

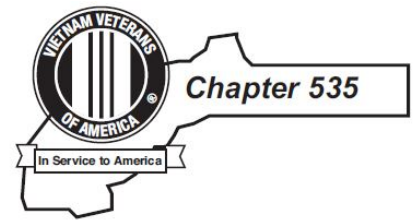


# INCOMING

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

## CHAPTER 535

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



Volume 29 Issue 4

April 2019

Gentleman and Ladies,

### **A Quasi-Melancholic Journey as the Aftermath of War**

By Bart Ruud

Melancholy – a descriptive noun that defines a feeling or expression of sadness emanating from a disgusting force.

Life is a journey, and a part of that journey for at least 2.7 million of us was service in Vietnam. That was a chapter in my life, and yours, that helped shape our lives, or scar our lives or even the lives of our supportive families. During my deployment, there were times I did not know if I was playing God or beast or one in the same. Regardless, like you, I am proud to have served our country. While I was a reluctant U.S. Army draftee, I was a part of roughly 25% of the forces deployed to Vietnam who factually were draftees. Some 75% of our deployed forces were enlistees, a fact perhaps lost to the ages.

A latecomer to the war, only 47 years have passed since my return home. My deployment changed my life, and it has long been a personal curiosity about who I might be had I never served in our military, let alone in Vietnam. I know this: By Day 3 at home, I had learned to share with no one where I had been for the previous months. Most of us can recall that we came home to a country long fed up with the war in

Southeast Asia. That forced denial was debilitating in the long term.

I submit many of us saw the future as an unknown when we returned home. But in reality, has our future ever been known? As time evolved I went through a period of self-medication before I got a grip on the present and set some goals for the future. I am not proud of those tumultuous times, but I mistakenly thought I could suppress anger and guilt and unpleasant memories by numbing my mind. Something that helped save me was my Type A personality, which blessed me with a tendency toward workaholic and a self-inflicted demand to achieve a high level of productivity. I buried myself in work so that I might suppress the pervasive emotions that were a looping curse, sometimes preeminent, and sometimes sequestered and of little distraction. The harder I worked, the better the suppression.

When suppression failed, there were periods of psychotherapy. Eventually I quit my employment of 33 years because the negative emotions overpowered my ability to cope with and silently weather the pain that was taking an emotional and physical toll. That led to more therapy and a sense of balance. A further blessing has been the support of family, friends and acquaintances that have forever had my back.

Retirement has been a two-edged sword. I've had time for travel, for hobbies – what hobbies? – and for volunteerism, all the while sensing that the insidious demons in the mind were breaking out and once again taking over my life. While busy, I've had too much time to think and too few demands on my life to fully suppress the antagonizers. Anxiety, anger, guilt, sleeplessness, and health issues related to the aforementioned stresses, and perhaps to Agent Orange exposure, resurfaced. Recognizing my denial and need for more therapy has forced my hand.

Today, I share this story because Bart needs to take care of himself; a part of that means stepping back from chairing VVA-535. I am grateful that going forward we will have new and capable leadership following our April elections. I seek no pity because it is not a need.

I have availed myself to VA services and again find myself engaged in professional help by way of group and individual therapy. It is not easy but the outcome will free me from some of the stresses described. I know that because I have prior experience with the drill. I hope my story might inspire and encourage you, and indeed empower you, to seek help if you sense you need it. It takes courage to make that bold step, but do get past denial and your male ego, and do get on with your life. The sun will always rise on the eastern horizon and you will enjoy it more when you get your life right.

## **Nominations for 2019-2020 Officers and Directors**

Current nominees:

President: Keith Grueneberg  
Vice-President: Enrique Vasquez  
Treasurer: Ralph Remick  
Secretary: ? (**We Need a Volunteer**)

Director: Dave Chaix  
Director: Dick Corn  
Director: Dale Epps  
Director: Ray James  
Director: Dave Johnson  
Director: Dave Middleton  
Director: Bart Ruud  
Director: Rick Sheridan  
Director: Tom Wollard

We need someone to volunteer to be **Secretary**. Dave Johnson has given long service to this office and declines continuing to serve in this position. And of course anyone can nominate someone or themselves for office at the night of our meeting. If that happens for an Officer position, then we will do a run-off election right there - with the candidates stepping outside while the membership votes.

