

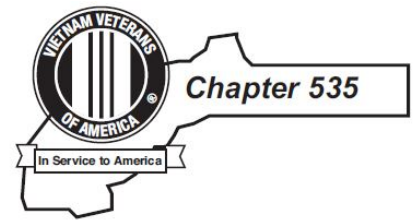


# INCOMING

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

## CHAPTER 535

Website: [www.vva535.org](http://www.vva535.org)



Volume 28 Issue 7

July 2018

Gentleman and Ladies,

The Summer solstice arrived on schedule on June 21<sup>st</sup>, and with that, the clock is winding toward July, a time when we should finalize our planning for the Nevada County Fair. Appreciation is extended to those who have already signed on for assisting with setting up and for committing to shift. The point is, it would be prudent to dial in the booth-sitting in July, rather than to try to finalize it Aug. 2 just days before the fair is with us. Check the attached schedule to see if you might be in position to lend a hand.

The VVA 535 Board of Directors is in the throes of finalizing two documents – one a long-term annual calendar, and the second, a Mission Statement pertinent to our Chapter. That will be a statement that will complement the VVA National Mission Statement.

Due to CSC representative Chuck Holmes' suffrage with ongoing and debilitating back pain, Chapter President Bart Ruud suggested to Chuck that his first priority should be his attention to medical and personal needs, rather than to make the trek to Fresno for the June 21 - 23 CSC meeting in Fresno. The Board agreed with cancellation of Chuck's attendance. It is thought that outcomes of the meeting will be found at a later time in an upcoming edition of the *California Zephyr*.

**Dave Middleton**, with assistance from **Ralph Remick** has contributed many hours to coordinating and organizing for a **Texas Hold 'Em** poker tournament to be staged **Oct. 20, 2018**. Thank you, Dave and Ralph.

Hopefully there has been some voluntary participation with two challenges – one being a self-monitored walking program, and the second being saving pop-tabs for the Ronald McDonald house program.

The **50:50 Raffle** initiated on May 3, 2018 currently has \$49 in the can. If you choose to participate, the Raffle will continue at the meeting of July 5, 2018.

Chapter Chair Bart Ruud will be out of town for our VVA-535 meeting of July 5, 2018. Long in the planning stages, Bart anticipated a June 29 departure on a solo motorcycle journey across the northern tier states. He anticipates a return home around July 20, 2018.

- Bart

### **July 4 Independence Day Parade**

Submitted by Dick Corn

The Independence Day Parade is in Nevada City on July 4th. It starts promptly at 11:00 AM. Our good friend Bill Slade of Bill Slade Trucking has 2 deuce and 1/2s that he provides for us and the Marine Corps League.

If you would like to ride, or walk in the parade, you should be at the Nevada City Veterans Building no later than 9:30. Bill parks the trucks in our designated spots on Broad St. at Cottage St.. We decorate the trucks with bunting and our military service flags at 10:00. Please help with that job. It doesn't take long.

The streets in NC are blocked off at about 9:45. A few of us can park in the Vet's bldg. parking lot if you get there early enough. The bar that the VFW has there is open before and after the parade. We are all guests.

If you have any Vietnam Vets who are not members of VVA, invite them to join us with no obligation. I would like to fill up our truck.

I contacted the Chamber of Commerce. We

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### **Upcoming Events**

General Meeting ..... July 5, 2018  
 NCCVC meeting. 10:00 a.m. July 5, 2018  
  
 Director's Meeting ..... July 5, 2018

will be one of the first 4 units in the parade.

The Nevada City Veterans Building is on the corner of N. Pine and Cottage Streets.

### **Attention**

If you do not drive and need a ride to a meeting or any VVA-535 function, please contact Bart Ruud or any local VVA -535 member and we will do our best to arrange transportation for you.

### **Guest Speaker July 5, 2018**

Tom Woollard has arranged for the **Patriot's Honor Group** to speak about their July 25<sup>th</sup> charity golf tournament, the proceeds of which benefit Northern California injured war veterans.

