

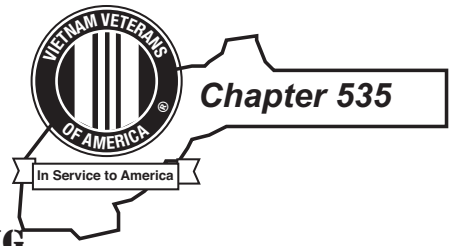


# INCOMING

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA  
**CHAPTER 535**

ANNUAL NEVADA COUNTY FAIR EDITION OF INCOMING

Chapter 535 Web Page [www.vva535.org](http://www.vva535.org)



*"It Feels Good to Get Involved"*

Volume 23 Issue 8

*In Service To America and the Gold Country*

August 2013

## **President's Message**

### **August Chapter Meeting – Dave Chaix**

Our chapter meeting on August 5 will feature Dave Chaix, who will tell us about his trip to Vietnam earlier this year and bring us up to date on the Friends of Vinh Son Orphanage Project. Dave was originally scheduled to speak at our June meeting but, due to problems with the projector we rescheduled Dave to our August meeting. I hope you can join us.

### **The VVA booth at the Nevada County Fair**

We still have a few slots to fill for staffing our booth at the fair. Ric Sherridan (274-1413) is looking for volunteers to fill the remaining slots. Give Ric a call.

Instead of selling pins, hats and shirts our booth this year will provide information to veterans about the VVA, focusing on issues that are important to all of us. We also hope to recruit a few new members. If you are not able to work a shift, I hope you will stop by the booth to see what we are doing.

### **Did You Know Veterans Are Authorized To Use The Military Hand Salute?**

Public Law 110-181 passed by Congress in 2008 authorizes veterans and members of the military not in uniform to render the military hand salute to the flag of the United States. Unfortunately, the patriotic intention of this congressional act remains disappointingly unfulfilled. The change to the law was not well publicized and few of our 25 million veterans are aware of it. There is a program underway to request major sports franchises (and other sponsors of public events) to amend their flag ceremony announcements to include the phrase, "As now authorized by the United States Congress, all Veterans of the armed forces are invited to render the military hand salute." The VVA fully supports this program. I hope you will join me in using the military hand salute at our chapter meetings and other events in our county when we salute the flag.

### **Chapter Summer Bar-B-Que**

Our summer pot luck Bar-B-Que will be held on Saturday, August 24, from 3PM to 6PM, at Harold and Patricia Graves' house, 10065 Robinson King Road, Nevada City. The chapter will provide hot dogs and hamburgers, soft drinks, plates and utensils. RSVP to Harold at 470-8507 and let him know if you plan to bring a salad, side dish or desert.

### **California Vietnam Veterans Memorial 25th Anniversary – November 23**

The 25th anniversary of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial will be celebrated at the memorial in Sacramento on November 23. I hope you will mark your calendar and plan on joining us. Details to follow.

### **Constitution Day Parade – Nevada City – September 8 – 2:00PM**

As Nevada City did last year, the Constitution Day Parade will salute our veterans. The parade will be organized by period of service; World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Persian Gulf War, Iraq & Afghanistan. We'll start gathering about 1:15 pm at the top of Broad Street. We have invited veterans' organizations from all over northern California and Reno, and would like to fill Broad Street with vets! I hope

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you will plan on joining us. Give me a call if you have any questions.

Each year at the Nevada County Fair, Friends of Nevada County Military has displayed 90 photos of our troops, their family and members of friends, totaling more than 700 photos since we first put up the "Friends" booth in 2006. This photo collection will be on display in the Nevada City Chambers in the city hall Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning before the parade.

**Fred Buhler, President 265-4878**

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## **Vietnam Veterans of America**

Founded in 1978, Vietnam Veterans of America (the "VVA") is the only national Vietnam veteran's organization congressionally chartered and exclusively dedicated to Vietnam-era veterans and their families. VVA is organized as a not-for-profit corporation and is tax-exempt under Section 501(c) (19) of the Internal Revenue Service Code.

