 18, 2008. It is "Dutch Treat" but it will allow our VVA Family to gather and reflect back on our accomplishments of servicing veterans, our community and schools. I look forward to see you there. Don't forget to bring your wife. Give her a night off from fixing dinner at home.

Since there will not be a meeting in December, I want to thank all our members and their family for their support of our chapter throughout the year. As we are in Holiday season, I would like all our members to reflect on what you could do for our brother and sister veterans during 2009. I hope that more of our members become more active in the chapter and enjoy being with other members, the public and our new generation of veterans. It is the little things you do during your life to help others that you reap the reward inside that you made a difference in someone's life.

Have a safe Holiday and by all means be safe if you are traveling. Have a great New Year and I look forward to seeing everyone at our January 2009 meeting.

Semper Fi

Tom Hall

Chapter 787 thanks the following individuals for their generous donations to the Holiday Meal Program:



Herb Popple, Stowers Funeral Home

Carl & Elaine, Harris

Harold & Sandra, Carson



Pictures by: **Tom Hall**



Stolen Valor

N.J. official accused of faking (Vietnam) combat record

The Associated Press Posted : Wednesday Nov 26, 2008 18:45:54 EST

TRENTON, N.J. — An official in the state Department of Military and Veterans Affairs has been accused of falsifying his veteran and government records in order to receive a tax exemption and medical benefits.

William Devereaux, the department's director of veterans programs, was arrested Monday, issued a summons and released. A court hearing has not yet been scheduled.

In announcing the arrest on Wednesday, the Camden County Prosecutor's Office said the 63-year-old Laurel Springs resident invented a false history of combat heroism in the Vietnam War. The prosecutor's office said its investigation was prompted by information provided by the county Office of Veterans Affairs.

Prosecutors said Devereaux falsely claimed on military benefits forms for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs that he served as a paratrooper and artilleryman during the war and was injured multiple times. He also claimed to have received medals including the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star with "V" device.

Authorities said Devereaux served as a payroll distribution specialist in Vietnam for about 4½ months in 1968 and never served as a paratrooper or artilleryman. They also said he never received the medals he claimed to have and that there was no record of his being injured in combat.

Devereaux received \$34,000 in compensation from Veterans Affairs based on the falsified records, authorities said.

He is also accused of wrongly claiming exemption from property taxes in Laurel Springs by claiming he was 100 percent disabled due to military service.

He was charged with falsifying or tampering with records and theft by failure to make required disposition.

Devereaux, who was appointed to the state post in 2004 by former Gov. James McGreevey, did not return a telephone message left at his home on Wednesday. It was not clear if he had retained a lawyer.

Mobile Counseling Centers

The first of 50 new mobile counseling centers for Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Vet Center program are now available, with the remainder scheduled to be activated over the next three months. The 38-foot motor coaches allow counselors and outreach workers to bring services closer to veterans in more geographic areas, in addition to counseling at active-duty, reserve and National Guard activities and post-deployment health reassessments for returning combat service members. Vet Centers provide non-medical readjustment counseling, including psychological counseling for traumatic military-related experiences and family counseling when needed for a veteran's readjustment. To learn more, read more on www.Military.com.

Submitted By: Jon Mueller

Quote

“He who knows no hardships will know no hardihood.

He who faces no calamity will need no courage.

**Mysterious though it is, the characteristics in human nature
which we love best grow in a soil with a strong mixture of troubles.”**

Harry Emerson Fosdick



Medal of Honor Winners of the War in Vietnam



SHIELDS, MARVIN G



Rank and organization: Construction Mechanic Third Class, U.S. Navy, Seabee Team 1104. Place and date: Dong Xoai, Republic of Vietnam, 10 June 1965. Entered service at: Seattle, Wash. Born: 30 December 1939, Port Townsend, Wash. Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Although wounded when the compound of Detachment A342, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces, came under intense fire from an estimated reinforced Viet Cong regiment employing machineguns, heavy weapons and small arms, Shields continued to resupply his fellow Americans who needed ammunition and to return the enemy fire for a period of approximately 3 hours, at which time the Viet Cong launched a massive attack at close range with flame-throwers, hand grenades and small-arms fire. Wounded a second time during this attack, Shields nevertheless assisted in carrying a more critically wounded man to safety, and then resumed firing at the enemy for 4 more hours. When the commander asked for a volunteer to accompany him in an attempt to knock out an enemy machinegun emplacement which was endangering the lives of all personnel in the compound because of the accuracy of its fire, Shields unhesitatingly volunteered for this extremely hazardous mission. Proceeding toward their objective with a 3.5-inch rocket launcher, they succeeded in destroying the enemy machinegun emplacement, thus undoubtedly saving the lives of many of their fellow servicemen in the compound. Shields was mortally wounded by hostile fire while returning to his defensive position. His heroic initiative and great personal valor in the face of intense enemy fire sustain and enhance the finest traditions of the U.S. Naval Service

Submitted By: Jon Mueller

Airman may get Medal of Honor for his actions in secret Laos mission.