VVA Leadership Conference, Palm Springs, CA  
 July 22 – 30, 2018

General Meeting ..... August 2, 2018  
 Nevada County Fair – August 8 – 12, 2018  
 CSC Full Council - August 24 – 26, 2018, Fresno  
 Nevada County Veterans Stand Down – October 19 & 20, 2018  
 Texas Hold 'Em tournament – October 20, 2018  
 Victorian Christmas... Dec 2, 9, 12, 16, 19, 2018

### **Chapter 535 Officers**

President Bart Ruud  
 (H) 530-823-1368; (C) 530-305-0493  
  
 Vice-President  
 Dale Epps ..... 368-6156  
  
 Treasurer  
 Ralph Remick .....559-7716  
  
 Secretary  
 Dave Johnson ..... 887-8297

## Directors

Dave Chaix .....	269-1431
Dale Epps .....	368-6156
Kent Hawley .....	432-3551
Bill Holman .....	265-8387
Chuck Holmes .....	478-1126
Dave Johnson .....	887-8297
Dave Middleton .....	205-9375
Ralph Remick .....	559-7716
Bart Ruud .....	823-1368
Ric Sheridan .....	274-1413
Tom Woollard .....	432-1212

## Committee Chairs

Finance .....	Ralph Remick & Dave Johnson
Parade and Honor Guard .....	Dick Corn
Membership Affairs .....	Ric Sheridan
Newsletter .....	Interim editor Bart Ruud
Victorian Christmas .....	Jose Gonzales
Nominations .....	Dick Corn
Christmas Year Round .....	Bart Ruud
NCCVC .....	Dick Corn
Speakers Bureau .....	Tom Woollard
Web Master .....	Ralph Remick
Quartermaster .....	Kent Hawley
Facebook Master .....	Mike Laborico
Nevada County Fair .....	Bart Ruud
VSO Liaisons .....	Don Bull & Gary Oliver
CA State Council Rep. ....	Chuck Holmes

## Nevada County Veterans Service Officer

Kevin M. Edwards ..... (530) 265-1446  
988 McCourtney Road, Grass Valley 95949  
[ncvso@co.nevada.ca.us](mailto:ncvso@co.nevada.ca.us) Thursday, 9:00 to 12:00  
and 1:00 – 4:00 is a “Walk-In” day.

## Placer County Veterans Service Officer

Suzi Vinci .... 916-780-3290.  
1000 Sunset Blvd, Suite 115, Rocklin, CA  
Monday – Friday, 8:00 – 12:00 and 1:00 – 5:00  
p.m.

## **Matters of interest as outlined at Board Meeting of June 7, 2018**

One additional Booth Captain for the Nevada County Fair, August 8 – 12, 2018 is needed. At least five timeslots for booth sitting remain to be filled. Thanks are extended to those who have already committed.

The Board is close to finalizing its development of a **Mission Statement** specific to VVA Chapter 535. In addition, the Board is researching a fitting legacy project for expenditure of at least \$2,900 that has been contributed in memory of Past-President Harold Graves. When research is completed, a report will be shared with the membership for its consideration.

A suggestion has been made that the several Veterans organizations in Nevada County develop a fund to compensate the bagpiper that so often presents at burials and at patriotic events. The matter has been deferred to the NCCVC for its consideration.

**Dick Corn** will serve as a voluntary Sunshine Committee chair to send good wishes, condolences or other benevolent thoughts to those we learn of who may be ill or otherwise in need of our recognition.. Thank you, Dick.

## **The Combat Medic Badge**

Contributed by Bill Hawkins  
Source unknown.

The Combat Medic Badge (CMB), like any combat badge, is highly coveted within the community, but I have always felt that the CMB has a distinct spirit, something inherently different from the Combat Infantry Badge (CIB) and the Combat Action Badge (CAB), by the nature of the jobs associated with each one.

