

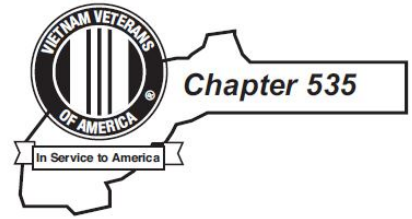


INCOMING

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

CHAPTER 535

Website: www.vva535.org



Volume 27 Issue 9

September 2017

President's Message

Dear fellow Vets,

Greetings! The booth at the fair went off reasonably well all things considered. There is room for improvement on our part as far as scheduling and display for next year. The old banner is becoming frail and a new one will be made. Thank you to all that participated and contributed!

Upcoming is the Yuba Sutter Stand Down on August 24th through the 26th. It will be at the Cotton Rosser Pavilion at Riverton Park, 1010 Bizz Johnson Drive in Marysville.

Our next meeting will on the 7th of September. The Constitution Day Parade will be the 10th of September in Nevada City, and the Nevada County Stand Down is on the 6th and 7th of October.

Due to weather our representative decided not to go to the convention in New Orleans. Probably a good choice as there was flooding.

A work party will be scheduled for our trailer and hopefully we will find a place to store it. If anyone has room for it, please let us know?

That's all for now and see you at the meeting,

Chuck

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Matters of interest as outlined at Board Meeting of August 17, 2017

Directors learned that VVA Life Member Don Bull, our appointed representative to attend the National conference in New Orleans, cancelled his travels to the convention because parts of the city were flooded as severely as what was seen during Hurricane Katrina. Common sense prevailed, but with Don's connections we may still hear of convention outcomes.

Discussion for a future Johnny Cash Tribute show to possibly be scheduled for 5/19/2018 at

the Center for the Arts was again deferred. We remain hopeful that Ralph Remick will visit the Center for the Arts to explore possibilities of coordinating with them for management of a concert.

Directors discussed the successes seen with the VVA-535 booth at the Nevada County Fair. Notations were made to serve as guidance in the future. Thanks were expressed to those who sat the booth and met the public.

Upcoming Events

- General Meeting Sept. 7, 2017
- Constitution Day Parade, NC – Sept. 10, 2017
- Director’s MeetingSept. 21, 2017
- VVA 535 Summer Picnic – To be determined
- CSC Full Council - October 27-29, 2017, Fresno
- VVA-535 Christmas Dinner Dec. 7, 2017
- Victorian Christmas – Dec. 3, 10, 13, 17, 20, 2017

Chapter 535 Officers

- President
Chuck Holmes (H) 478-1126; (C) 263-6968
- Vice-President
Dave Chaix 269-1431
- Treasurer
Ralph Remick559-7716
- Secretary
Dave Johnson 887-8297
- Past President
Harold Graves 470-8507

Directors

- Craig Johnson 575-3576
- Dave Johnson 887-8297
- Ralph Remick 559-7716
- Ric Sheridan 274-1413
- Dave Chaix269-1431
- Bill Holman 265-8387
- Bart Ruud 823-1368

- Dale Epps 368-6156
- Harold Graves 470-8507
- Chuck Holmes 478-1126

Committee Chairs

- FinanceRalph Remick & Dave Johnson
- Parade and Honor Guard Dick Corn
- Membership AffairsRic Sheridan
- Newsletter Interim editor Bart Ruud
- Victorian Christmas Chuck Holmes
- NominationsDick Corn
- Christmas Year Round Harold Graves
- NCCVC Ken Farmer
- Web Master Ralph Remick
- Quartermaster Kent Hawley
- Facebook Master Mike Laborico
- Nevada County Fair Chuck Holmes
- VSO Liaisons Don Bull & Gary Oliver
- CA State Council Rep. Chuck Holmes

Nevada County Veterans Affairs Rep.

Kevin Edwards (530) 273-3396
ncvso@co.nevada.ca.us Tuesday & Thursday,
 8:00 to 12:00 and 1:00 – 4:00 are “Walk-In” days.

Nevada County Veterans Stand Down

The 2017 Nevada County All Veterans Stand Down is scheduled for October 6th and 7th, and will take place at the Northern Mines building at the Nevada County Fairgrounds.

The Stand Down is a completely free event linking local veterans with local and regional resources, providing information, referrals and services, and having a little fun along the way. Nevada County Stand Down Board is expanding services this year and hopes to include Veteran friendly employers, making the Stand Down a one-stop shop for attendees. Service providers can reach the Stand Down committee at nevcostanddown@gmail.com
VVA-535 will likely not participate because it is difficult to find volunteers to lend a hand.

love to hear from you. And, thank you in advance.

