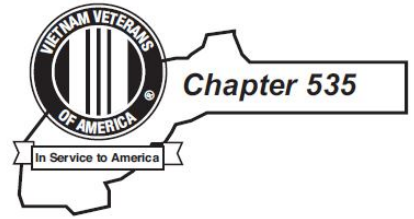




# INCOMING

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

## CHAPTER 535



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

Volume 30 Issue 2

February 2020

### VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA CHAPTER 535 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE February 2020

Hope all of you are keeping your new years resolutions, or at least working at them. Bart started a walking program last year and I would like to remind everyone to get off that lazy boy and get outside and walk or use your treadmill. It is very beneficial. I would like to follow up on a subject Jose brought up at our Christmas dinner, which I support 100%. We need to get together more that once a year for a meal and fellowship. He suggested a BBQ sometime during the summer. This does not have to be a big deal, just a day when we can get together, BBQ some ribs, maybe drink a little beer and just have fun. This has been tried in the past with low turnout. We need to improve this by scheduling this in advance so everyone can calendar the event. We could even substitute a meeting with this event like we do for our Christmas party.

Another subject on our "to do" list is discussion regarding fundraising. There is enough discussion out there centered on our continued participation in Victorian Christmas that needs to be vetted. We will need ideas on less physical requirements on our members. Suggestions do not mean that you automatically volunteer to chair the event. We just need ideas. We have

had some very successful events in the past that increased our financial well-being.

If you have a guest speaker in mind for our meetings, that you feel would be of interest to the rest of the membership, do not hesitate to contact Tom Wollard. Scheduling speakers is a very difficult task so help if you can. Our speaker last month from Hospitality House was very interesting and generated a lot of questions.

Officer elections are coming up so be thinking about whom you would like to nominate for next year.

President Keith

### 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.*

### 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 for February 6, 2020**

Unknown at this juncture if we will have a guest speaker.

Tom Woollard works hard to coordinate and arrange for guest speakers. Lend a hand and pass along any ideas you may have for future guest speakers.

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**Upcoming Events**

- NCCVC Meeting – February 6, 2020
- General Meeting – February 6, 2020
- Director’s Meeting – February 6, 2020
- CSC Meeting – Visalia – Feb. 28, 29, Mar. 1
- VVA-535 Elections – April 2, 2020
- April 6, 2020 – Drawing for air rifle
- CSC Convention – Visalia, CA - June 12, 13, 2020

**Chapter 535 Officers**

President Keith Grueneberg  
kgberg0178@sbcglobal.net  
(H) 530-265-1946(C) 916-425-1121

Vice-President  
Enrique Vasquez .....530-575-4416

Treasurer  
Ralph Remick .....559-7716

Secretary  
Dave Johnson ..... 530-887-8297

**Directors**

Dave Chaix .....269-1431  
Dick Corn ..... 277-8856  
Dale Epps ..... 368-6156  
Ray James ..... 478-1126  
Dave Johnson ..... 887-8297  
Dave Middleton ..... 205-9375  
Bart Ruud ..... 823-1368  
Ric Sheridan ..... 274-1413  
Mike Underwood ..... 925-759-2924  
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 ..... Underwood & Ruud  
Nominations ..... Ralph Remick  
Veterans Assistance ..... Keith Grueneberg  
NCCVC ..... Dick Corn  
Speakers Bureau ..... Tom Woollard  
Web Master ..... Ralph Remick  
Quartermaster ..... Dick Corn  
Facebook Master ..... Mike Laborico  
Nevada County Fair ..... Dave Middleton  
CA State Council Rep. .... Mike Underwood

**Nevada County Veterans Service Officer**

VSO Officer -David West II (530) 265-1446 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**

Derrick Oliveira ... 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 January 2, 2020**

Sponsored by “Welcome Home Vet” an “Injured Veteran Gold Tournament” fundraiser will be held in Penn Valley/Lake Wildwood in July. Details will evolve.