### **VVA's Founding Principle**

*"Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another."*

### **Goals**

VVA's goals are to promote and support the full range of issues important to Vietnam veterans, to create a new identity for this generation of veterans, and to change public perception of Vietnam veterans.

In pursuing our goals, the VVA aggressively advocates on issues important to veterans.

- Seek the fullest possible accounting of America's PWO/MIAs
- Seek full access to quality health care for all veterans.
- Identify the full range of disabling injuries and illnesses incurred during military service.
- Hold government agencies accountable for following laws and mandating veterans' health care
- Create a positive public perception of Vietnam veterans
- Support the next generation of America's war veterans
- Serve our communities



### **Brief History**

By the late 1970s, it was clear the established veterans groups had failed to make a priority of the issues of concern to Vietnam veterans. As a result, a vacuum existed within the nation's legislative and public agenda. In January 1978, a small group of Vietnam veteran activists came to Washington, D.C., searching for allies to support the creation of an advocacy organization devoted exclusively to the needs of Vietnam veterans. VVA, initially known as the Council of Vietnam Veterans, began its work. At the end of its first year of operation in 1979, the total assets were \$46,506.

Council members believed that if the nation's attention was focused on the specific needs of Vietnam veterans, a grateful nation would quickly take remedial steps. However, despite persuasive arguments before Congress, which were amplified by highly supportive editorials printed in many leading American newspapers, they failed to win even a single legislative victory to bring new and needed programs into creation to help Vietnam veterans and their families.

It soon became apparent that arguments couched simply in terms of morality, equity, and justice was not enough. The U.S. Congress would respond to the legitimate needs of Vietnam veterans only if the organization professing to represent them had political strength. In this case, strength translated into numbers which meant membership. By the summer of 1979, the Council of Vietnam Veterans had transformed into Vietnam Veterans of America, a veterans service organization made up of, and devoted to, Vietnam veterans.

Hindered by the lack of substantial funding for development, the growth of membership was at first slow. The big breakthrough came when the American hostages were returned from Iran in January 1981. It was as if America went through an emotional catharsis that put the issues of the Vietnam era on the table for public discussion. The question was asked why parades for the hostages but not for Vietnam veterans? Many veterans complained about the lack of recognition and appreciation for past national service. Vietnam-era veterans wanted action in the form of programs that would place the latest generation of veterans on the same footing as veterans from previous wars. Membership grew steadily, and for the first time, VVA secured significant contributions. The combination of the public's willingness to talk about the Vietnam War and the basic issues that it raised, as well as the veterans themselves coming forward, was augmented by the nation's dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in November 1982. The week-long activities rekindled a sense of brotherhood among the veterans and a feeling that they shared an experience that was too significant to ignore.

# Chapter 535 Information Center

## VVA Belt Buckles For Sale:

Eagle with Flag and Vietnam Service Ribbon: \$25  
 Weight: 5.5 ounces Measurement: 2 3/8" x 3 3/4"  
 Eagle only (add your own pins) \$12  
 Weight: 5 ounces Measurement: Same



Call Margie (530-265-4878) or e-mail at [margie95959@earthlink.net](mailto:margie95959@earthlink.net)

## Chapter 535 Officers & Board of Directors

### Officers-Phone

**President**  
 Fred Buhler ..... 265-4878  
**Vice-President**  
 Dick Corn ..... 277-8856  
**Secretary**  
 Dave Johnson ..... 885-1230  
**Treasurer**  
 Harold Graves [haroldgraves@sbcglobal.net](mailto:haroldgraves@sbcglobal.net)..... 470-8507  
**Past President**  
 Fred Buhler ..... 265-4878

### Directors

Ric Sheridan [rfsheridan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rfsheridan@sbcglobal.net)..... 274-1413  
 Dan Davis ..... 272-4110  
 Pete Burrelle [howling\\_wolf28@yahoo.com](mailto:howling_wolf28@yahoo.com)..... 274-3787  
 Bill Holman [bholman@succeed.net](mailto:bholman@succeed.net) ..... 265-8387  
 Kent Hawley.....432-3551  
 Ralph Remick.....272-5922

