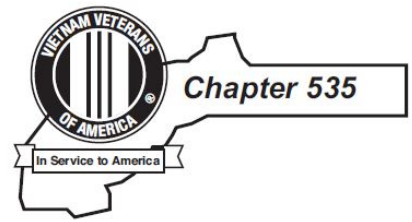




INCOMING

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
CHAPTER 535

Website: www.vva535.org



Volume 26 Issue 8

November 2016

President's Message

Holiday Greetings Everyone,

I can't believe that it's that time again and thus we have a lot coming up.

At our November meeting we will be passing out the new jackets. The following week we will be electing the person that has our lives in their hands, then turkey day with all our friends and family.

Our December Christmas Dinner comes on the first day of the month followed by the first day of Victorian Christmas on Sunday, December 4th. That's followed by four more days of two Sundays and two Wednesdays. Sign-ups for all the different shifts will start at our November meeting and continue through our Christmas meeting. If you have worked in the Booth before you know how much fun it is. If you haven't, ask anyone that has. I'm looking forward to this Holiday season and I hope you are too.

Harold Graves

Matters of interest as outlined at Board Meeting of October 20, 2016:

See President's message.

Upcoming Events

General Meeting, Thursday, Nov. 3, 2016.

December 2016 – Victorian Christmas, Nevada City. Sundays Dec. 4, 11, 18 1:30 – 6:00 p.m. Weds. Dec. 14, 21 – 5:00 – 9:00 p.m. New Leadership is needed. Harold Graves shared at the conclusion of the 2015 Project that it was time to pass the torch. Planning for this event is upon us. (I understand Chuck Holmes will chair this fundraiser event. Editor)

Chapter 535 Officers

- President
Harold Graves 470-8507
- Vice-President
Al Hernandez 864-2480
- Treasurer
Ralph Remick559-7716
- Secretary
Dave Johnson887-8297
- Past President
Pete Burrelle (deceased)

Directors

- Al Hernandez 864-2480
- Dave Johnson 887-8297
- Ralph Remick 559-7716
- Ric Sheridan 274-1413
- Dave Chaix269-1431

Bill Holman 265-8387
 Kent Hawley432-3551
 Bart Ruud 823-1368
 Dale Epps 368-6156
 Harold Graves 470-8507
 Dick Corn 272-5922

Committee Chairs

FinanceRalph Remick & Dave Johnson
 Parade and Honor Guard (vacant)
 Membership AffairsRic Sheridan
 Newsletter Interim editor Bart Ruud
 Nominations Dick Corn
 Christmas Year Round Harold Graves
 NCCVCKen Farmer
 Web MasterRalph Remick

Quartermaster Kent Hawley

Nevada County Veterans Affairs Rep.

Kevin Edwards (530) 273-3396

ncvso@co.nevada,ca.us

VVA 535 Jackets Available 11/3/2016

President Harold Graves has reported that jackets for which VVA members submitted unit patches will be ready for delivery at the general meeting of Nov. 3, 2016. Completed price of each jacket will be \$100.

Recollections of a Vietnam War era draftee: Part II, offered by David M. Chaix: How Did I Get Here?

May 1967 – Bien Hoa Air Base, South Vietnam:

After a short flight in a C 130 from Bien Hoa to Pleiku, then a truck ride about 16 miles west to Camp Enari (Dragon Mountain), the 4th Infantry Division’s Base Camp, we were dropped at the 4th Replacement Company for orientation and a patrol assignment. (A patrol on our 1st day?).

There were about 50 of replacements there, mostly 11B20’s.

We were issued M-16’s (first one I had seen) along with normal gear for a patrol. The Lieutenant was a short-timer getting ready to rotate home. He singled me out for his RTO (Great - I now had a rifle I had never fired and a radio I had never used.)

About 50 of us, with various MOS’s, formed up for our first patrol. As we set up for the night, the Lieutenant tied up his hammock as we began digging. He told me not to wake him up unless there was an emergency. Sometime in the morning I received a call from an artillery unit wanting to drop some rounds off our perimeter. Guessing this was not an emergency, I told them to proceed. The first rounds were closer than the range they were reporting, and they requested to drop in closer. That’s when I rolled the Lt. out of his hammock – he verified they were getting too close, so I stopped the exercise. How could he sleep through this?

After processing, I was dropped off at B Company 4th S & T’s company area. I was assigned to the 4th Platoon, the medium truck platoon comprised of about 30 guys. I learned I was the first replacement as all there had come over by ship.

I was assigned Tractor B 402 and found we pulled three types of loads - flat beds (stake sides), 5,000 gallon tankers and refers, with varying loads for all three.