To date, 45 tickets for the M-1 replica pellet gun have been sold. It is hoped a total of 100 tickets can be sold at \$10 each. Drawing is 4/6/2020.

Unused cider from Victorian Christmas will be donated to the Hospitality House.

Net returns from Victorian Christmas appear to be \$2,113.53 but that sum will increase because several who had made outlays will voluntarily take no reimbursements. An approximate \$485 can be added to the net sum.

Jose Gonzales is yet to be reimbursed for the October 2019 Stand Down outlays he had made. If the American Legion Womens’ Auxillary cannot manage reimbursement, VVA-535 will reimburse Jose for costs associated with the hamburger lunch.

### **VVA-535 Leadership Election Planning**

Our *Nominations Committee Chair*, Ralph Remick, with an eye on the calendar, notes that our annual election of Officers and Directors is scheduled for April 2, 2020.

Current President Keith has served admirably but the time for change is coming around like clockwork. There should never be an assumption that a sitting president will automatically assume a second consecutive term. We have a capable membership and within that body is someone ready for new responsibility. That someone could be you. Why? Because you are ready to lead. Your life

experience has made you ready. You have assimilated ideas and notions that will carry us forward for our next leadership year of May 2020 through April 2021. When the floor is opened for nominations, be ready to accept a role that will move us collectively forward. Long-serving Officers and Directors are not a fixed entity. All positions are open for nominations.

### **VA Presumptive AO Diseases**

#### **Addition’s Study Results Not Expected till Late 2020**

Military Times | Patricia Kime | January 6, 2020

The day President Donald Trump signed a funding bill including a provision ordering VA to announce its plans to add four conditions to the list of Agent Orange-linked diseases within 30 days, VA Secretary Robert Wilkie said the decision wasn’t likely to come until at least “late 2020.” In a letter to Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., dated 20 DEC and obtained by Military Times, Wilkie said he would not make a decision until the results of two long-awaited studies are submitted to or published in scientific journals.

In March 2019, VA officials told members of Congress that the decision would be announced within 90 days. Then Wilkie said he was just awaiting the results of the studies — the Vietnam Era Health Retrospective Observational Study, or VE-HEROES, and the Vietnam Era Mortality Study — expected in 2019. But the requirement that the results be analyzed, peer-reviewed and in the publication pipeline could add months to the process. VE-HEROES results are currently “being analyzed,” while data from the mortality study is “expected to be available for peer review and publication in late 2020,” Wilkie wrote in the letter.

It’s unclear whether VA plans to comply with the new law that requires it to announce its plans on a decision within the 30-day requirement. For the 83,000 veterans with one

of three conditions under consideration, including bladder cancer, Parkinson's-like symptoms or hypothyroidism, as well as an unknown number of Vietnam veterans with high blood pressure, the wait continues. Just how many Vietnam veterans have one or more of the four proposed presumptive conditions is unknown; VA did not have the data readily available by press time. What is known is that some veterans will die waiting. While the 10-year survival rate for bladder cancer is high — 77 percent — the mortality rate for in the U.S. bladder cancer is 4.2 deaths per 100,000 people, according to the National Cancer Institute.

Senate Democrats stepped up pressure on the Trump administration to issue a decision after documents surfaced that showed Office of Management and Budget Director and Acting White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney was personally involved in blocking an announcement of the decision on three of the diseases planned in 2017 by former Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin. Mulvaney and other OMB officials said VA must provide more “compelling evidence” to prove the link between the proposed diseases and exposure.

Lawmakers, including Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer of New York, and Rep. Josh Harder, a California Democrat who previously introduced a House resolution urging President Donald Trump to add the diseases to the presumptive medical conditions list, have said “VA needs to get its act together.” “We have the science. We have the backing of our veterans. We even have bipartisan agreement in Congress. It’s time for the VA to catch up,” Harder said.