Storage Trailer Conundrum

Many Chapter 535 members are familiar with the enclosed utility trailer utilized for years by the VVA as a storage unit for equipment used during the Victorian Christmas exposition as well as for other projects, like the Nevada County Fair.

The trailer, as I understand it, is very likely Past-President Harold Graves personal property and is likely registered with the DMV in Harold's name. It's a sensitive subject, but a subject that should be addressed. Should VVA-535 offer to purchase this unit from Harold? Would Harold become a willing seller if VVA-535 were a willing buyer? Because of health issues, we can appreciate that Harold faces limits in his ability to do the heavy lifting with organizational projects that has been his style for so long. We who are able must carry the torch, even if it takes three to do the work Harold accomplished as one. Harold never shied from organizational leadership.

If the trailer were to transition into VVA-535 hands, is it an appropriate consideration to think about where it might be securely stored? But where? An ideal situation would center on a site with reasonably easy year round access, sans a monthly or annual fee, and secure from the prying hands of vandals. If a site were found, voluntarily offered by a VVA member, should a simple shed be constructed to shelter the trailer from weather become a consideration? Would a canvas and metal pole canopy, such as those found at Costco or similar outlets, be a consideration. The trailer is not totally weatherproof, and it needs a good cleaning.

If you have a site that could be utilized that would fit the parameters sought, VVA-535 would

- **New Navy Device Helps Dogs Smell Explosives Better**

By SCOTT WYLAND | STARS AND STRIPES.
Published: August 8, 2017



- Army Specialist Gregory Taflinger familiarizes his working dog, Lucky 6, with the Mixed Odor Delivery Devices during Office of Naval Research-sponsored research conducted at the U.S. Army's Blossom Point Research Facility under its Expeditionary Canine Sciences Program.

A bomb-sniffing dog trains by sniffing individual chemicals within an explosive but isn't likely to get a whiff of a complete device until coming across the real thing. Current training on homemade explosives, which typically use readily available commercial products, is limited because while each chemical is inert and safe, they can become dangerous when mixed.

Trainers say it's like teaching dogs to identify a cheeseburger by smelling a meat patty, followed by

cheese and then a bun, rather than the whole thing at once. However, a new device developed by the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory safely combines all the volatile chemicals in a small box. The device exposes dogs to the mixed odors, so that what they're exposed to better mimics a homemade bomb. Chemicals are placed into separate vials and kept apart within the box. The odors mingle in a central tube and emanate enough for a dog to smell. Known as the Mixed Odor Delivery Device, it will become available to military canine units in September.



Petty Officer 3rd Class Hannah Asbargen handles VVixen as she sniffs for a simulated explosive containing potassium chlorate on Aug. 2, 2017, at a U.S. Navy base warehouse in Naples, Italy. A new training device will safely hold multiple chemicals to better simulate how a real bomb smells to a dog.

Members of the U.S. Navy's canine unit in Naples, Italy, said the device seems promising, but they won't know how effective it is until they test it on their six dogs.

"I'd like to see their reactions when encountering it," said Chief Petty Officer Susan Collins, kennel master for the unit, which aids police and security teams in sweeps and occasionally has a handler and dog deploy to a war zone.

Allowing dogs to smell an explosive's entire

chemical composition seems a more realistic simulation, Collins said. Still, a device may not work equally well on all dogs, she added.

"Each dog is unique in how they sniff and develop and become efficient," Collins said.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Travis Kruciak, a dog handler at the unit, said he is open to anything that helps them and the dogs do their jobs better. It should also streamline how they handle and track chemicals, which now must be done one chemical at a time, he said. "It will make things simpler, more effective," Kruciak said. The device comes with adjustable plugs and perforated caps that allow handlers to vary the intensity of the odors and create different bomb scenarios for dogs. It gives handlers a clearer idea of what they are training dogs to sniff out.

"If you understand the odor that is coming off that training aid, you have a better chance of hitting that target in real life," said Lauryn DeGreeff, the Navy chemist who invented the device, in an instructional video.

Collins said she likes the odor-adjusting feature because you can vary the compounds the way real explosives vary. She looks forward to trying the device. "As dog handlers, we're always open to new techniques," Collins said. "We're always trying to learn something because there's always room for growth."