When my unit was first told we were deploying it was like ripping a band-aid off. “I look forward to serving with you in Afghanistan,” was all the

commander said, before turning it over to the 1SG. The first conversations that took place were done by the elated junior enlisted, who had never been to war, and were all excited to earn their badges.

The scouts and the forward observers chattered in formation beside us about their CABs, and I remember a junior medic saying that he was excited to get his CMB. There are those little moments when you view the world differently after hearing what someone says. This was one of those for me. One of our medics had just returned from Iraq, where he had done convoy security, which is a job I want no part in. With his CMB on his chest, he snatched that young medic (not me) out of formation and dragged him over in front of our own formation, just enough to show him the rest of the troop. The senior medic pointed at all the soldiers and asked the junior medic, "Who gets the Purple Heart to go along with your CMB?"

The kid froze.

They returned to formation, the junior medic and all the other medics in the platoon who had seen this exchange, sufficiently humbled.

The CMB was created in January of 1945. To be eligible for this award, a soldier must first be a medical professional and below the rank of colonel. They must also, "Satisfactorily perform medical duties while the unit is engaged in active ground combat, provided they are personally present and under fire."

Now, if there is a way to cheat the system and water a badge down, people will find a way to do it, because that is what people do. They want the maximum return for the least amount of effort. The trick to this one is to perform medical duties. To give you an idea of how this badge can be potentially earned, here is a conversation that took place one night on my base in Afghanistan. Our eight-man building had

just been rocked by some incoming fire that had landed near by.

"Holy shit, are you guys ok?" one of the Sergeants yelled in the dark room.

Everyone 'rogered up,' still half asleep.

"I'll go check on the rest of the platoon," another Sergeant said, stumbling out of bed and out the door.

"Congrats, Doc, you just earned your CMB," a sergeant said.

"What the fuck for?" I asked.

"You asked if we were ok. That is the first step in a patient assessment."

"I didn't ask if you were ok," I replied.

"No, he didn't," the platoon sergeant said.

"Wait, no you didn't. You are the worst medic ever," he replied.

"Fuck you, too. How about that?" I replied, while we all laughed.

Now, the rest of the platoon was fine, and we all went back to sleep while mortars pounded the point of origin. The important takeaway from this—aside from me being a terrible medic—is how little effort it can take to potentially earn this badge based upon the written criteria. Is that how everyone earns it? No, definitely not. But, as we all know, there are always a few.

Before I joined the military, all I wanted was experience, to be a hardened combat veteran with a chest full of medals. After my first tour, I lost interest in that idea and matured a bit, eventually losing interest in badges and awards completely. Finally, I had a CMB of my own, but those few who watered it down made it difficult for me to put it on.

This was where I was humbled again, this time by a soldier who had received two Purple Hearts. He stopped me while we were out-processing from our mobilization site and stuck his finger in my chest in the empty spot where my CMB should have been. "Where is yours? Are you too good to wear it?"

I didn't have a response, but the next time he saw me, I was wearing it.

His two Purple Hearts were attached to my CMB, along with several of the other soldiers who were walking around. A cheap CMB recognizes a soldier's actions, regardless of how strong or weak they had been. When a CMB is earned, it is by the sacrifices of others, and all the medic can do is try to keep them together, until they are in the more capable hands of a doctor.

That is what a CMB is. It is bought with the blood of our friends and comrades. It isn't about the fight. It is about the sacrifice. Thankfully, it is far less recognizable outside of the military community.

Stolen Valor individuals don't know it exists for them to slap it on their fake uniforms.

Which I appreciate.