## **Military Unmanned Ships**

### **Update 01: US Navy’s Surface Force Directed to Develop Concepts**

Defense News | David B. Larter | January 3, 2020

The head of the U.S. Navy’s Fleet Forces Command has ordered the service’s surface force to develop a concept of operations for both the large and medium unmanned surface vessels in development, according to a 19 DEC message seen by Defense News. The message, which was coordinated with U.S. Naval Forces Europe and U.S. Pacific Fleet, directs the surface fleet’s Surface Development Squadron to develop concepts for “the organization, manning, training, equipping, sustaining, and the introduction and operational integration of the Medium Unmanned Surface Vehicle and Large Unmanned Surface Vessel with individual afloat units as well as with Carrier Strike Groups, Expeditionary Strike Groups, and Surface Action Groups.”

**A rendering of DARPA's Sea Hunter, which has been transferred to the U.S. Navy's Surface Development Squadron. The squadron has been tasked with formulating a comprehensive concept of operations for unmanned ships.**

The message comes after a long battle with Congress over funding for unmanned surface combatants, during which lawmakers expressed skepticism that the Navy was knowledgeable enough about the technology for which it was seeking funding. Ultimately Congress appropriated funds for the Navy to buy two large unmanned surface vessels, but lawmakers forbade the service from equipping the vessels with vertical launch tubes, as the Navy intended. The concepts of operations is meant to define what would be considered “initial operating capability” for the medium and large USVs and goes on to define what those platforms are intended to do.

- “Medium Unmanned Surface Vehicle will be a high-endurance vessel with capacity for carrying various modular payloads,” the message read. “Large Unmanned Surface Vessel will be high-endurance vessel equipped with Vertical Launch System (VLS) cells.

- “The Medium Unmanned Surface Vehicle will initially focus on intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) payloads and electronic warfare (EW) systems, while the Large Unmanned Surface Vessel will focus on surface warfare (SUW) and strike missions.”

The message directs the Surface Development Squadron, which was created last year to incorporate new technologies such as the DDG-1000 and Sea Hunter into the force, to examine several areas of consideration. The group is to examine command and control for the platforms, as well as potential challenges with interoperability and communications; examine issues with basing, maintaining and supporting the new platforms; look at what the vessels will need in terms of sensors, computers and various supporting systems; and look at what kind of training and personnel will be needed to support unmanned operations. The group is directed to have a first draft by February and a final draft prepared by September of this year. Ultimately the group’s work is intended to help inform acquisition requirements.

The Navy recently emerged from a bruising fight with Congress over its designs for integrating unmanned technology into the surface force. Navy leaders have publicly acknowledged congressional skepticism. In October, the Navy’s top requirements officer told an audience at the Expeditionary Warfare Conference in Annapolis, Maryland, that the platform will be difficult to develop.

“I don’t want to be Pollyannaish about this: It’s going to be hard work,” said Vice Adm. Jim Kilby, the deputy chief of naval operations for war-fighting requirements and capabilities. “And when we brief this, we go right to the upper right-hand corner of the difficulty

spectrum. “So we have been working with the acquisition community to roll out a test and competence program so we can get something to the war fighter that they’re confident they can use.”

What Congress wants to see is more gradual development and proof of concept before it commits serious funding, Kilby told reporters after his remarks. “What I think they are interested in is ‘Block I will have the following capabilities and we’re going to test them in the following manner, and you can see the results of that test,’” Kilby said. “Then we are going to move on to Block II and Block III. They’re interested in us having a ramp-up and build confidence, achieve those capabilities and they can follow that.

“Let’s talk about that first instantiation: Maybe that’s going from point A to point B, follow [the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea], not hit anything, follow the rules of the road. Well, that serves a number of purposes from a deception standpoint. And if those platforms can do that, then maybe I can add capability as I prove out that concept.” The message from Fleet Forces Command described the Navy’s acquisition strategy as “a rapid, iterative, block approach to further develop, test, and employ new capabilities, aligned with the Surface Capability Evolution Plan,” referencing a document developed inside the office of the chief of naval operations that lays out plans for a future surface force.