By Michael Hoffman, Military Times, November 10 2008



Pentagon officials told Cory Etchberger that his father died in a helicopter accident in Southeast Asia on March 11, 1968.

But at 9 years old, Cory said he felt something was missing in the story when his family was secretly whisked into the Pentagon to accept his father's Air Force Cross.

Turned out Chief Master Sgt. Richard Etchberger died saving three Americans fighting off waves of North Vietnamese commandos advancing on a top-secret U.S. radar station in the Laotian mountains, but those details were omitted.

Four decades later, Air Force Secretary Michael Donley has recommended Etchberger's Air Force be upgraded to the Medal of Honor. It's now up to Defense Secretary Robert Gates and President Bush for the final approval.

Etchberger was nominated for the Medal of Honor in 1968, but President Lyndon B. Johnson did not approve it. Johnson did not sign off on the award because the U.S. wasn't supposed to have troops in Laos, and at the time of his death, Etchberger wasn't technically in the Air Force.

Before he was deployed to Lima Site 85—a radar station used to locate bombing targets in North Vietnam and Laos, Etchberger and his wife went to Washington DC along with the other airmen about to go on the secret mission and their wives. There they were told they would be made into civilian employees who worked for Lockheed Aircraft Services as a cover, said Col. Gerald H. Clayton, then the commander of 1043rd Radar Evaluation Squadron, Detachment 1.

The radar stations location, on top of a 5,000 foot ridge made a tough target to attack but that's just what the NVA did by scaling the massive cliffs.

Only 19 Americans were at the site and they fought until 3 AM when the remaining 7 were backed against a ledge. Etchberger tended to the wounded while also trying to fight off the advancing enemy. **Continued on next page.....**

Continued from page 6.....

When the rescue helicopters arrived, Clayton said Etchberger loaded the wounded Americans onto the rescue sling as the helicopter hovered over the station. He refused to leave until everyone else was on board.

Those who survived say Etchberger saved at least four airmen before he rushed unto the helicopter. But moments later, an armor-piercing round ripped through the helicopter's underbelly, hitting Etchberger. He bled to death en route to the airbase in Thailand.

Submitted By: Jon Mueller

Study: PTSD rates higher for troops who kill

By [Kelly Kennedy](#) - Staff writer Posted : Saturday Nov 22, 2008 12:51:21 EST

CHICAGO — New research presented at the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies shows post-traumatic stress disorder rates are higher in service members who have had to kill someone.

Shira Maguen, health sciences assistant clinical professor at the University of California, began her research when she realized that the Vietnam vets she treated at the San Francisco VA Medical Center were “really struggling with taking another life,” she said, adding that they often told her: “Killing really changed me.”

She started hearing the same complaint from veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, but found “there’s not much discussion” about the issue in VA and Pentagon research. She and her colleagues decided to look into past research to see if there was a correlation between those who had killed and those who had mental health issues. They found that killing is “strongly predictive of PTSD.”

She talked to 259 veterans involved in the National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Study, and found that if a person had killed someone, they were 3½ times more likely to have symptoms of PTSD than someone who hadn’t killed.

Maguen concluded that more research is needed on the context of killing: Did the veteran kill because his life was at risk? Was he ordered to kill or make the decision himself? Was it another combatant or did the service member kill a civilian?

“I think it’s very important for DoD and VA to be more explicit about killing,” Maguen said, while adding that therapists also need to target the issue in their treatments.

Sabra Inslicht, principal investigator for the San Francisco VA Center, looked at the impact of killing on Afghanistan and Iraq veterans, also because of work she had done with Vietnam veterans. She looked at work by Charles Hoge, chief of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at the Walter Reed Institute of Research, as well as the Soldier Wellness Assessment Program at Fort Lewis, Wash., reviewing a total of 3,000 service members.

She found 40 percent had reported killing someone, and that killing someone was a “strong predictor” for PTSD, depression and alcohol use.

In Hoge’s research, service members also were asked if they had seen anyone killed or wounded, if they had fired their weapons during direct combat, and if they ever felt they were in great danger of being killed.

In the survey of troops who had deployed and may or may not have killed someone, they found that 19 percent of those in Iraq screened for a potential mental health disorder, while those in Afghanistan screened at 11 percent and those in other areas at 8.5 percent.

Charity Shoot collects over \$48,000

On Friday November 21st, the 2nd annual Sheriff Gee Charity Sporting Clay Shoot, was held at the Deer Creek Range in Land O Lakes. A number of Chapter 787 members were on hand including **Dave Braun** and **Gerard Abbett**. The money will go to the Wounded Warriors project, Haley House and Operation Helping Hand.

Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Time
<u>December 2008</u>		
18th Thursday	Chapter 787's Annual Christmas Party, Golden Corral Restaurant, Brandon	7:00 PM
<u>January 2009</u>		
8th Thursday	Board of Directors Meeting, Jon's House	6:30 PM
22nd Thursday	Chapter 787 Meeting, Veterans Park & Museum	7:00 PM

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

Submitted By: Jon Mueller

Study links heart disease, Agent Orange toxin

By [Kelly Kennedy](#) - Staff writer Posted : Friday Nov 21, 2008 16:20:27 EST

Scientists studying dioxin exposure in humans — including Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange — have found a correlation between the chemicals and the death rates of heart disease and cardiovascular disease.

The research, presented in Environmental Health Perspectives, shows that there are “consistent and significant dose-related associations” with heart disease and modest associations with cardiovascular disease.

Researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health and the Environmental Protection Agency said they realized that most dioxin studies had centered on cancer rates, but no one had produced a review of research about cardiovascular disease.

“Future studies in both animals and humans should assess whether cardiovascular effects are present at environmentally relevant doses,” the authors wrote.

Environmental Health Perspectives’=2 0editor, Hugh Tilson, said the report is of interest because cardiovascular disease is a leading cause of death in many countries, and dioxin exposure can be prevented.

Financial Status of Chapter 787 as of November 2008

Total.....\$11,573.59 (Moving Wall Fund..\$6,663.82, General checking \$3,457.87.... Holiday Meals Fund \$1,313.34)

Total.....\$1,851.59 (Household Goods.....\$267.30 Convention Fund.....\$1,582.65)

All Accounts Total: \$13,424.74

Thanks to our Treasurer Bob Silmser

Marines Missing From Vietnam War Are Identified



The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of four U.S. servicemen, missing from the Vietnam War, have been identified and will be returned to their families for burial with full military honors.



They are Lance Cpl. Kurt E. La Plant, of Lenexa, Kan., and Lance Cpl. Luis F. Palacios, of Los Angeles, Calif. Remains that could not be individually identified are included in a group. Among the group remains are Lance Cpl. Ralph L. Harper, of Indianapolis, Ind., and Pfc. Jose R. Sanchez, of Brooklyn, N.Y. All men were U.S. Marine Corps. Palacios will be buried Friday in Bellflower, Calif., and the other Marines will be buried as a group in the spring in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C.

On June 6, 1968, these men were aboard a CH-46A Sea Knight helicopter that was attempting an emergency extraction of elements of the 1st Battalion, 4th Regiment, 3rd Marine Division then engaged against hostile forces in the mountains southwest of Khe Sanh, Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam. The helicopter was struck by enemy ground fire and crashed, killing 12 of the 23 crewmen and passengers on board. All but four of the men who died were subsequently recovered and identified.

Between 1993 and 2005, joint U.S./Socialist Republic of Vietnam (S.R.V.) teams, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), investigated the incident in Quang Tri Province, interviewed witnesses and surveyed the crash site three times. The team found a U.S. military boot fragment and wreckage consistent with that of a CH-46 helicopter.

In 2006, a team began excavating the site and recovered human remains and non-biological material evidence including La Plant's identification tag. While at the site, a Vietnamese citizen turned over to the team human remains he claimed to have found amid the wreckage. In 2007, another team completed the excavation and recovered additional human remains, life support material and aircraft wreckage.

Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory also used mitochondrial DNA and dental comparisons in the identification of the remains.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/> or call (703) 699-1420.

As shown in the November issue of the SFA Chapter LX newsletter.

NCO's ARE SO SMART

The Company Commander and the First Sergeant were in the field. As they hit the sack for the night, the First Sergeant said, "Sir, look up into the sky and tell me what you see?"

The CO said, "I see millions of stars."

1st Sgt.: "And what does that tell you, sir?"

CO: "Astronomically, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Theologically, it tells me that God is great and that we are small and insignificant. Meteorologically, it tells me that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you, Top?"

1st Sgt.: "Well sir, it tells me that somebody stole our tent."

TAPS



Retired Marine **Col. John Ripley**, who was credited with stopping a column of North Vietnamese tanks by blowing up a pair of bridges during the 1972 Easter Offensive of the Vietnam War, died at home at age 69, friends and relatives said Sunday.

Ripley's son, Stephen Ripley, said his father was found at his Annapolis home Saturday after missing a speaking engagement on Friday. The son said the cause of death had not been determined but it appeared his father died in his sleep.

In a videotaped interview with the U.S. Naval Institute for its Americans at War program, Ripley said he and about 600 South Vietnamese were ordered to "hold and die" against 20,000 North Vietnamese soldiers with about 200 tanks.