Dismal Adventure Reconciled by *Emergency Assistance Plus*

In the interest of those who have heard, EA+ paid \$343.20 for Bart's medical evacuation flight to Sacramento and EA+ also paid \$730 to the carrier that trucked his BMW to his home in Auburn.

NPS Senior Pass

Heads Up. If you Google NPS Senior Pass, you will discover that effective August 29, 2017 a Senior Pass will cost \$80, instead of the current \$10.

The date was incorrectly posted in the August newsletter.

If you can stop at a National Park before August 28, 2017 the entrance personnel can directly sell you a \$10 pass.

If you order online before August 28, the Senior Pass will be \$10 but you will be charged an additional \$10 processing fee.

Writing Your Story for INCOMING

(Ongoing repeat solicitation)

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

So far we have heard from Ruud, Epps, Chaix, Hamer, current Marine LCpl. Jesse Hernandez, and Kent Hawley. (Thank you!)

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 been sent 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 Bart.

Barge-ing into History

Submitted by VVA-535 Quartermaster Kent Hawley
Communications Yeoman 3rd Class (1970)

YRBM20, known as the Delta Hilton, was a floating Brown Water Navy base in Vietnam during 1969 and 1970. It was located on a wide spot in the Bassac River, the west tributary of the Mekong River a mile south of the town of Chou Doc in the Chou Doc Province and very near the Cambodian border.

Detachments assigned in YRBM20 patrolled the French-built border canals nearby. One canal ran between the Bassac River through Tinh Bien to Ha Tien while another ran to the Mekong River.

YRBM stands for "Yard Repair Berthing and Messing." It is not self-propelled. A barge tied to the stern had diesel outboards to move the YRBM when tugboats were not available. It also functioned like a pocket helicopter carrier, supplying fuel and ammo continuously for days in support of nearby air operations.

Check Kent's website at <http://brownwater-navy.com>

To my knowledge. YRBM20 is active, in service, at Naval Station San Diego, CA (Ed.)



Trump Approves Global War On Terrorism Memorial in DC 8/18/2017

President Donald Trump signed a bill Friday night authorizing the construction of a privately funded Global War on Terrorism Memorial in Washington, D.C.

In signing the "Global War on Terrorism War Memorial Act" passed by the House and Senate, Trump did not designate a site but authorized a memorial somewhere on "federal land in the District of Columbia," the White House said. Trump also authorized the non-profit Global War on Terror Memorial Foundation to raise funds and oversee the project.

The bill to establish the memorial was sponsored in the Senate by Sens. Joni Ernst, R-Iowa, an [Army](#) veteran of the Iraq War, and Joe Manchin, D-West Virginia.

On the House side, the bill's sponsors were Reps. Mike Gallagher, R-Wisconsin, and Seth Moulton, D-Massachusetts; both are [Marine Corps](#) veterans of the Iraq War.

In a statement, Ernst said "I am thrilled the President has signed into law this important legislation authorizing the Global War on Terrorism Memorial Foundation to begin creating a place of remembrance for those who served, their loved ones, and all impacted by this war."

Manchin said "I'm proud of the work done by my colleagues in approving the first step towards building a memorial that commemorates our sons and daughters who answered the call to fight." Both Manchin and Ernst said the likely site for the memorial would be the National Mall. "This authorization is the first step in a process that will culminate with the design and construction of a Global War on Terror[ism] Memorial on the National Mall without using any federal funds," they said.

The Global War on Terror Memorial Foundation has on its advisory board retired Army Gen. David Petraeus, the former commander in Iraq and Afghanistan, and retired Army Capt. Florent Groberg, a [Medal of Honor](#) recipient for valor in Afghanistan.

In a statement following Trump's signing, the

foundation said the bill exempted the memorial from the 10-year waiting period under the Commemorative Works Act of 1986, and authorized the foundation to oversee the fundraising, design, and construction of the memorial.

“Today’s historic signing is dedicated to our three million brothers and sisters who have deployed in the Global War on Terror, especially to the ones we

have lost, and those who face great obstacles since their return home,” said Andrew J. Brennan, a West Point graduate and Afghanistan veteran who started the foundation and serves as executive director. “We’re looking forward to building a sacred place of healing and remembrance for our veterans and their families, and want to thank our partners and advocates who worked tirelessly on Capitol Hill to pass this bipartisan legislation,” he said.

Shulkin will decide whether to add more conditions to Agent Orange list by Nov. 1

By TOM PHILPOTT | Special to Stars and Stripes | Published: August 3, 2017

VA Secretary David J. Shulkin will decide “on or before” Nov. 1 whether to add to the list of medical conditions the Department of Veteran Affairs presumes are associated to Agent Orange or other herbicides sprayed during the Vietnam War, a department spokesman said Tuesday in response to our enquiry.