### CA State Council Delegates

Pete Burrelle, Fred Buhler (alternate) 265-4878

## Chapter 535 Committees Chairs

Finance .....Ralph Remick & Dave Johnson  
 Parade and Honor Guard .....Pete Burrelle  
 Membership Affairs ..... Margie Buhler  
 Newsletter ... [bholman@succeed.net](mailto:bholman@succeed.net), 265-8387 Bill Holman  
 Nominations ..... Dick Corn  
 Christmas Year Round ..... Harold Graves  
 Shredding Program .....Dan Davis  
 NCCVC ..... Margie Buhler  
 Web Master..... Ralph Remick

### Nevada County Veterans Affairs Rep.

Eric .....(530) 273-3396

The Vinh Son Orphanage, has a new web site

[www.friendsofvso.org](http://www.friendsofvso.org)

### Membership Facts Chapter 535

<b>VVA</b>	
Individual members	28
Life members	38
<b>AVVA</b>	
Individual members	1
Life member	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>



## August Birthdays

8	2	Jon Cavaiani MOH
8	17	Wayne Cronos
8	23	Dave Chaix
8	26	Howard Hamer

## Upcoming Dates and Events

August 2	Chapter Meeting 6 pm
August 7-11	Chapter Fair Booth
August 24	Chapter Picnic 3-6 PM

## Veterans Directory

### Congress

Senate - Veterans Affairs Committee .....	202-224-9126
House - Veterans Affairs Committee.....	202-225-3527

### Department of Veterans Affairs

Board of Veterans Appeals .....	202-233-3001
Central Office .....	202-233-4000
Freedom of Information/Privacy Act .....	202-233-3616
Personnel Locator.....	202-233-4000
Public Information .....	202-233-3056
Veterans Health Administration .....	202-535-7010
VA Telephone Care Program .....	800-733-0502
Cemetery, Burial, & Headstone Info.....	800-697-6947

### Agencies

Department of Defense .....	703-545-6700
DEERS Information (California).....	800-334-4162
CHAMPUS (California).....	800-741-5048
Office of Management and Budget Veterans Affairs.....	202-395-4500
Small Business Administration Office of Veterans Affairs .....	202-205-6773

### Locator & Reunion Services

Army Worldwide Locator.....	317-542-4211
Navy Times Locator Services .....	703-750-8636
Service Reunions .....	703-998-7035
Vietnam Veterans Locator.....	319-388-9023
Veteran's Locator Service .....	800-449-VETS

### Miscellaneous

Vietnam Women's Memorial Project .....	202-328-7253
Sons & Daughters In Touch CA .....	805-872-4035
Retired Pay - Cleveland DFAS.....	800-321-1080
Navy Lodging.....	800-NAVY INN
Army Lodging.....	800-GO ARMY

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### *Vietnam Veterans of America continued from page 2*

In 1983, VVA took a significant step by founding Vietnam Veterans of America Legal Services (VVALS) to provide assistance to veterans seeking benefits and services from the government. By working under the theory that a veteran representative should be an advocate for the veteran rather than simply a facilitator, VVALS quickly established itself as the most competent and aggressive legal-assistance program available to veterans. VVALS published the most comprehensive manual ever developed for veteran service representatives, and in 1985, VVALS wrote the widely acclaimed Viet Vet Survival Guide. In the nineties, VVALS evolved into the current VVA Service Representative program.

The next several years saw VVA grow in size, stature, and prestige. VVA's professional membership services, veteran's service, and advocacy work gained the respect of Congress and the veterans' community. In 1986, VVA's exemplary work was formally acknowledged by the granting of a congressional charter.

## Newsletter Submissions

Please ensure that submissions for the newsletter reach us no-later-than the 15th of the month before the meeting. They may be mailed to:

### VVA Chapter 535

**Attn: Newsletter Editor**

**18455 Augustine Rd, Nevada City, CA 95959**

**e-mail to [bholman@succeed.net](mailto:bholman@succeed.net) or**

**call Bill Holman at (530) 265-8387**

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of Vietnam Veterans of America National, State Council, or Chapter 535 or the newsletter editor, but those of the author of the comments.