Our area of operation was from Quin Nhon on the coast in the east to Du Co on the Cambodian border to the west (Hwy 19), and from Dak To in the north to Ban Me Thout in the south (Hwy 14). Of course there were many small roads or trails in between.

Convoys were required on anything west of An Khe, except fuel runs between Camp Holloway in Pleiku to Camp Enari on Hwy 14. In the

beginning all roads were dirt but as my tour went on, some became chip and seal.

Our duties were mostly driving, but also included perimeter guard, Dragon Mountain guard, patrols and convoy security. (I spent significant time on the Platoon gun jeep.)

Some of us hated base camp, while others hated the roads. All flats were fixed by the drivers, so after getting in late, drivers fixed any flats that needed to be repaired. This was especially true after moving through an ambush – many flats by brass. Also, there was no hot water and there were shit-burning details. Some of the guys that wanted off the roads volunteered to work nights fixing flats while others found a way to heat water for showers and handle the burning detail.

On my first trip I was accompanied by a short-time SP-5 to Quin Nhon. On our return trip we were pulling up An Khe Pass and came up behind a jeep going very slow. It was a big sweeping turn, so I pulled out and passed. The jeep came up beside me and the passenger told me to stop at the top of the pass. As the jeep pulled away I noticed a sign on the back that said Sergeant Major 504th MP's. This was not going to be good.

After an ass-chewing, it was back to Camp Enari to face the music. The Captain questioned both of us, and to my surprise, sided with me. I was sent out on the road and out of sight for a few weeks. No action taken.

In September '67 I was asked to participate in the Battalion Soldier of the Month contest. Didn't know what that was, but surprisingly I won and picked up a 3 day R & R in Vung Tau. Along with this was the jeep driver's job for the Battalion C. O. I became Russet Jackal 6 Echo for a short time, not a good job match, so back on the road.

The first 6 months were relatively quiet, some mines and sniper activity, but no major

ambushes. In November '67 that all changed and things began to get very exciting, especially to the north in the Dak To and Kontum areas.

Christmas Eve '67, we were on a little firebase west of Ban Blec in the southern part of the Ia Drang Valley. Christmas Day we had a ceremony with a local Montagnard tribe outside the wire – consisting of rice wine in an earthen jug and a blessing with a chicken. Fortunately, the chicken lived.

Since Christmas Day was a cease-fire, we didn't head back north until the 26th. Would you believe, the Bob Hope show was at Camp Enari, so we were able to attend, but were gone again by dark.

Although things had heated up, it really got bad after Tet '68. This continued until I left for home in May '68. I was scheduled for R & R to Australia in February, but that didn't happen and never got back on the calendar.

Major lesson learned – should have qualified with the M-16 at Fort Carson. I had my familiarity out of the window of the truck. Same goes for the M-60 – first time use was in the Platoon gun jeep.

Another lesson – when running with a transportation convoy, carry double ammo. Transportation companies carried M 14's, so no M-16 replacement ammo. (Should have remembered that in Part I.)

In May '68 I was in our usual hotel for an overnight in Quin Nhon, which was off limits, but had worked a deal with the 504th MP's – another story - when some of our drivers showed up with my orders to go home. So, a big party where I acquired food poisoning from bad shrimp. Now I had to drive back to the Central Highlands sick, through Mang Yang Pass. Fortunately it was an uneventful trip.

The last night at Camp Enari, I was given a medal - still don't know what it is - for driving more miles than anyone before me. Really did not like base camp.

So, back home to Fort Lewis, where I received a 90 day early-out. Let's see, twenty-four months minus 3 months early out, minus 60 days leave, minus 15 days excessive leave = 18.5 months active duty.

I returned to Pacific Telephone in Placerville, CA and was sent to Lake Tahoe, CA on loan for the next 3 years, then located there in '71.

I didn't do anything related to military service until 1988 and the dedication of the Vietnam Memorial in Sacramento, CA. I attended the dedication with a couple friends and this got me thinking about the past and especially James Rowe, so this being the start of the computer age, did a little research.

In Part I of this story, I mention James Rowe US xxx xx 520.

Well, Jim ended up in the 1st Cav and almost made it to July 19, 1968 our ETS, the end of his 2 year obligation.

Jim was KIA June 29, 1968. The things that happened after DEROS, we just lost track.

Met Elaine in 1970, married in 1972. Certainly a life changer, but more a life saver.