Any ailments Shulkin might add to VA’s current list of 14 “presumptive diseases” linked to herbicide exposure would make many more thousands of Vietnam War veterans eligible for VA disability compensation and health care.

Ailments under review as possible adds to the presumptive diseases list include bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinson-like symptoms without diagnosis of that particular disease. But hypertension (high blood pressure) and stroke also might be embraced, or ignored, as part of the current review.

The process was sparked by the Institute of Medicine’s 10th and final review of medical literature on health effects of herbicide exposure in Vietnam. The 1,100-page report concluded in March 2016 that recent scientific research strengthened the association between herbicide exposure and bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinson-like symptoms. Specifically, the institute, or IOM, found “limited or suggestive” evidence of an association to herbicide versus its previous finding of “inadequate or insufficient” evidence of an association.

Replay

The IOM report also reaffirmed from earlier reviews “limited or suggestive evidence” of an association between herbicide sprayed in Vietnam and hypertension and also strokes. That same level of evidence was used in 2010 by then-VA Secretary Eric Shinseki to add ischemic heart disease and Parkinson’s disease to the Agent Orange presumptive list. Shinseki had stronger evidence, an IOM finding of “positive association” to herbicide for chronic lymphocytic leukemia, which he also added to the list that year. Shulkin, the current secretary, has authority to use IOM findings to add all five diseases to the presumptive list, or he can choose to look at other studies and scientific evidence to support adding fewer ailments or none at all.

The IOM, renamed the National Academy of Medicine last summer, delivered its Veterans and Agent Orange: Update 2014, to then-VA Secretary Bob McDonald 15 months ago. He immediately ordered a technical work group formed to review IOM findings and original studies it relied on, as well as any new science relevant to Agent Orange ailments. The workgroup's findings then were reviewed by a smaller strategic workgroup, followed by an internal task force of senior VA leaders.

“The entire VA response packet (with specific recommendations for action) from the IOM Task Force was delivered to the Office of the Secretary for consideration” on Feb. 17, a senior official told us at the time.



Shulkin that month was confirmed as VA secretary. The previous 18 months he was VA undersecretary for health and would have been familiar with the Agent Orange packet. So, what has happened since then?

VA officials are lean on those details. A spokesman said VA continues to work “diligently to review the National Academy of Medicine report on potential new presumptions for Agent Orange and prepare the Secretary to make an informed decision. This includes everything from what the science is indicating, necessary regulations and a complete regulatory impact analysis. There is no delay in the decision process. Rather VA is taking appropriate time to ensure we are prepared to provide any benefits and services based on the Secretary’s decision.”

Past VA secretaries had rigid timetables for accepting or rejecting IOM findings. They also had to adhere to certain standards and procedures in determining if more diseases should be presumed service connected, and to explain in writing if they declined to add IOM-identified conditions to the presumptive list.

But Congress allowed those provisions of the Agent Orange law to “sunset” Oct. 1, 2015, six months before

IOM delivered its last report. Shulkin therefore is under no “statutory deadline nor required to do anything” with the IOM report, except whatever he promised veterans and Congress, said Bart Stichman, co-director of the National Veterans Legal Services Program, a nonprofit that advocates for veterans and had lobbied to the Agent Orange provisions.

Many veterans know what’s at stake and have been pressing VA to add more diseases to the presumptive list. Also, thousands of sailors and Marines who served on ships in the territorial waters off Vietnam continue to press VA and the Congress to make Blue Water Navy veterans eligible for Agent Orange benefits.

“I’ve been doing everything I can to bug the hell out of Secretary Shulkin” on the latest IOM study, said Rick Weidman, executive director for policy and government affairs for Vietnam Veterans of America. Shulkin responds, Weidman said, that “he’s trying and it’s a process.” Weidman said he suspects one big hurdle is the White House’s Office of Management and Budget, which likely resists saddling VA with sharply higher disability pay obligations for high blood pressure, bladder cancer or stroke contracted by any veteran who stepped foot in Vietnam during the war.

OMB tried to block Shinseki in 2010 from adding three ailments, including heart disease, to the presumptive list. Shinseki went around OMB and appealed directly to then-President Barack Obama, who sided with veterans, Weidman said. The Congressional Budget Office calculated that within three years of that decision, ischemic heart disease, Parkinson’s and leukemia accounted for 280,000 additional compensation claims and \$4.5 billion in retroactive disability payments.