Congress approved the two LUSVs the Navy requested, but forbade the service from installing a vertical launching system. Furthermore, lawmakers are withholding funding until the Navy’s top acquisitions official briefs them on the path forward for these systems. “Incremental upgrade capability for a vertical launch system may be addressed in future fiscal years,” read the agreement between House and Senate appropriators. “It is directed that no funds may be awarded for the conceptual design of future LUSVs until the

Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development and Acquisition) briefs the congressional defense committees on the updated acquisition strategy for unmanned surface vessels.”

### **Explainer: Russia’s cabinet quit and it’s all part of Putin’s plan**

Regina Smyth, Indiana University



Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, and Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev talk to each other prior to a Wednesday cabinet meeting in Moscow. The Tass news agency reported that Medvedev submitted his resignation to President Vladimir Putin.

#### ***What just happened?***

Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has been in power for 20 years and faces term limits in 2024, has begun his effort to consolidate control and maintain his hold on power after the next elections. The cabinet and prime minister’s resignations are part of that effort.

Putin wants his majority in the parliament – the State Duma – to pass constitutional amendments that will allow him to remain in political control.

This move is not unexpected, at least among Kremlin watchers and scholars like me who have studied Russian elections over 30 years. Putin signaled the change in his annual press conference in December, where he spoke about the potential for constitutional reforms.

On Jan. 15, Putin gave his annual state of the nation address and unveiled “serious changes to the political system.” In response to the proposed constitutional amendments, which Putin is promoting as “reforms,” Prime Minister Medvedev and his government resigned.

This move should not be seen as protest, although it might be useful for Medvedev, a longtime ally of Putin’s, to feign independence and appear as if he made the move in dissent. He and Putin orchestrated similar actions in 2008 and again in 2011.

The goal of Putin and his allies is to forestall popular protest among those tired of Putin’s long reign.

Putin’s proposal to redefine the separation of power between the Duma, presidency and prime minister would allow parliament to select the prime minister, a power now in the hands of the president. Together with an agreement to impose strict two-term limits on future presidents, this change suggests that Putin will leave the presidency.

Future presidents would retain control of the security forces and the military but must consult the State Council.



Russian President Vladimir Putin, left, listens to Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev during a Wednesday meeting in the Kremlin.

The proposal is being touted in leading Russian

newspapers as “democratic reform.” In fact, while appearing to redistribute power among the high-level players in the Kremlin, the details that will determine power relations remain vague.

On Monday, Putin’s spokesman stated that specifics will be developed in consultation with the Russian people. Given regime controls over voting and national campaigns, this nod to the people is a form of window dressing.

In making these changes and accepting the government’s resignation, President Putin is laying the groundwork for several paths to retain power, including as prime minister or head of a strengthened State Council, an advisory body to the president.

Putin’s proxies are already arguing that these reforms will prevent political crisis in 2024 and increase living standards.



Russian President Vladimir Putin addresses the State Council in Moscow on Wednesday. Putin proposed changing the Russian Constitution to increase the powers of parliament and the Cabinet.

### ***Why did it happen?***

President Putin faces two potential roadblocks if he wants to maintain political control through the next election cycle – parliamentary elections in 2021 and presidential elections in 2024.

The first problem is term limits that mandate he leave the presidency. In the face of growing urban protest and declining support for his regime’s policies, any political reforms that

prolong Putin’s tenure are risky. Reform must be seen by the public as a step forward and not a step toward stagnation.

The second problem is that Putin and his United Russia party need to win large majorities in parliamentary and presidential elections. Russia’s sluggish economy and citizens’ frustration with poor government services will undermine support for regime candidates.

This plan, betting on the regime’s capacity to control elections, is risky. Outright electoral fraud will almost surely provoke protest.

