



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 JIM LAGARDE (813) 758-4547
WEB SITE: WWW.VVA787.COM**



Submitted by: **Bruce Burnham**

Pictures from The Wall



Pictured above is the Armwood High School **History of the Vietnam War** class of teacher and chapter member **Bruce Burnham**. Bruce is shown in the black shirt at the far left (I know its hard to tell him apart from his students).

Two more pictures from the Dignity Memorial Moving Wall event are shown on page 6.

Chapter Officers

President: Jim LaGarde
Vice President: Carl Harris
Secretary: Bob Picariello
Treasurer: Tom Hall

Board of Directors:

Bob Silmsen
Kevin Ruhl
Dave Braun
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: 6:30 PM

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

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

Chapter 787 Holiday Meal Program

Picture Submitted by:
Tom Hall



Pictured at left, L-R, Chapter 787 members, **Tom Hall, Jim La-Garde, Bob Silmsler, Herman Rainey, Tony Towers, Glayron and Judi Faries. Dave & Ann, Weber.**

Every year during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, many of your chapter members drag themselves out of bed at around 4 a.m. and head out to a cold Tampa warehouse. Once there they pickup different food courses which when combined will make a full Thanksgiving or Christmas meal for female veterans and some of their families who are in need during the holidays.

The "Holiday Meal" program's base of operations is the Homeless Women Veterans Program which falls under the Veterans Health Administration.

Chapter member Glayron Faries Holiday Meal Encounter

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I was wandering aimlessly around the VA this morning, looking for the Records section and a young, attractive lady asked me if she could help. I told her what I was looking for and she told me she was going that way and would take me there. As we walked along, we talked about several things and she mentioned the new VA Eye Clinic. I told her I was over near the new Eye Clinic on Saturday morning. She said she was near there on Saturday morning also. It turns out she was there to pick up a Turkey Dinner for Thanksgiving. She said she didn't have room in her freezer for the turkey, but she had someone who was storing it for her. She also said she wasn't sure how to cook a turkey, but she would figure it out.

She was very thankful and said "THANKS" to all of you for making it possible for her to have a nice Thanksgiving Dinner. It made me feel very good to know that she received one of the meals we provided.

Happy Thanksgiving to all of you.

Glayron

Submitted by: **Bob Silmsler**

Bob's Army buddies in Iraq

Bob Silmsler, chapter 787's previous secretary, treasurer, member of the year, board member, official chapter work-horse and problem solver, etc, etc, etc, made friends with a group of soldiers in Iraq.

The OUTPOST editor is still trying to get some details on this unit but we believe it's the 4th Psychological Operations Group (Airborne), the only Reserve Psyops unit in the U.S. Army.

They are located on the Iraq/Iran boarder and the units 1st Sgt is MSG Daley.

Maybe we can adopt them?



Medal of Honor recipients of the War in Vietnam



John Baca

Born: January 10, 1949
Providence, RI

War: Vietnam

Rank: Specialist Fourth Class, U.S. Army, Company D, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division

Location of action: Phuoc Long Province, Republic of Vietnam

Date of action: February 10, 1970

Medal received from: Richard Nixon, June 15, 1971

Official Citation:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Specialist Fourth Class Baca, Company D, distinguished himself while serving on a recoilless rifle team during a night ambush mission. A platoon from his company was sent to investigate the detonation of an automatic ambush device forward of his unit's main position and soon came under intense enemy fire from concealed positions along the trail. Hearing the heavy firing from the platoon position and realizing that his recoilless rifle team could assist the members of the besieged patrol, Specialist Fourth Class Baca led his team through the hail of enemy fire to a firing position within the patrol's defensive perimeter. As they prepared to engage the enemy, a fragmentation grenade was thrown into the midst of the patrol. Fully aware of the danger to his comrades, Specialist Fourth Class Baca unhesitatingly, and with complete disregard for his own safety, covered the grenade with his steel helmet and fell on it as the grenade exploded, thereby absorbing the lethal fragments and concussion with his body. His gallant action and total disregard for his personal well-being directly saved 8 men from certain serious injury or death. The extraordinary courage and selflessness displayed by Specialist Fourth Class Baca, at the risk of his life, are in the highest traditions of the mili-

Chapter 787 Officer Changes

As advised in last month's newsletter, Tom Hall will step down as chapter President. Tom has appointed former chapter 787 President, Jim (Rambo) LaGarde, to fill in as President until the next regular election in April.

Submitted By: Jon Mueller

Quote

Once upon a time there was a war, and I was in it. It seems about as far away now as the Civil War, but there it was--The 1960's--and among things like topless bathing suits, integration and space programs there was an increasingly gnawing ache in the side of the American People called Vietnam.

EVERYMAN STROLLS THROUGH HELL by James Worth.

Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Time
<u>January 2010</u>		
8th Saturday	Field of Honor Ceremony, Veterans Park, Hosted by Chapter 787	10:00 AM
14th Thursday	Board of Directors meeting, Jon's house	6:30 PM
28th Thursday	Chapter Meeting, Hillsborough County Veterans Park	6:30 PM
<u>February 2010</u>		
11th Thursday	Board of Directors meeting, Jon's House	6:30 PM
25th Thursday	Chapter Meeting, Hillsborough County Veterans Park	6:30 PM

Archival copies of the OUTPOST can be viewed on our web site: www.vva787.com

Submitted by: **Kevin Ruhl**

Vietnam War MoH recipient dies

He received more medals for valor than anyone who served in the Vietnam War



Retired Army Col. Robert L. Howard, a Medal of Honor recipient who retired in San Antonio and was the most highly decorated soldier from the Vietnam War, died Wednesday.

Howard, 70, died at about noon at a hospice in Waco, where he'd been for about three weeks, suffering from pancreatic cancer, said Benito Guerrero, a close friend, Vietnam veteran and retired sergeant major.

Howard, a larger-than-life figure on the national military scene, appeared at many patriotic events in San Antonio and helped honor the wounded by attending Purple Heart ceremonies. At his suggestion, the local Blue Star Mothers of America chapter began holding an annual ceremony in late December to remember the troops serving overseas.

In April, Howard traveled, as he often did, to Iraq and Afghanistan to talk to U.S. troops about service. Just two months ago, he visited troops in Germany, Bosnia and Kosovo.

Howard, who served **five tours in Vietnam**, was a sergeant first class in the Army's Special Forces on Dec. 30, 1968, when he rallied a badly shot-up platoon against an estimated 250 enemy soldiers in Vietnam. Despite being unable to walk because of injuries from grenade blasts, he coordinated a strong counterattack while aiding the wounded and was the last man to board a helicopter, according to military records.

He was nominated for the **Medal of Honor**, the highest honor for valor, **three times during a 13-month period**. His long list of awards also included the **Distinguished Service Cross**, **two Silver Stars** and **eight Purple Hearts**.





Marine Vietnam Vet Serves in Iraq

December 07, 2009 Marine Corps News|by LCpl. Melissa A. Latty



From the battle at Belleau Wood, where Marines earned the name Devil Dog, to the iconic image of the flag-raising at Iwo Jima, Marine Corps history is embedded in every Marine from their initial training at boot camp and continues to provide inspiration to those who continue to serve. Some veterans of past wars, like Vietnam, are not only holding on to the memories of that time, but are also making new ones while they serve in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The company first sergeant for Transportation Support Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 46, 1st Sgt. Viriato B. Sena, is one of the few Vietnam veterans still left among the ranks of currently serving Marines. Sena, who joined the Marine Corps in 1973, participated in the evacuation of Vietnam and is now deployed to Iraq during the responsible drawdown of U.S. forces and equipment in Iraq. The military drawdown from Iraq has been noted to be the largest operation of its kind since Vietnam.

In April 1975, Sena, who was attached to Battalion Landing Team, 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, participated in the evacuation of Saigon, Vietnam while working as part of a security team aboard the ships USS Midway and USS Enterprise.

"There were 10 of us, all combat engineers," Sena said. "Our function was to make sure that Vietnamese civilians brought nothing on to the ship that would jeopardize the mission, such as weapons or grenades."

Once on the ships, the civilians were taken to refugee camps in the Philippines Island.

Sena then became part of a team of Marines who helped set up more refugee camps for the Vietnamese civilians and provide security for displaced South Vietnamese nationals.

"I was only 19 at the time and it was a hell of an experience," Sena remembered. "It has been a drastic change from those days to now."

Sena also noticed physical changes since first joining the corps 36 years ago. While reminiscing, Sena, a reservist out of Providence, R.I., recalled his recent visit to his very first duty station at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

"I remember being back at Camp Lejeune right before this deployment," he said. "I was driving on base with a young Marine and we passed by what used to be an open squad bay. Now the area is well built up."

Camp Lejeune, which was a tobacco barn, farm house and temporary tent cities back in 1941, has grown to a 246-square mile military training facility, according to the official Camp Lejeune web site. Today the base boasts 11 miles of beach, capable of supporting amphibious operations. There are 78 live-fire ranges, 98 maneuver areas, 34 gun positions, 540 tactical landing zones and a state-of-the-art Military Operations in Urban Terrain training facility.

"Things have changed so much since I was stationed there when I was active duty," Sena said. "Who would have thought I would be back there on the base that I was on in 1973 and it's now 2009."

Now as the TS Co. first sergeant, Sena is leading his Marines through the responsible drawdown process. Their missions include retrograde of gear and equipment from Al Asad and other small forward operating bases in western Iraq, resupply and general service support to the FOBs.

Sena used his knowledge of the evacuation of Vietnam to prepare his Marines for their Iraq mission in support of the drawdown of Marine forces and gear.

Four months ago, Sena gave a class to the battalion about the difference between the evacuation of Vietnam and the current responsible drawdown of U.S. forces and equipment.

One of these differences is the speed at which U.S. forces are withdrawing. During the Vietnam War, as soon as the fight was over U.S. troops were on their way home.

However, troops in Iraq have stayed past the fight to assist the Iraqis in rebuilding their country and training their military forces.