## 2 USS Fitzgerald Officers Face Courts-Martial in Wake of Collision



The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Fitzgerald sits in Dry Dock 4 at Fleet Activities Yokosuka to continue repairs and assess damage sustained from its June 17, 2017 collision with a merchant vessel. (U.S. Navy photo/Christian Senyk)  
Stars and Stripes 20 Jun 2018 By Dianna Cahn

WASHINGTON -- The Navy will pursue courts-martial for two officers from the USS Fitzgerald in the wake of a deadly collision one year ago off the coast of Japan that killed seven sailors.

The decision by Adm. Frank Caldwell comes despite a recommendation by a pretrial hearing officer that Lt. Natalie Combs instead be sent before a board of inquiry to determine whether she should be discharged from the Navy, according to Combs' lawyer.

Cmdr. Bryce Benson, the commanding officer of the ship at the time of the June 17, 2017, collision, and Combs, the tactical action officer inside the combat information center below deck, will each face general court-martial, the Navy said in a news release. Benson will not face an original charge of negligent homicide.



Charges against a third officer, Lt. Irian Woodley, the ship's surface warfare coordinator, were dismissed. Instead, Caldwell recommended Woodley be sent to a board of inquiry, where he will be required to "show cause" why he should be allowed to stay in the Navy.

Caldwell was appointed consolidated disposition authority in late 2017 after the Fitzgerald collision was followed by the crash of another Navy [destroyer](#), the [USS John S. McCain](#). That collision killed 10 sailors in August. Part of Caldwell's authority is to decide whether to convene a court-martial, and he has ultimate discretion on who should face internal disciplinary action and who should face justice in a military courtroom.

Combs and Woodley faced a joint Article 32 pretrial hearing last month. Combs' lawyer, David Sheldon, told Stars and Stripes that the hearing officer Cmdr. Anthony Johnson had recommended that both cases go before a board of inquiry to determine separation from the Navy. That board makes findings only for purposes of separation, not guilt or innocence.

Sheldon issued a statement Tuesday saying his client is disappointed in the decision, but "nonetheless resolute in her belief that when the facts are fully presented, she will be exonerated."

"The blame in this case is widespread," Sheldon said. "The Fitzgerald had systemic problems with its equipment and training. To single this young woman, who has served honorably and

with distinction, for prosecution is very troubling in the circumstance."

The Navy said it will not release Johnson's recommendations until all proceedings involving the collision are over.

After handing the helm over to the officer of the deck, Benson was in his quarters when the Fitzgerald and a commercial container ship collided in the busy coastal waters off southern Japan, and he suffered multiple injuries. Caldwell referred the counts of negligent dereliction of duty resulting in death, negligent dereliction of duty and one specification of negligent hazarding of a vessel to court-martial after Benson waived his right last month to an Article 32 hearing.

Combs will face charges of negligent dereliction of duty resulting in death and negligent hazarding of a vessel, the Navy said.

Combs and Woodley pleaded not guilty during their preliminary hearing on May 9 that revealed severe problems with the ship's systems, along with an undermanned and overworked crew.

Prosecutors portrayed the defendants as failing in their jobs -- not using the tools at their disposal properly, not trying to get faulty equipment fixed and therefore failing to see close calls in busy waters over the course of the night -- the defense argued that the ship's radars and electronic equipment never worked properly and the crew was exhausted from working 20-hour days with no time to train or do repairs. The problems were systemic, leaving

the officers unaware of the other ship's approach, the defense argued.

The Navy singled out Combs for her failure to communicate adequately with the deck and failing in her job of supporting the bridge to ensure it received vital information about contact with other vessels.

One expert witness during the Article 32 testified that Combs had just 13 actions involving monitoring or tracking other ships on her console that night -- none in the last hour and 13 minutes, leading up to the collision, when there were many ships in the vicinity that night. Her attorney argued the Fitzgerald had faulty equipment and the Combat Information Center was unaware of any such contacts.

## **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, Chuck Holmes, current Marine LCpl. Jesse Hernandez, Kent Hawley, and Mike Laborico. (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](mailto:bruud45@gmail.com) or hand deliver to Bart.