Still, these so-called reforms are timed well before the election to allow Putin and his allies to rebuild support in the wake of any negative reaction. The Kremlin is preserving room to respond and correct course.

In accepting the government’s resignation, Putin blamed it for the country’s economic decline, and placed recovery and improved standards of living at the top of his political agenda.



Russian President Vladimir Putin attends a meeting on drafting constitutional changes at the Novo-Ogaryovo residence outside Moscow on Thursday. Putin proposed a set of constitutional amendments that could keep him in power well past the end of his term in 2024.

### ***What’s next?***

Putin’s regime has successfully sold unpopular reforms to skeptical voters in the past. Earlier government attempts to promote pension and housing program changes provide a model for

superficial responsiveness to popular demands. To channel discontent Putin proposed a national referendum on the changes.

So Duma deputies will hold meetings in their districts. Party leaders will meet with constituents and hear their concerns. Officials will make amendments to the proposed changes that appear to address those concerns, but in ways that don't fundamentally change their intent. The process will occur quickly to thwart any opposition organization.

The new prime minister will announce economic reforms and an infusion of state funds into the economy. These actions will also create an impression of responsiveness and win voter support.

As elections approach, the Kremlin will warn of potential crisis, offering Putin as the guarantor of stability. The message will be, as it has been in the past, that Putin is the bulwark against crisis.

its policies, as he has since the U.S. imposed sanctions on Russia for its invasion of eastern Ukraine.

I believe Putin will continue to meddle in U.S. politics and elections to prolong the country's democratic crisis. This effort will serve both domestic and international agendas, by destabilizing the U.S. and making democracy look unappealing to ordinary Russians, who associate the dismal economic and political conflicts of the 1990s with Russian attempts at democratic reform.

The trajectory is clear in Russia's newly revealed hack of the Ukrainian firm Burisma, where Joe Biden's son Hunter served as a board member. This effort by Russia, presumably to unearth embarrassing information about the Biden family, is likely intended to inflame partisan tensions around the impeachment trial of President Donald Trump.

Distracting the U.S. with domestic strife also limits its capacity to challenge Russia abroad.

#### Vladimir Putin's rise to power

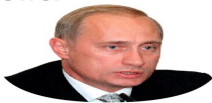
**March 1997:** Deputy chief of staff of the Presidential Executive Office and Chief of Main Control Directorate.

**May 1998:** First deputy chief of staff of the Presidential Executive Office.

**July 1998:** Director of the Federal Security Service, the successor agency of the KGB.

**March 1999:** Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation.

**August 1999:** Appointed prime minister of Russia, by President Boris Yeltsin.



**Dec. 31, 1999:** Becomes acting president following Yeltsin's decision to step down.

**March 26, 2000:** Elected president.

**March 14, 2004:** Reelected for a second term.

**May 2008:** Appointed prime minister by President Dmitry Medvedev, who was viewed as a placeholder president because Putin was subject to term limits. Later that year, Medvedev proposed lengthening presidential term limits from four to six years.



**January 2020:** Putin ousted Medvedev as prime minister and appointed him deputy head of the presidential Security Council. Putin proposed sweeping constitutional changes that could keep him in power well past the end of his term in 2024.

SOURCES: AP Reports, The Kremlin

AP

President Vladimir Putin's climb up Russia's leadership ladder.

#### ***What does this mean to the US?***

While the Putin regime's domestic policy is not popular, his ability to project Russian power abroad is. The U.S. can expect Putin to challenge

**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.

## Gallup Decade in Review

### 2010 to 2019 Public Opinion Changes

Gallup | Justin McCarthy | December 31, 2019

A review of Gallup analyses over the past decade reveals that the years from 2010 to 2019 bore witness to key revolutionary changes in public opinion, along with some persistent trends and concerns, as well as striking moments and lasting effects. Here are the changes, issues and moments in public opinion that Gallup editors think will long be associated with the 2010s:

#### Revolutionary Changes

**Same-Sex Marriage:** When the decade began, only a handful of states had legalized gay marriage and most Americans opposed it. But in 2011, Gallup recorded majority support for same-sex marriage for the first time. Americans continued to warm to gay marriage as the decade progressed, with support reaching the 60% mark just before the Supreme Court's 2015 *Obergefell v. Hodges* decision made gay marriage legal nationwide. In the final years of the decade, support has ranged between 61% and 67%. The wholesale change in public attitudes about gay marriage over such a short time span represents one of Gallup's most compelling public opinion trends.