"[A contrast of the current] drawdown and Operation Frequent Wind is we're taking our time because we're not forced to pull out all at once as we were in the fall of Saigon," he said.

Back in the states, Sena works as a Lt. Supervisor with the Department of Veterans Affairs Police in Boston, Mass. He has served a total of 23 years of active duty in the Marine Corps.

"The Marine Corps has made me a better person and has guided me in the right direction," he said. "I love the responsibility that the Marine Corps instills in me to take care of my junior Marines."

"I'm going to stick around for the Marines until they kick me out," Sena joked. "I have a great bunch of Marines in my company. They are the future of the Marine Corps."

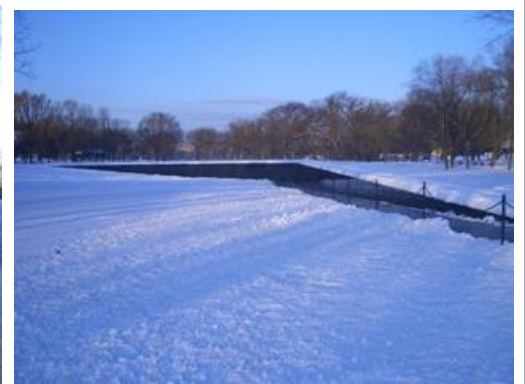
Dignity Memorial Moving Wall Event



Pictured above is (L) Armwood High School senior **Jacob VanOrder** . Next is **Beth Rodriguez** and Armwood teacher and chapter 787 member **Bruce Burnham**. Beth is the General Manager for Hillsboro Memorial Gardens and was a key partner in bringing the Vietnam Moving Wall to the Tampa area, getting it set up and hosting the ceremonies. She was a student at Armwood High School graduating in 1998. In addition Beth was in the History of the Vietnam War class taught by **Bruce Burnham**.

Submitted by: Carl Harris

Christmas Time at the Vietnam Memorial Wall, Washington D.C.



Sometimes we Vietnam Veterans in Florida and other warm winter states forget about the beauty of The Wall covered in snow. Snow that was never seen in S.E. Asia. The man with the snow shovel is Vietnam Veteran **Jan Scruggs** who is making a path for folks to follow in preparation of the Lighting of the Christmas Tree at The Wall ceremony.

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 (VVA), Chapter 787, Tampa Florida. All articles, and opinions are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views 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 Tom Hall: MarineDI@aol.com

VP Carl Harris: c-e-harris@tampabay.rr.com

Secretary & Treasurer : Open

State Council Delegate Kevin Ruhl:

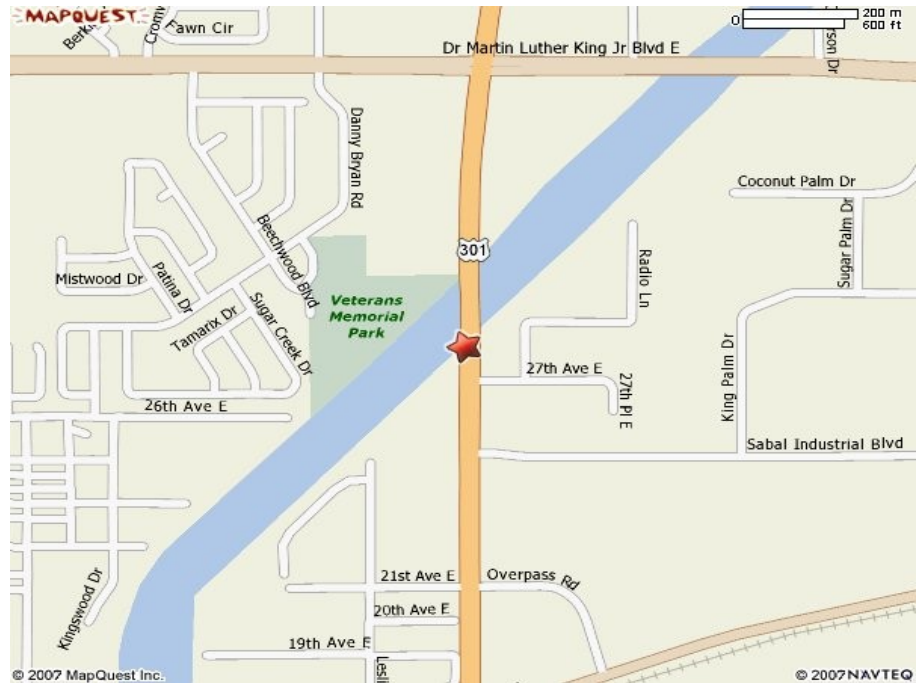
MSgtMCRet@aol.com

Board of Directors

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Dave Braun: Prowler143@aol.com

Jon Mueller: ParaSF68@aol.com



Important Web Sites

Vietnam Veterans of American, Chapter 787, Tampa Bay Florida.....	http://www.vva787.com
Hillsborough County Veterans Park Museum & War Memorials (NEW).....	www.hcmemorials.com
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