**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 2017



Nevada County Fair VVA-535 Booth Schedule **V.5 June 25, 2018**

August 8, 2018 - August 12, 2018

Project Chair: ?????????????????????????????????

Set-Up: Tuesday, August 7, 2018. Volunteers – **D. Chaix; B. Ruud;**

Take-Down: Monday, August 13, 2018. Volunteers – ??????????????????????????????

Time Slot	10:00 – 2:00	2:00 – 6:00	6:00 – 10:00
Wed. Aug. 8, 2018  Booth Captain: <b>Dave Chaix</b>	Name: <b>D. Chaix</b>  Phone:  Name: <b>B. Ruud;</b> <b>T. Eberlein</b>  Phone:	Name: <b>D. Chaix</b>  Phone:  Name: <b>B. Ruud</b>  Phone:	Name: <b>D. Chaix</b>  Phone:  Name: <b>B. Ruud</b>  Phone:
Thurs. Aug. 9, 2018  Booth Captain: <b>Dick Corn</b>	Name: <b>C. Holmes</b>  Phone:  Name: <b>M Laborico</b>  Phone:	Name: <b>E. Vasquez</b>  Phone:  Name: <b>Craig Johnson</b> - (maybe) <b>Dick Corn</b> Phone:	Name: <b>Keith Gruenneberg</b> Phone:  Name:  Phone:
Fri. Aug. 10, 2018  Booth Captain: <b>Gary Barnes</b>	Name: <b>C. Holmes</b> <b>Enrique Vasquez</b> Phone:  Name: <b>C. Johnson</b>  Phone:	Name: <b>Dale Epps</b>  Phone:  Name: <b>C. Johnson</b>  Phone:	Name: <b>Dave Middleton</b>  Phone: Name: <b>Gary Barnes</b>  Phone:
Sat. Aug. 11, 2018  Booth Captain: _____ <b>Peter Hidalgo</b>	Name: <b>Dale Ferguson</b>  Phone:  Name: <b>Peter Hidalgo</b>  Phone:	Name: <b>D. Ferguson</b>  Phone:  Name:  Phone:	Name: <b>Kent Hawley</b> Phone:  Name:  Phone:
Sun. Aug. 12, 2018  Booth Captain: _____	Name: <b>Dave Johnson</b>  Phone:  Name: <b>Rick Sheridan</b>  Phone:	Name:  Phone:  Name:  Phone:	Name:  Phone:  Name:  Phone:

# June

# 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6 D-Day: Allied Invasion of Europe (1944)	7 VVA Board Meeting & General Meeting	8	9
10	1	12 Peace Officer's Memorial Day	13	14 Flag Day US Army founded (1775)	15	16 Elegance in the Garden
17 Father's Day	18	19 National Maritime Day	20	21 1 <sup>st</sup> day of Summer	22 Pledge of Allegiance recognized by Congress (1942)	23
24	25 Korean War began (1950)	26	27	28	29 First US ground forces arrived in Korea (1950)	30

# July

# 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Canada Day (Canada)	2 US Army Air Corps Established (1926)	3	4 Independence Day	5 VVA Board & VVA General Membership meeting	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20 First Manned Moon Landing (1969)	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day. Korean War ended (1953)	28 World War I began (1914)
29	30	31				

# August

# 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 VVA Board & VVA General Membership Meeting	3	4
5	6 1 <sup>st</sup> Atomic Bomb Mission, Hiroshima (1945)	7 Set up Nevada County Fair	8 <b>Nevada County Fair</b>	9 <b>Nevada County Fair</b>  2 <sup>nd</sup> Atomic Bomb, Nagasaki	10 <b>Nevada County Fair</b>	11 <b>Nevada County Fair</b>
12 <b>Nevada County Fair</b>	13 Take Down Nevada County Fair Booth	14 Japan Surrendered Ending WW II (1945)	15 Allied Invasion Southern France (1944)  Panama Canal opened (1914)	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	