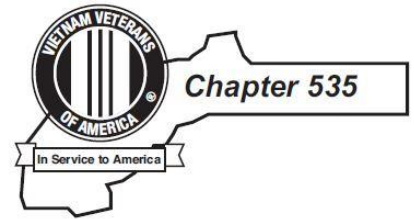




INCOMING

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
CHAPTER 535



Website: www.vva535.org

Volume 32 Issue 7

July 2022

**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
CHAPTER 535
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
July 2022**

CSC Report

Chapter Secretary Bart Ruud and I attended the State Council Meeting in Visalia this past week, June 16 – 18, 2022.

This was a Special Meeting called to elect officers that will serve for the next two years. Although this was focused on the election, other topics were presented, among which was a VVA National directive on how to organize a local Town Hall seminar on Agent Orange.

Of particular interest was the request for funds to **Repair the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial** in Sacramento, CA.

Bart had done some research on the subject and found that the Memorial, although located on State property, does not belong to the state, so state funds are not available for repair and maintenance.

The statute authorizing the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial was signed into law by then Governor Deukmejian in September 1983. The

Memorial, located in Capitol Park, was dedicated in 1988 and is inscribed with 5,822 names of Californians who made the ultimate sacrifice in the Vietnam War.

It is estimated the cost of this restoration will be roughly \$108,000. At present, only about \$6,000 has been raised. Funds are requested from Chapters and individuals. Checks can be sent to:

CA Vietnam Memorial Committee
8400 Old Melones Dam Road Space #86
Jamestown, CA 95327

Bart will make this an agenda item for our July 7, 2022 Chapter meeting.

As stated, this was a Special Meeting called specifically for the election of officers. President: Alan Cook; 1st Vice-President: Jerry Orlemann; 2nd Vice-President: Dick Southern; Secretary: John Bilbrey; Treasurer: George Hunter; Northern District Director: Butch Frederickson; At Large Director: Conrad T. Gomez.

The next Regular CSC Meeting will be held August 19, 20 & 21, 2022 in Visalia, CA. In the past, CSC meetings had been held at a venue in Fresno where the annual cost of four Quarterly meetings had been \$12,000. The current venue,

Wyndham Visalia, provided meeting rooms without charge provided at least \$350 was expended for a banquet. The savings dictates why quarterly meetings will be scheduled at the Wyndham Visalia Hotel. Conference rate for rooms was \$99 per night plus fees and taxes.

Dave Chaix
President

Chili Cookoff June 25, 2022

The Chili Cook-Off began at 7:30 AM at the Veterans Hall with the setup.

Our leader and head chef, Jose Gonzales, showed up with all the fixin's, stove, pots and all that would be needed to prepare his world class chili.

Assisting was Pete Hidalgo (on the meat), Ray James (working with the secret ingredients) and I was given the vegetables (something not easily destroyed).

Jose in his true Captain's role, oversaw and gave orders as we slaved trying to please him.

There were 5 entries, the Marine Corp League, the American Legion, Friends of the Nevada County Military, the All-Branches Honor Guard and VVA Chapter 535.

As people came through and tasted "Jose's Chili", there were many compliments and requests for seconds.

Then came the tasting by the judges.

It was announced VVA Chapter 535, scored a 2nd place.

Way to go!!

Also attending was Susie James with moral support and Bart Ruud bringing by an occasional beer.

A huge thank you to Jose for putting this together and for all the pre- and post-work done mostly by him and his family.

Also, big thank you's for Ray and Pete!

Attendance was sparse, I think mostly due to the heat.