"I'll never forget that order, 'hold and die'," Ripley said. The only way to stop the enormous force with their tiny force was to destroy the bridge, he said.

"The idea that I would be able to even finish the job before the enemy got me was ludicrous," Ripley said. "When you know you're not going to make it, a wonderful thing happens: You stop being cluttered by the feeling that you're going to save your butt."

Ripley crawled under the bridge under heavy gunfire, rigging 500 pounds of explosives that brought the twins spans down, said John Miller, a former Marine adviser in Vietnam and the author of "The Bridge at Dong Ha," which details the battle.

Miller said the North Vietnamese advance was slowed considerably by Ripley.

"A lot of people think South Vietnam would have gone under in '72 had he not stopped them," Miller said.

Ray Madonna, president of the U.S. Naval Academy's 1962 graduating class, served in Vietnam as a Marine at the same time and said his classmate saved countless U.S. and South Vietnamese troops.

"They would have been wrecked" if the tanks had crossed, Madonna said. He said Ripley also coordinated naval gunfire that stopped the tanks from crossing at a shallower point downstream.

"He was a Marine's Marine, respected, highly respected by enlisted men, by his peers and by his seniors," Madonna said.

Miller said Ripley, who was born in Radford, Va., descended from a long line of veterans going back to the Revolutionary War. He graduated from the Naval Academy in 1962, after enlisting in the Marines out of high school and spending a year in naval school in Newport, R.I.

He earned the "**Quad Body**" distinction for making it through four of the toughest military training programs in the world: the Army Rangers, Marine reconnaissance, Army Airborne and Britain's Royal Marines, Miller said. He was also the only Marine to be inducted in the U.S. Army Ranger Hall of Fame.

Ripley earned the Navy Cross and Silver Star for his service in Vietnam. He later served on the Joint Chiefs of Staff and was regimental commander at Camp Lejeune, N.C., among other postings.

After retiring from the Marines, he was president and chancellor of Southern Virginia College in Lexington, Va.

Stephen Ripley said his father had a deep and tenacious love for his country, the Marine Corps and his family.

"My Dad never quit anything and never went halfway on anything in his life," he said. "He just was a full-throttle kind of person and those people that he cared about, he really cared about."

Ripley is survived by his wife, Moline B. Ripley, 67; three sons, Stephen Ripley, 43, Thomas Ripley, 38, and John Ripley, 35; a daughter, Mary Ripley, 39; and eight grandchildren.



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.

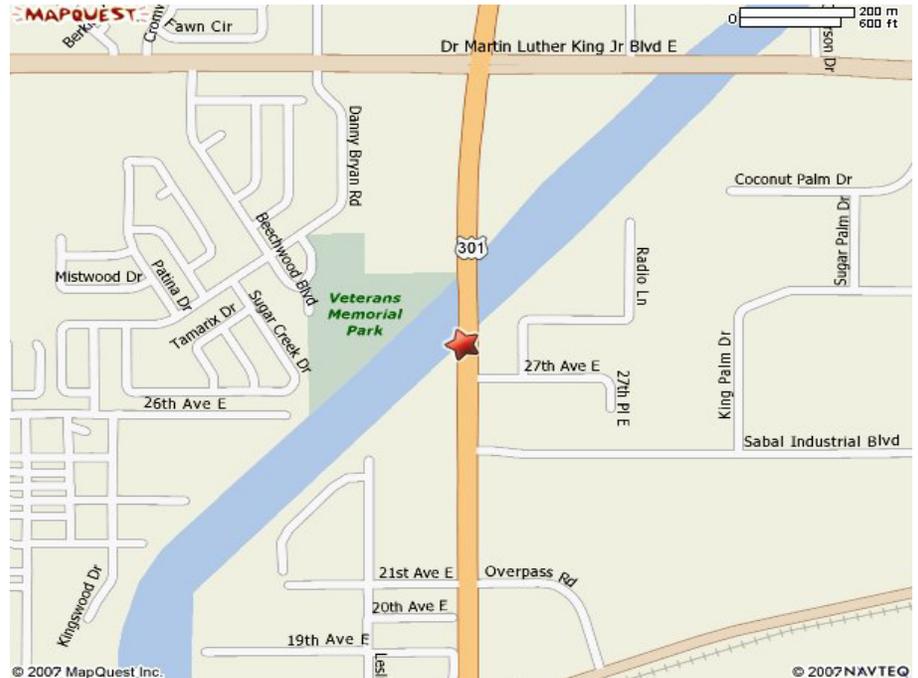
Chapter meetings are held at the Veterans Memorial Park & Museum, 3602 Hwy. 301 N. Tampa Fl. 33619.

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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://users.dishmail.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