**Marijuana:** Much like the issue of same-sex marriage, Americans' views on legalizing marijuana have vastly changed, with the sharpest shift in support for legalization occurring in the past 10 years. In 2010, when no states had yet legalized recreational marijuana, 46% of U.S. adults supported legalizing it, but that grew to about two-thirds in four consecutive readings by decade's end. Today, 11 states and Washington, D.C., have legalized recreational use of marijuana, while many other states have decriminalized it or passed laws allowing for medical marijuana use.

**The U.S. Economy:** That two in three Americans say it is a good time to find a quality job in the U.S. at the conclusion of 2019 shows how far U.S. consumers have come from the economic despair Gallup found as the decade began. In January 2010, just 9% of Americans said it was a good time to find a quality job. And for the better part of the decade, Gallup's Economic Confidence Index was in negative territory as Americans continued to reel from the effects of the global economic crisis and the U.S. recession. President Donald Trump's inauguration in 2017 marked an important turning point as Americans again became net-positive about the economy and jobs in particular. But Gallup has consistently found that most Americans view the country's current and future economic health through a political lens.

**Political Polarization:** Republicans and Democrats have become more polarized in their views on issues and evaluations of politicians. This polarizing trend is not unique to the end of the decade, but it's one that has accelerated over the past 10 years. A 2017 Gallup analysis found that Barack Obama's presidential approval ratings had been the most politically polarized ratings for any president in Gallup's history -- and President Donald Trump's are on pace to be even more polarized. But Republicans and Democrats diverge even on questions that are seemingly apolitical, including how the U.S. economy is doing and how they rate their personal healthcare situation, for example. This will have enormous consequences not just for the coming presidential election, but for how U.S. politics navigate beyond it.

**Religion:** Religious faith is prominent in the U.S., but much less so than in previous decades. Church membership and attendance -- as well as frequency of attendance -- are all down to record lows. Americans have become less likely to believe in God. Meanwhile, more than one in five Americans (21%) now describe themselves as having no religion, a sizable jump from 14% in 2010 and 8% in 1999. In addition to the decline in Americans identifying with any religion, some of the largest changes within religious groups have occurred among U.S. Catholics, of whom weekly church attendance has nearly halved since the beginning of the millennium, and whose confidence in organized religion and the clergy have fallen.

### **Persistent Issues and Concerns**

**Gun Violence:** Many of the deadliest mass shootings in U.S. history have occurred during the past decade, and Americans have often reacted to these events with alarm. In 2012, U.S. parents' worries about their children's safety rose after the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, which marked one of the least happy days in 2012, according to Americans' self-reports of their emotions. In March 2018, less than a month after the Parkland, Florida, school shooting, Americans' mentions of guns as the nation's top problem spiked to a record high. But much like the cyclical political conversations on gun control, these fears typically decline until the next event drives them back up again. How Americans interpret deadly shootings is also divisive, as Republicans and Democrats attribute gun violence to different root problems. Majorities of Americans have generally reported wanting stricter gun control over time, and violent events have often pushed this desire to relative heights.