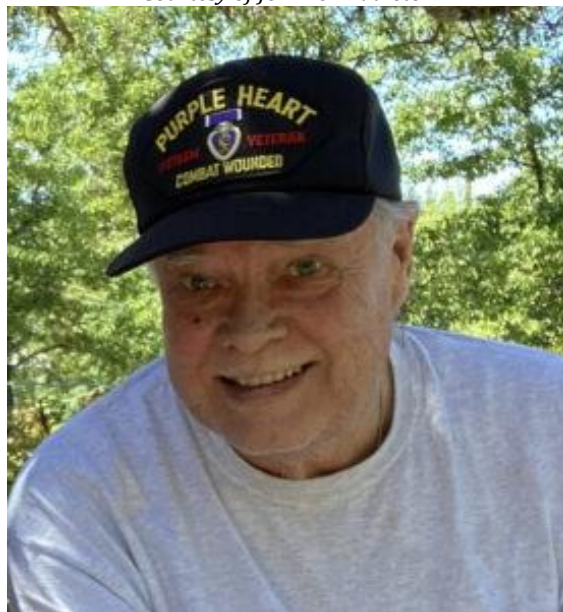
All in all, a fun day.

Dave Chaix
President

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.

Dave Middleton
Courtesy of JoAnne Middleton



Dave Middleton passed away on Saturday, June 18, 2022, at Mercy General Hospital in Sacramento, CA. He was 71.

American Legion Post 130, P.O. Box 1113,
Grass Valley, CA 95945.

Memorial services will be conducted from 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 16, 2022, at the Grass Valley Veterans Memorial Building. There will be a military honors ceremony at 2:00 p.m.

Dave was born on Dec. 30, 1950, in Newburgh, NY, to Morrison and Edith Middleton. He served in the U.S. Army from Feb. 1970 to Aug. 1972, as a helicopter pilot. He earned 14 Air Medals, the Army Commendation Medal for Valor, and the Purple Heart. After the military, he worked in the crane and rigging industry for most of his life. He was a licensed general contractor, a California RE Broker, and was a board member of the Nevada County CA Building Code and Accessibility Board of Appeals. Dave loved to cook especially with his grandchildren, and to go out to restaurants. He enjoyed golf, poker, reading, watching old westerns, and watching his children, and grandchildren play sports. He was a member of the Vietnam Vets, American Legion, Scottish Rite, the Crow Canyon Masonic Lodge #551 F & AM, and the helicopter group Dark Horse.

He is survived by his wife of 37 years, JoAnne of Nevada City; children Anthony (Shawna) of Placerville, Anina (Jeff) of Ione, Brian (Twylight) of Las Vegas, NV; sister Moira (Jim) of Sun City, AZ; grandchildren, Jack, Kayleigh, and Charlotte. He was preceded in death by his parents Morrison and Edith Middleton; and brother Bruce Middleton.

Memorial contributions may be made to the VVA Chapter 535, P.O. Box 37, Grass Valley, CA 95945 or the Frank Gallino

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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Upcoming Events

NCCVC Meeting – July 7, 2022

VVA General Meeting – July 7, 2022

July 2, 2022 – Penn Valley Gateway Park
Community Fun Day.

July 4, 2022 Parade – Bill Slade deuce & a half
Nevada County Fair – August 10-14, 2022

CSC: August 19 – 21, 2022 - Visalia

CSC: Oct 14-16, 2022 - Visalia

October 16 – 22, 2022 VSO Conference, Gold
Country Inn, Grass Valley

December 1, 2022 – Christmas potluck dinner

December 17, 2022 Wreaths Across America

Chapter 535 Officers

President David Chaix
dmcb402@gmail.com
1-530-269-1431

Vice-President Keith Grueneberg
kgberg0178@sbcglobal.net
916-425-1121

Treasurer
Ralph Remick 530-559-7716

Secretary
Bart Ruud 530-305-0493

Directors

Dick Corn 530-277-8856
Enrique Vasquez530-575-4416
Ray James530-478-1126
Ric Sheridan530-274-1413
Corbin Smith 916-833-7860

Committee Chairs

Finance ...Ralph Remick & Dave Johnson
Parade and Honor Guard Dick Corn
Membership AffairsRic Sheridan
Newsletter Interim Editor Bart Ruud
Victorian Christmas Cancelled for 2022 ?
Nominations Ralph Remick
Veterans Assistance..... Dave Chaix
NCCVC Dave Chaix; Dick Corn
Speakers Bureau Ray James
Web Master Ralph Remick
Quartermaster Dick Corn
Facebook Master Mike Laborico
Nevada County Fair Open
CA State Council Rep..... Open

Nevada County Veterans Service Officer

David West II
Nevada County Veterans Service Officer
988 McCourtney Rd.
Grass Valley, CA 95949
David.West@co.nevada.ca.us
(530) 265-1446 (Office)
(530) 913-5046 (Cellphone)

“Walk-In” opportunities are available M – F.