Beside resistance from OMB, Weidman said Shulkin is counseled by senior staff who run post-deployment health services and study environmental hazards for VA and yet are skeptical of the science associating herbicide dioxins with higher incidence of various ailments. The Agent Orange “experts” they rely on, Weidman charged, haven’t published “one scientific paper in a reputable peer review journal. The whole crew should be fired and I’ve told the Secretary that.”

But is VA studying more than whether to add Agent Orange ailments? Anthony Principi, VA secretary in President George W. Bush’s first term, argues for more sweeping changes. Like Weidman, Principi served in combat in Vietnam but believes the Agent Orange law went too far, forcing VA secretaries to build out lists of presumptive illnesses based only on suggestive links to their wartime service, and ignoring the impact of unhealthy lifestyles, heredity and aging.

Interviewed Tuesday, Principi said it doesn’t seem fair that an elderly Vietnam veteran can begin receiving more disability compensation for heart disease at 75 or 80 than a young Marine receives who loses a leg fighting in Afghanistan. Principi said he wants “common sense” changes to the Agent Orange law so that, for example, diseases on the presumptive list are deemed service connected only if diagnosed within 30 years of a veteran exiting Vietnam.

There’s legal precedent if Shulkin were to propose such a rule, perhaps while adding hypertension to the presumptive list, said lawyer Stichman. In 1994, he recalled, Congress allowed such a “manifestation rule” for Agent Orange-related respiratory cancers. By 2001, however, it rescinded it on complaints by veterans groups that there was no science to support limiting benefits in that way.

Send comments to Military Update, P.O. Box 231111, Centreville, VA, 20120, email milupdate@aol.com or twitter: [@Military_Update](https://twitter.com/Military_Update)

Application For Membership
VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC., CHAPTER 535
P.O. Box 37, Grass Valley, CA 95945

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 28, 1961, and May 7, 1975, or in **any duty location** between August 5, 1964 and May 7, 1975.

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: (_____) _____ Cell Phone: (_____) _____

Email Address: _____ Gender: _____

(Optional) Chapter Number: _____ Sponsor: _____

_____ I am already a VVA member and I want to become a Life Member. My VVA Number is _____.

Type of Membership: Individual _____ 1 year @ \$20. Individual _____ 3 years @ \$50.
Life Membership: _____ \$100. (Check type of membership)

ATTENTION New members and new life members: You must submit a copy of your DD-214 form along with this application and dues payment.

Payment Method: ___ Check ___ Money Order ___ Credit Card (Visa, MasterCard, AMEX, Discover)

Credit Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Return your completed application, payment and a copy of your DD-214 to:

Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc., Chapter 535
P.O. Box 37
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Revised: January 2016

August 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 General Meeting 6:00 p.m.	4	5 Hiroshima 1945
6	7	8 Set up for Nevada County Fair VVA National Convention	9 Nevada County Fair Nagasaki 1945 VVA National Convention	10 Nevada County Fair VVA National Convention	11 Nevada County Fair VVA National Convention	12 Nevada County Fair VVA National Convention
13 Nevada County Fair	14 Japan surrendered (1945)	15 Allied invasion of southern France (1944)	16	17 Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 Yuba Sutter Stand Down	25 Yuba Sutter Stand Down	26 Yuba Sutter Stand Down
27	28	29	30	31		

September 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 VJ Day Japan 1945
3	4 <u>Labor Day</u>	5	6	7 VVA General Meeting	8	9
10 Constitution Day Parade	11 Patriot Day	12	13	14	15 POW/MIA Recognition Day	16
17	18 US Air Force Established 1947	19	20	21 VVA Board Meeting	22 First day of Autumn	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5 General Meeting 6:00 p.m.	6 Nevada County Stand Down	7 Nevada County Stand Down
8	9 Invasion of N. Korea 1950 Columbus Day	10	11	12	13 US Navy Established 1775	14
15	16	17	18	19 Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 CSC Council – Fresno. Navy Day	28 CSC Council - Fresno
29 CSC Council - Fresno	30	31 Halloween				

November 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 Veterans Day Parade
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 <u>Thanksgiving</u>	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Victorian Christmas	4	5	6	7 VVA-535 Christmas Dinner	8	9
10 Victorian Christmas	11	12	13 Victorian Christmas	14	15	16 Wreaths Across America
17 Victorian Christmas	18	19	20 Victorian Christmas	21 Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.	22	23
24	25 <u>Christmas</u>	26	27	28	29	30
31						