**Terrorism:** Americans' worries about terrorism in the 2010s were somewhat of a holdover from the prior decade, which was largely defined and shaped by the attacks that took place on Sept. 11, 2001. Much like gun violence, 76

Americans' worries about terrorism ebb and flow in reaction to terrorism in the U.S. and abroad. The 2013 Boston Marathon bombings prompted a double-digit increase in the percentage of Americans who believed another terrorist attack was coming. After the 2015 terrorist attacks in Paris, Americans' concerns about the possibility of future terrorist attacks rose the most among a list of 15 problems facing the U.S. Fears about terrorism affect Americans' behavior, as was evident in 2017, when a record-high percentage of U.S. adults reported they were less likely to attend large events because of terrorist attacks. As recently as October 2019, nearly half of Americans said they worried that they or a family member could be a victim of terrorism.

**Race Relations:** Whites and blacks alike are less positive in their assessments of race relations in the U.S. than they were in the previous decade. The final years of the 2010s revealed heightened worries about race relations compared with previous measures Gallup has taken since 2001. The election of Obama, the first black U.S. president, may have signaled a major achievement in race relations, but Americans' views of race relations became less harmonious during Obama's time in office -- and have further soured during Trump's presidency.

### Striking Moments

**The 2016 Election:** In 2016, for only the fourth time in U.S. history, the president elected by the Electoral College did not win the popular vote. Still, the event was singular in that the two major-party candidates had the worst favorable ratings Gallup has ever recorded leading up to an election, and Americans rated the tone of the election more negatively than elections in the past. Despite then-candidate Trump's low ratings on personality and leadership qualities, the constant news about his opponent Hillary Clinton's email server scandal hurt her. Trump's attacks on the media came at a time when confidence in the media had dipped to new lows -- especially among members of his own party.

**Osama bin Laden:** Al-Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden had been "Public Enemy No. 1" even before the attacks on 9/11. His eluding capture had dogged then-President George W. Bush, who was in the first year of his presidency when the U.S. experienced the deadliest terrorist attack in its history. Nearly a decade after 9/11, bin Laden was killed in Pakistan by a U.S. special operations team. The raid was well received in the U.S., with 93% approving of the military action and about eight in 10 saying it was extremely or very important to the U.S. that bin Laden was killed (though the operation was not well-received in Pakistan, where it occurred). Americans gave most credit to the U.S. military and the CIA. Obama received a six-percentage-point bump in his approval ratings -- a rare "rally event" for him.

**Government Shutdowns:** The federal government shut down three times over the decade. While one was relatively brief (Jan. 20-22, 2018), the other two lasted weeks -- with the most recent shutdown that ended in January 2019 being the longest in U.S. history. Gallup has found that these events affected Americans' views of the country in various ways. In 2013, Congress approval dropped to one of its lowest levels in history, while satisfaction with government reached a new low. Meanwhile, Americans' confidence in the U.S. economy -- which had been slowly rebuilding after the global economic crisis -- plummeted as the shutdown wore on.

The Republican Party's image took a hit as a result of GOP members of Congress' role in the shutdown. Obama's approval ratings mostly held steady during the shutdown of 2013, as did Trump's ratings during the shutdown earlier this year. During the most recent shutdown,

mentions of the government and poor leadership as the top U.S. problem spiked, while trust in the government to handle domestic and international issues each dropped to record lows.

**The Tea Party:** The seeds of the Tea Party movement took root in 2009 and early 2010 when fiscal conservatives opposed "excessive" federal spending and government bailouts -- and later, when conservative Republicans were outraged over various proposals from the new Democratic-controlled Congress and White House, particularly the Affordable Care Act. But the movement bore fruit in 2010, when 87 Republicans were newly elected to Congress, many under the umbrella of the Tea Party movement -- representing one of the GOP's greatest electoral victories in generations. In 2010, Gallup found that more than a quarter of Americans (28%) and about half of Republicans (49%) were supporters of the Tea Party movement, with strong support among whites and conservatives. Support for the movement waned after peaking at 32% following its successes in the 2010 elections. By 2015 -- the last time Gallup posed the question -- support was about half that level (17%).