## **VVA Chapter 535 Mission Statement**

*To foster camaraderie among members and assist those with disabling mental and physical injuries, to promote the welfare of our brethren affected by the war, and to engender public understanding of the sacrifice, patriotism and bravery of those who served, those who gave all, and those left behind.*

The **50:50 Raffle** initiated on May 3, 2018 had a March 2019 winner of \$252. Another \$252 was dedicated to VVA-535, of which \$126 will be distributed to the charity selected by the membership at large. The remaining \$126 will fall into VVA-535's general fund.

The question now is, do we want to continue the raffle?

### **Guest Speaker for April 4, 2019**

April 4<sup>th</sup> will be a time for accepting final nominations for office, the closing of nominations and election of Officers and Board Members for our 2019-2020 presidential year. In lieu of elections, there will be no guest speaker, but we will serve the traditional election night pizza.

### **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.

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### **Chapter 535 Officers**

President Bart Ruud bruud45@gmail.com  
 (H) 530-823-1368; (C) 530-305-0493

Vice-President  
 Dale Epps ..... 368-6156

Treasurer  
 Ralph Remick ..... 559-7716

Secretary  
 Dave Johnson ..... 887-8297

### **Upcoming Events**

- Welcome Home Vietnam Vets Day – 3/29/19
- Nicholas Warr, former Marine, presentation re the 1968 Battle of Hue – April 1, 2019; 6:00 p.m.
- All Veterans Day @ Capitol – 4/24/19
- CSC meeting – April 26-28, 2019, Fresno
- NCCVC Meeting – May 2, 2019
- General Meeting – May 2, 2019
- Director's Meeting – May 2, 2019\*
- National VVA Convention – 7/16 – 7/21/19

### **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

\* Subject to change?

## Committee Chairs

Finance .....Ralph Remick & Dave Johnson  
Parade and Honor Guard ..... Dick Corn  
Membership Affairs .....Ric Sheridan  
Newsletter ..... Interim editor Bart Ruud  
Victorian Christmas ..... **Vacant**  
Nominations ..... Ralph Remick  
Veterans Assistance ..... Bart Ruud  
NCCVC ..... Dick Corn  
Speakers Bureau ..... Tom Woollard  
Web Master ..... Ralph Remick  
Quartermaster ..... Dick Corn  
Facebook Master ..... Mike Laborico  
Nevada County Fair ..... Bart Ruud  
VSO Liaisons ..... (Open opportunity)  
CA State Council Rep. .... Mike Underwood

## Nevada County Veterans Service Officer

VSO Officer -David West (530) 273-3396 office  
(530) 913-5046 cell  
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 March 7, 2019**

A three-year audit of the books has been completed by Ralph Remick and Dave Johnson.

Grass Valley Blueprints (Dave Hauser) will assist with completion of the VVA Shadowbox installed within the confines of the Veterans Hall.

Reservations for the use of the kitchen for Victorian Christmas prep have been made. Reservations for us of the kitchen and dining hall for Christmas dinner have been made.

Mike Underwood will be reimbursed for expenses incurred when he represents VVA-535 at the April 2019 California State Council meeting in Fresno. Similarly, reasonable expenses will be reimbursed for attendance at a Pre-Convention meeting in Sparks, NV and for attendance at the National Convention in Spokane, WA.

## **Deployments to US-Mexico border straining Marine Corps, commandant warns**

By: Tara Copp. Army Times March 21, 2019



Marines with the 7th Engineer Support Battalion, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force 7, walk along the California-Mexico border at the Andrade Point of Entry in Winterhaven, California, Nov. 30, 2018.