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapters are hereby given permission to reproduce any locally produced articles published in this newsletter. Permission to reprint anything else must come from the original source.

### Has Your Address Changed?

Please let us know before the Post office quits forwarding your newsletters. If you find your not receiving your newsletters or hearing from us, please contact Bill Holman at 265-8387.

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Today, Vietnam Veterans of America has a national membership of approximately 65,000, with 617 chapters throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, and the Philippines. VVA state councils coordinate the activities of local chapters. VVA places great emphasis on coordinating its national activities and programs with the work of its local chapters and state councils and is organized to ensure that victories gained at the national level are implemented locally.

VVA strives for individual and group empowerment and locally originated action to assist veterans and other needy members of their communities. These volunteer programs offer unique and innovative services to an ever-widening population. They include: support for homeless shelters; substance-abuse education projects and crime-prevention campaigns; sponsorship of youth sports, Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts, Big Brothers/Big Sisters; and relief to other communities affected by natural disasters and chronic poverty. VVA is governed by a national board of directors and by national officers – 24 women and men democratically elected by VVA delegates, are sent by their respective chapters to biennial conventions. VVA's essential purpose is to promote the educational, economic, health, cultural, and emotional readjustment of the Vietnam-era veteran

to civilian life. This is done by promoting legislation and public-awareness programs to eliminate discrimination suffered by Vietnam veterans.

VVA's government-relations efforts combine the three ingredients essential to success in the legislative arena – lobbying, mobilizing constituents, and working with the media – to achieve its ambitious agenda. Legislative victories have included the establishment and extension of the Vet Center system, passage of laws providing for increased job-training and job-placement assistance for unemployed and underemployed Vietnam-era veterans, the first laws assisting veterans suffering from Agent Orange exposure, and landmark legislation (i.e., Judicial Review of veterans claims) permitting veterans to challenge adverse VA decisions in court. All were enacted largely as a result of VVA's legislative efforts.

### **Nevada County Chapter 535 – History**

On July 4, 1989, during the Independence Day Parade in Grass Valley, Vietnam veteran Jim Reber took his American flag and started down Mill Street. The fact that he wasn't an "official" entry didn't bother Jim. Along the way he found other vets who were quick to join him. The crowd along the parade route warmly received Jim and his group of veterans. By June 1990 Chapter 535 was formed with Jim Reber as the chapter's first President.

The chapter's early days were lean financially, but by the end of May 1991 we had 53 regular members and ten associate members. Today the chapter has 66 members including 38 life members and 3 associate members.

The chapter meets at 6pm on the first Thursday of every month at the Grass Valley Veterans Memorial Building. We try to keep our business meetings short, have an interesting speaker and time for socializing.

In the summer we get together for a bar-b-que and have Christmas pot luck in December. Our color guard participates in several local parades during the year. We have a booth at the County Fair in August as part of our outreach program to inform the public about the VVA. In December we sell possibly the world's greatest brownies and hot apple cider at the Victorian Christmas celebration in Nevada City. Both the booth at the fair and participation in Victorian Christmas provides an opportunity to meet with the public and other veterans.

Chapter members played an important role in helping to found Friends of Nevada County Military, a local non-profit that supports our service men and women and their families. Since the group was founded in late 2004, "Friends" has sent more than 6,000 gift boxes to troops serving in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere.

In March 2001 one of our members, Dave Chaix, returned to Vietnam for the first time since the war. He served in Vietnam with the 4th Infantry Division during the war. While in the central highlands, the tour leader took the group to an old wooden church. Behind the church Dave and others spotted an orphanage. In was in terrible condition. All the guys dug deep and made a contribution on the spot. The group then started discussing how they might help this group of Montagnard children. Dave and his friends formed The Friends of Vinh Son Montagnard Orphanage, a non-profit with supporters in the United States, Australia and the Netherlands. Since its formation FVSO has grown, and now supports seven orphanages in Kon Tum Province with 830 children.