Placer County Veterans Service Officer

Derrick Oliveira ... 916-780-3290.
1000 Sunset Blvd., Suite 115, Rocklin, CA

Mon. – Fri., 8:00 – 12:00 and 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. The Auburn office, at 11562 B Avenue, Auburn, CA 95603, is now open every Tuesday 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.. The Carnelian Bay office, at 5252 N Lake Blvd, Carnelian Bay, CA 96140, is now open every 3rd Monday (excluding Holidays) 9:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.

Derrick Oliveira will leave the employ of Placer County July 8, 2022 and move on to achieve a long-term academic goal. His work for Veterans is gratefully acknowledged.

Guest Speaker for July 7, 2022

Greg Thompson, an Air Force veteran, will present ideas on fundraising methodology. Carl Ciesleskowski will introduce Greg.

County VSO Resource Closet Needs

Sleeping bags, duffel bags, small lightweight tents, socks, briefs, bras, tee shirts (white/olive drab), sweatshirts, sweatpants, jeans, shoes, boots, hygiene supplies, grocery store gift cards, gas cards, blankets.

These kinds of items will become components of life packs to assist those in need that are seen by staff at VSO David West’s office. Thank you for your assistance with this project.

Matters of Interest as outlined at the Meeting of June 2, 2022

A worthy discussion ensued regarding who is a Vietnam Veteran. Consensus aligned with VVA National policy, as stated in the Charter, is a Vietnam Vet: Anyone who served on active duty (for other than training purposes) in the U.S. armed forces between February 28, 1961 and May 7, 1975 in the Republic of Vietnam (“in-country”), or in any duty location between August 5, 1964 and May 7, 1975.

The previously scheduled Craft Show to be sponsored by VVA 535 for June 4, 2022 was cancelled due to lack of vendor participation.

Jose Gonzales will lead a team with an entry in a Chili Cook-Off scheduled for June 25, 2022.

A community fun day honoring Veterans is scheduled at Western Gateway Park, Penn Valley, for July 2, 2022.

Bill Slade has offered his deuce and a half truck to VVA 535 for the Nevada City July 4th Parade.

Jose Gonzales has informed us of a critical need to find a new storage site for our enclosed utility trailer.

There is movement, spearheaded by Jose Gonzales, to organize for a Summer BBQ to be staged at the Kentucky Flat School, for a VVA 535 members and their families.

VALife

New VA Benefit Will Sell Insurance to Most Veterans

Military.com | Rebecca Kheel | May 31, 2022

A new Department of Veterans Affairs life insurance policy for veterans of any level of disability rating is just six months away from launching. In a blog post 30 MAY, the VA reminded veterans it will begin offering Veterans Affairs Life Insurance, or VALife, on Jan. 1, 2023, in line with a law passed last year, with applications opening that day.

VALife will be open to all veterans 80 years old or younger who have a disability rating of 0 to 100. Older veterans will also be eligible if they applied for VA disability compensation before age 81 but did not receive the disability rating until after turning 81, and if they apply for the life insurance within two years of getting the rating. "The new program meets the needs of

service-connected veterans who may not have previously qualified for life insurance with VA," the blog post said.

VALife is what's known as guaranteed acceptance whole life insurance. That means no medical exams or health questions are required to be approved, with the VA in its blog post saying the plan will have "fully automated online enrollment with instant approvals." But guaranteed acceptance plans often have lower benefits and higher premiums than other life insurance policies. VALife will offer beneficiaries payouts of up to \$40,000, with lesser coverage available in increments of \$10,000.

The cost of the insurance varies based on age and the amount of coverage, but could run as low as \$11 per month for an 18-year-old with \$10,000 of coverage or as high as \$1,768 per month for a 95-year-old with \$40,000 of coverage, according to the VA website, which noted rates may change before the policy launches. The premiums are fixed for the life of policy, meaning veterans will pay the amount for the age they were when they enrolled even as they get older.