The unplanned deployments of Marines along the U.S-Mexico border, among other unplanned demands has strained the force to the point that it faces “unacceptable risk to Marine Corps combat readiness,” Commandant Gen. Robert Neller said this week.

The March 18 memo, first reported by the Los Angeles Times, was addressed to Navy Secretary Richard Spencer as part of a lengthy request to seek funding relief for the Corps.

Without relief, the Corps would be forced to cancel a number of key exercises in Twentynine



Palms, Alaska and Scotland, Neller warned, which would further degrade readiness.

The Marine Corps had anticipated a healthier budget year, given the two-year budget passed last year by Congress. However, Hurricanes Florence and Michael and other unanticipated costs have created “fiscal challenges without precedent,” Neller said.

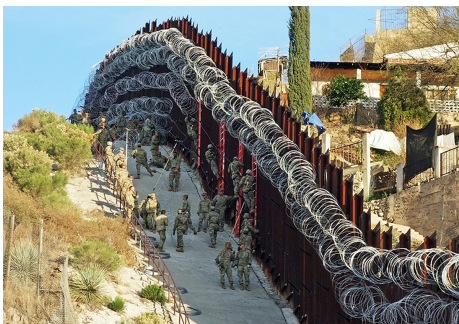
Typically, the Marines would reprogram money to the necessary accounts to provide temporary relief and avoid exercise cancellations. However, the funding demands on the military to shift money around to meet President Donald Trump’s request to secure the border have created a situation where “border security funding transfers” have impacted available funds for it to use to address its shortfalls, Neller wrote.

In addition, Hurricanes Michael and Florence created more than a \$849 million shortfall to the Marine Corps, Neller wrote.

The memo comes as each service is soon to testify on Capitol Hill about its 2020 budget request and as the Pentagon reviews a new Department of Homeland Security request for more assistance along the U.S.-Mexico border. U.S. troops have been deployed there since last fall.

### **Here are the units now deployed to the US-Mexico border**

By: Tara Copp . Army Times March 5, 2019



Hillside above downtown Nogales, Arizona, on Feb. 2, 2019

U.S. Northern Command on Tuesday identified the military units now deployed to the U.S.-Mexico border. Additional units are expected but will not be named until they have deployed, the command said.

There are now approximately 6,000 military personnel deployed to the border, including 2,100 National Guard members.



Thousands more troops are headed to the border, DoD says.No specific numbers were provided, but DoD confirmed large additional deployment to occur.

Here are the units identified that are now deployed:

- 36th Engineer Brigade
- 5th Engineer Battalion
- 563rd Military Police Company
- 595th Engineer Company
- 161st Engineer Support Company
- Alpha Company, 52nd Engineer Battalion
- Alpha Company, 16th Engineer Battalion
- Forward Support Company, 5th Engineer Battalion
- 1st Support Maintenance Company
- 542nd Support Maintenance Company
- 584th Support Maintenance Company
- 46th Engineer Battalion
- Forward Support Company, 46th Engineer Battalion
- 108th Military Police Company
- 515th Engineer Company
- 610th Engineer Support Company
- 147th Support Maintenance Company
- 602nd Support Maintenance Company

- 7th Engineer Support Battalion (USMC)
- Alpha Company, 7th Engineer Support Battalion (USMC)
- CE Company, 7th Engineer Support Battalion (USMC)
- Alpha Company, 1st Law Enforcement Battalion (USMC)
- Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment (USMC)
- Fox Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment (USMC)
- Golf Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment (USMC)
- Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment (USMC)
- Combat Logistics Battalion 5 (-) (USMC)
- 819th Red Horse Squadron (USAF)
- 503rd Military Police Battalion
- 66th Military Police Company
- 41st Engineer Company
- 4th Sustainment Brigade
- 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion
- 227th Quartermaster Company
- 178th Adjutant General Company
- 126th Transportation Company
- 155th Transportation Company
- 377th Transportation Company
- 259th Movement Control Team
- 153rd Quartermaster Company
- 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment
- Alpha Company, 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment
- Bravo Company, 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment
- Charlie Company, 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment
- 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery Regiment
- Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery Regiment
- Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery Regiment
- Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Battalion
- 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion (USMC)
- Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine

- Regiment (USMC)
- Golf Company, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment (USMC)
- 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade
- 4th Battalion, 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade
- 24th Theater Public Affairs Support Element
- 63rd Expeditionary Signal Battalion
- 505th Military Intelligence Brigade

**A Link to the Friends of Vinh Son Orphanage website:**

<https://www.friendsofvso.org>

**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.

## **The Hour Has Come**

In my opening conveyance on Page 1 of this edition of INCOMING I shared that the time has come for a change in leadership of VVA-535. I depart the position as your President with mixed emotion, in part because my accomplishments over the past months have not met the goals I set for myself, and effectively for us, in early 2018. Perhaps the message in that is that setting leadership goals has a similarity to establishing New Years Resolutions. I long ago gave up on Resolutions because the failure rate was extreme.

All of that said, with the wonderful assistance of an active Board of Directors and truly dedicated Officers who've been supportive of my whims, the final assessment is that we have had a good year. The Presidency of any organization should be limited because new leadership breathes new life into any association.

We've enjoyed some levity – the on-key, off-key “Happy Birthday” songs delivered a cappella, and we've had the anticipation of drawing a black marble in a cash raffle. With Board and general membership assistance we have a *Mission Statement*. We also have a working long-term calendar that can forewarn us of needs to be met. With this document we do not have to rely so much on the intellectual capacity of our elder members whose recall has so often met a critical need. Going forward, that document will be improved. In terms of other documents, we have also seen improvement in, or development of, written guide sheets for organizing a few of our premier activities – Victorian Christmas, set-up for the Nevada County Fair, and a guideline for organization of a Poker Tournament. Having these resources available makes us a stronger organization because the deployment of these activities is less subject to reinvention of the wheel. Energy saved is energy gained.

I do believe we've seen an uptick in regular attendance. There is also evidence that we have grown in membership numbers despite the loss of members who have transitioned from this world. This is good because an active membership contributes immensely to a strong organization. As I turn over the gavel, thank you, everyone, for being you. / 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 \_\_\_\_\_.

**Membership:** Individual Life Membership: \$50. (Effective Oct. 20, 2018)

**ATTENTION New 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 2019



# MARCH

# 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Operation Rolling Thunder began (1965)
3 Star Spangled Banner made U.S. Anthem (1931)	4	5	6 Ash Wednesday	7 VVA General Meeting & Board Meeting	8	9
10 Daylight Savings begins	11	12 Girl Scouts of America founded (1912)	13	14	15 American Legion's 100 <sup>th</sup> Birthday	16 FSP - Women Vets - Auburn
17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19 Start of Operation Iraqi Freedom (2003)	20 First Day of Spring	22	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29 Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day	30
31						

# APRIL

# 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 April Fools' Day	2	3	4 VVA General Meeting & Board Meeting.  VVA -535 Elections	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 Persian Gulf War Official Cease Fire (1991)	12	13
14 Palm Sunday	15	16	18	14	19 Good Friday	20
21 Easter Sunday	22 Earth Day	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

# MAY

# 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 VVA General Meeting & Board Meeting	3	4
5 Cinco de Mayo	6	7	8 V-E Day (1945)	9	8	10
11 Mother's Day	12	14	15 Peace Officers Memorial Day	16	17	18 Armed Forces Day
19	20	21	22 Maritime Day	23	24	25
26	27 Memorial Day	28	29	30 Ascension Day	31	

# JUNE

# 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4 U.S. Coast Guard Established (1790)	5	6 VVA General Meeting & Board Meeting  D-Day (1944)	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14 Flag Day  Army's Birthday (1775)	15
16 Father's Day	17	18	19	20	21 First Day of Summer	22 Pledge of Allegiance Recognized by Congress (1942)  GI Bill Signed into Law (1944)
23	24	25	26	27	28	29 First US Ground Forces Arrived in Korea (1950)
30						