Under our Christmas Year Round program, the chapter provides assistance to local veterans in need. Together with the local chapter of the Marine Corps League and Friends of Nevada County Military, we formed "Vets Helping Vets" to assist a local vet, who suffers from Multiple Sclerosis and is wheel chair bound, rebuild his house.

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## **Vietnam Veterans of America - Legislative Agenda**

The VVA's top legislative priorities are *Gaining the fullest possible accounting of the missing and killed in South-east Asia during the Vietnam War, Addressing the Legacy of Toxic Exposures and Fixing the VA.*

The VVA believes all three can be accomplished if there is a political and/or the managerial will. They are achievable if we want them badly enough and if we can marshal our service and veterans communities and work in concert to convince our federal elected officials that these issues are of great importance for all Vietnam veterans, for our families and our survivors.

Vietnam Veterans of America continues to embrace the newest generation of veterans who have served with such distinction in Southwest Asia. Consistent with our founding principle, we will never abandon any generation of veterans.

### **Gaining the Fullest Possible Accounting**

Even after the return of 591 American prisoners of war between February 14 and April 4, 1973, the fates of 2,646 remained listed as missing in Southeast Asia. To date, 997 Americans have been accounted for. The VVA shall continue to press for answers regarding the 311 Americans, listed in Laos as killed in action, body not recovered; those 53 similarly listed in Cambodia; along with the 1,278 who are MIA in Vietnam.

The striking black-and-white POW//MIA flag was created to arouse and motivate Americans about the fates of those still missing in Southeast Asia. For many, however, it quickly became a universal symbol for those troops taken prisoner in all wars in which Americans were deployed into harm's way.

The VVA's Veterans Initiative Program is an historic effort to bring former enemies together to bring closure for families of troops who remain missing from the war. Of an estimated 300,000 missing Vietnamese troops, information regarding the locations of some 10,000 remains has been given to Vietnam by VVA. About 1,000 remains have actually been recovered.

### **Addressing the Legacy of Toxic Exposures**

We now know that substances like dioxin, mustard gas, sarin, VX and BZ can present symptoms a decade or more after exposure and separation from service. And by "long-term effects" we don't mean only on the veteran. We refer as well to their progeny, a generation or more into the future. Offspring of veterans exposed to toxic substances are also wounded by the war in which their mother or father served. We now know that exposure to toxic substances often has multi-generational effects. What we don't know is how many generations may be impacted, with serious health consequences.

To date research in this area has been totally inadequate. The VVA has drafted the Veterans' Family Preservation, Health Maintenance, and Research Act of 2013, embracing these elements:

- A veteran's military medical/health history as part of the electronic patient medical treatment system to be developed;
- A database registry within the Veterans Health Administration for veterans exposed to dioxin and other toxic materials;
- A national center for the Treatment and Research of Health Conditions suffered by the Progeny of Veterans Exposed to Toxic Substances during their military service;
- An Advisory Committee to oversee the work done at the Center and to advise the secretaries of Health and Human Services and Veterans Affairs on issues related to the research, care, and treatment provided for in this bill, as well as on the benefits and services needed by the progeny of veterans exposed to toxic substances during their military service;
- An Office of Extramural Research to look into environmental studies of toxic exposures by troops during their service;

- An Extramural Research Advisory Council to advise the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Director of Extramural Research on guidelines for research proposals, and to weigh the evidence of various epidemiological studies of the health effects of toxic exposures on veterans and their progeny;
- A coordinated, ongoing, national outreach and education campaign to communicate information on toxic exposures and resulting health conditions.

### **Fixing the VA**

Funding is not the primary issue when it comes to the ever-ballooning backlog of claims and appeals encountered by the beleaguered Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). The VVA will continue to work with the VBA to revamp the overburdened compensation and pension system, seeking to integrate the fruits of several IT pilot projects that have shown exceptional promise, along with competency-based testing of service representatives and VA adjudicators and a still-evolving array of necessary reforms.

The "challenge training" program currently being used for new raters has shown promising gains in efficiency and quality. The VA would be wise to quickly deploy this model to all staff.