My first trip back to Vietnam was in 2001 - where I became reacquainted with the Montagnard people, which began the healing process through Friends of Vinh Son Orphanage (FVSO)



Writing Your Story for INCOMING

Ideas for your story:

- Think about what you appreciated about the Vietnam experience. There is surely a means to segue into that with very little reflection on the negative aspects of war.
- What did you appreciate about the Vietnamese people during your deployment?
- Can you steer away from the bad stuff and reflect on the best experience you had in the Nam?
- Surely you had a close buddy and you supported each other. Maybe there is a story in that.
- What really got you through the day-to-day anxieties and fears? There might be a positive recollection in that regard.

American Legion Backs Medical Uses of Marijuana (From the Army Times, October 3, 2016. By Patricia Kime)

The American Legion has called on Congress to remove marijuana from the list of drugs that are classified as having no potential medical use.

The Legion, the country's large veterans organization with 2.4 million members, passed a resolution at its recent convention in Ohio to promote research on marijuana's potential use for treating post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury.

The resolution noted that with thousands of veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan diagnosed with PTSD or TBI, and the Drug Enforcement Administration's recent approval on the study of the

- How did your experience instill in you a sense of patriotism that you possibly express every day of your life.

No writer needs to dwell on the negatives of war. Each of us who was there lived the negatives, and all of us are better people for having served, especially when we look at how we matured as a result of our experiences. Each of us has derived a sense of being and an energy that is different from what it might have been had we not gone across the pond.

Do share with us, in your own words, something of that chapter of your life. And, thank you for your service.

Forward your story to Bart Ruud at bruud45@gmail.com or hand deliver to him.

effectiveness of cannabis for PTSD, Congress should remove marijuana from its Schedule 1 designation, where it shares space with heroin, Ecstasy, LSD, Quaaludes and peyote.

"Amend legislation to remove marijuana from Schedule 1 and reclassify it in a category that, at a minimum, will recognize cannabis as a drug with potential medical value," the Legion wrote in its resolution, first reported by marijuana.com.

The Drug Enforcement Administration in April approved the first randomized, controlled research in the U.S. that will use inhaled marijuana to treat PTSD.

During the convention, Dr. Sue Sisley, a lead researcher on that project and a former Veterans Affairs psychiatrist,

described veterans as “exhausted and [feeling] like guinea pigs” when it comes to treatment for PTSD.

They’re getting desperate. I could never reach that level of relief with traditional medications, so I knew I had to keep going,” she said of her efforts to pursue cannabis research for mental health conditions.

The DEA last month elected to leave marijuana on the list of Schedule 1 drugs. But it also ended its monopoly on growing marijuana for medical research, a move seen by advocates that could pave the way for more research on cannabis.

Legion leaders said their resolution was an effort for the organization to “step forward and help veterans who are suffering from PTSD.”

“There are a lot of tools that are not being utilized. Big pharma does not want them used,” former American Legion National Commander Bill Detweiler said.

Sisley called the organization’s decision to support marijuana research a “bold statement for a conservative veterans group.”

“It’s a big breakthrough. While I can’t say definitely that medical marijuana works for PTSD – we are three years away from published data – we owe it to veterans to study this plant,” Sisley said.

Earlier this year, the House passed an amendment to a Veterans Affairs funding bill that would have allowed veterans to discuss medical marijuana with their VA doctors and VA doctors to fill out the required paperwork in states where medical marijuana is legal.

The Senate Appropriations Committee also approved a similar measure.

But during negotiations on the final version of the fiscal 2017 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs appropriations bill, the provision was stripped from the legislation.

The bill has stalled in the Senate over an unrelated Zika funding provision. If the medical marijuana provision is not returned to the legislation or fails to pass as a stand-alone bill, veterans wanting to use marijuana must continue to go through a private doctor for a recommendation.

November 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 VVA 535 General Meeting 6:00 p.m.	4	5
6 Daylight Savings Time Ends	7 Election Day	8	9	10 U.S. Marine Corps Established (1775) National Museum of the Marine Corps opened (2008)	11 Veterans Day Signing of WW1 Armistice (1775)	12
13 Vietnam Veterans Memorial dedicated in Washington, D.C.(1982)	14 Battle of Ia DrangValley, Vietnam (1965)	15	16	17 VVA 535 Board Meeting 6:00 p.m. Court-martial of Lt. Calley begins (1970)	18	19 Gettysburg Address (1863)
20	21	22	23	24 Thanksgiving	25	26
27	28	29	30			

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, \$25/mo Until paid in full

Select Age Group ■ Ages 56-60 \$200 ■ Ages 61-65 \$175 Ages 66 and over \$150
■ Ages 72+ \$100

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

◆ Card Number _____

Exp. Date _____

Signature _____