**Occupy Wall Street:** Not long after the Tea Party movement's successes in 2010, the Occupy Wall Street movement was born when protesters in New York City's Zuccotti Park remained there for two months in the fall of 2011. This prompted national and international re-creations of the protest and ignited larger conversations about wealth inequality in the U.S., particularly the top 1% of income earners. Americans were slightly more approving than disapproving of the movement's goals and the way the protests were being conducted, but most were unfamiliar with the Occupy Wall Street movement. Occupy Wall Street likely tapped into frustrations that were present that year, as Americans' satisfaction with opportunities for people to get ahead by working hard had dipped to a new low (55%) in 2011 and a record-low 44% said it was likely that U.S. youth would have better lives than their parents. Many of the movement's messages have resonated with the current presidential campaigns of Sens. Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, whose platforms are largely centered on income inequality.

### **Lasting Effects**

**The Affordable Care Act (ACA):** One of the decade's most significant pieces of legislation was passed at its beginning. Signed by Obama in March 2010, the ACA successfully reduced the percentage of uninsured Americans. The bill, which became widely known as "Obamacare," was controversial, with 45% of Americans supporting it and 48% opposing just weeks before its passage. Since then, public opinion has continued to tilt against the law, averaging 46% approval and 49% disapproval since 2012, based on annual averages. Americans were most negative about the ACA as the ACA exchanges opened in late 2013 and the individual mandate took effect in early 2014. The ACA enjoyed majority approval in only two polls, both conducted in 2017, amid Republican attempts to repeal it. Twin polls in 2019 found the law just as divisive today as it was at the start, with 50% approving of the ACA and 48% disapproving.

**Socialism:** Nationally, socialism has not gained in popularity over the past decade -- and less than half of Americans would vote for a socialist presidential candidate. But U.S. Democrats have warmed slightly to socialism, and they now view socialism more favorably than they do capitalism. About half of millennials view socialism positively. Though Americans skew negative in their views of socialism, their views are more nuanced when asked about specific aspects of government responsibility. With more political leaders, namely Democrats, adopting socialist

messages, the coming decade will tell whether Americans become more positive in their views of socialism or whether they will remain as negative about it as they were in the 2010s.

### **VVA-535 Fundraiser 0.177 Caliber Air Rifle**

This is a photo showing a display of the air rifle to be offered by VVA-535 for members only. Tickets, at **\$10 each**, will be available at the December VVA-535 meeting/potluck. A total of one hundred tickets will be available.

The drawing for this air rifle will be conducted on **April 6, 2020**.



**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

# January

# 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 New Year's Day	2 VVA-535	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	14	15	16	17 Operation Desert Storm began (1991)	18
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 Signing of Vietnam Peace Accord (1973)	28	29	30	31	

# February

# 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 Groundhog Day	3	4	5	6 VVA-535	7 Wear Red Day	8 Boy Scouts of America founded 1910
9	10 Columbus Day	11	12 Lincoln's Birthday 1809  Operation Homecoming began 1973	13	14 Valentine's Day	15 Sinking of USS Maine 1898
16	17 President's Day	18	19 U.S. Marines landed on Iwo Jima 1945	20	21	22 Washington's birthday 1732
23 Flag raised on Iwo Jima 1945	24 Operation Desert Storm ground war started 1991	25	26 Ash Wednesday	27 CSC Meeting	28 Persian Gulf War ceasefire 1991  CSC Meeting	29 CSC Meeting



# March

# 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Operation "Rolling Thunder": began 1965	3 "Star Spangled Banner" made U.S, National Anthem, 1931	4	5 VVA -535	6	7
8 Daylight Saving Time begins	9	10	11	12 Girl Scouts of America founded 1912	13	14
15 American Legion's birthday 1919	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19 1 <sup>st</sup> Day of Spring  Start of Operation Iraqi Freedom 2003	20	21
22	23	24	25 Medal of Honor Day	26 Anniversary of The Wall Groundbreaking	27	28
29 National Vietnam War Veterans Day	30	31				