There need to be far better oversight of and by managers who are currently paid handsomely to administer a system that is all too obviously not functioning as it should. Management audits and assessments must be a component of annual performance reviews that are clear, specific, and success-oriented. There must also be focused and hard-hitting oversight by the Veterans' Affairs Committees in both the House and the Senate, as well as in the Budget and Appropriations Committees. The greatest challenge is to upend an entrenched corporate culture long resistant to change.

There needs to be, on a parallel track, real accountability in the management of the Veterans Health Administration. With Advance Appropriations now law, there can be no excuses as to why a VA medical center fails to hire the staff it needs or why it denies the purchase of a new MRI machine that is badly needed or give the go-ahead for small but pivotal construction projects.

*Continued on Page 7*



The VVA believes that measures to ensure accountability are essential. The system of bonuses for Senior Executive Staff needs to be overhauled to ensure only those who have taken that extra measure, who have walked that extra mile, to ensure that what they are responsible for has been done well, on time and within budget; and for those who innovate and improve the systems and projects under their auspices. Bonuses should be withheld from those who just do their job. Those who perform poorly need to be removed or reassigned; and any manager or supervisor who gets caught lying to a veteran, to their supervisor, or to a Member of congress should be dismissed. And bonuses should be given with a caveat attached: if you accept the bonus, you agree to stay with the VA for a given period of time, and not just take the money and run.

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## Military Trivia

**William Henry “Bill” Mauldin (October 29, 1921 - January 22, 2003) was a two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonist from the United States. He was most famous for his World War II**

cartoons depicting American soldiers, as represented by the archetypal characters “Willie and Joe”, two weary and bedraggled infantry troopers who stoically endure the difficulties and dangers of duty in the field. These cartoons were broadly published and distributed in the American army abroad and in the United States. His grandfather had been a civilian cavalry scout in the Apache Wars and his father was an artilleryman in World War I. Mauldin entered the US Army via the Arizona National Guard in 1940. While in the 45th Infantry Division, Mauldin volunteered to work for the unit’s newspaper, drawing cartoons about regular soldiers or “dogfaces”. Eventually he created two cartoon infantrymen, Willie (who was modeled after his comrade and friend Irving Richtel) and Joe, who became synonymous with the average American GI. During July 1943, Mauldin’s cartoon work continued when, as a sergeant of the 45th Division’s press corps, he landed with the division in the invasion of Sicily and later in the Italian campaign. Mauldin began working for Stars and Stripes, the American soldiers’ newspaper; as well as the 45th Division News, until he was officially transferred to the Stars and Stripes in February 1944. By March 1944, he was given his own jeep, in which he roamed the front, collecting material and producing six cartoons a week. His cartoons were viewed by soldiers throughout Europe during World War II, and were also published in the United States. To read more about Mauldin and the impression he left on other refer to the attachment to this Bulletin titled, “Bill Mauldin Stamp” [Source: CNN.com | Columnist Bob Green | Mar 2010 ++]

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**Application For Membership**  
**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC., CHAPTER 535**

P.O. Box 37, Grass Valley, CA 95945

Individual membership is open to all Vietnam-era veterans who served on active duty for other than training purposes between August 5, 1964 – May 7, 1975 and In-Country Veterans: February 28, 1961 – May 7, 1975.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone (        ) \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone (        ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter No. **535**                      Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_ ID No. \_\_\_\_\_

- ◆ **Membership Type:**     Individual – 1 year @ \$20 annual     Individual – 3 years @ \$50  
(select one)                       Life Member    **Payment Plan**     \$50 down, 8 monthly payments of \$25

**Select Age Group**     Ages 49 and under \$250     Ages 50-55 \$225

Ages 56-60 \$200     Ages 61-65 \$175     Ages 66 and over \$150

- ◆ **Payment Method:**     Check             Money Order             Visa             MasterCard  
(select one)

◆ **Card Number** \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Individual members **must** submit a copy of their DD-214 along with this application and dues payment. Associate participation is open to family, friends, all veterans, and other interested persons.

*In Service To America*

Address Correction Requested