The new insurance policy was created by a bill signed into law in January 2021 called the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act. The start date, eligibility criteria and coverage amounts were all stipulated in the law. The law allowed the department to set premium rates based on what is "generally charged for guaranteed acceptance life insurance policies by private life insurance companies." The 21 department already offers what's called Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI), but veterans have to apply within one year and 120 days of leaving military service in order to be eligible for that plan. The department also offers the Service-Disabled Veterans Life Insurance (SGLI) for veterans of any level of service-connected disability rating, but vets have to apply within two years of getting their rating.

The new VALife has no such time restriction on applying for veterans 80 or younger. The Service-Disabled Veterans Life Insurance plan also requires veterans to be in good health apart from their service-connected condition, unlike VALife's guaranteed acceptance. Veterans who already have the Service-Disabled Veterans Life Insurance will be able to stay in that program, but the policy will close to new applicants after Dec. 31, according to the blog post.

Vet Deportations New ICE Directive Says Veteran Status Will Be Considered

MilitaryTimes | Meghann Myers | June 7, 2022

When non-citizen veterans are detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, policy dictates that service records are considered when deciding whether to force deportation. But that policy hasn't always been followed in recent years. So on 7 JUN, the Homeland Security Department announced a new directive to formalize it. Agency-wide guidance will follow, according to a release from DHS, "to ensure service in the U.S. military by a noncitizen or their immediate family members is taken into consideration when deciding whether to take civil immigration enforcement actions against them and what enforcement action to take, if any."

The formalized policy also requires training on veteran deportation cases, as well as mandatory tracking and reporting. The move is part of the joint Immigrant Military Members and Veterans Initiative between DHS and VA, according to the release. A 2019 Government Accountability Office report found that 250 non-citizen veterans were under deportation threat between 2013 and 2018, and 92 of them were ultimately deported. "Specifically, ICE policies require agents and officers to document the decision to issue a [notice to appear] to a veteran, but do not require agents and officers

to identify and document veteran status when interviewing potentially removable individuals," according to the 2019 GAO report.

The GAO report also found that agents were not asking about military service, and in some cases, didn't know that they were supposed to. "Further, in December 2018 [Homeland Security Investigations] officials told us that HSI has not been adhering to either the 2004 or the 2015 policies because they were unaware of the policies prior to our review," according to the report. The plight of deported veterans has made multiple headlines in recent years, prompting action from lawmakers, mostly.

The program that had for more than a decade allowed non-citizens to join and earn citizenship — known as Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest — was throttled toward the end of the Obama administration before being completely suspended by the Trump administration. At the same time, Trump-era immigration policies put active duty troops, their family members and veterans at risk of deportation, removing protections that had previously allowed them to stay in the U.S. while their cases were handled. In the wake of those moves, lawmakers have proposed multiple bills that would not only make it easier for deported veterans to return to the U.S., but 30 give them a pathway to citizenship. Neither have come to a vote.

Ammunition U.S. Supply Chain Heavily Reliant on China/Russia's Antimony

Defense News | Bryant Harris | June 8, 2022

The United States has relied almost entirely on China — and to a lesser extent Russia — in recent years to procure a critical mineral that is vital to producing ammunition. The mineral antimony is critical to the defense-industrial supply chain and is needed to produce everything from armor- 47 piercing bullets and

explosives to nuclear weapons as well as sundry other military equipment, such as night vision goggles. Antimony is now on the front lines of recent congressional efforts to shore up the strategic reserve of rare earth minerals, known as the National Defense Stockpile.

The stockpile includes a multitude of other minerals critical to the defense-industrial supply chain such as titanium, tungsten, cobalt and lithium, but lawmakers expect will become insolvent by fiscal 2025 absent corrective action. The House Armed Services Committee took its first stab 8 JUN. A report accompanying the bill would require the manager of the national defense stockpile to brief the committee on the status of antimony by October while providing “a five year outlook of these minerals and current and future supply chain vulnerabilities.” “The committee is concerned about recent geopolitical dynamics with Russia and China and how that could accelerate supply chain disruptions, particularly with antimony,” the report noted.

The draft legislation would also require the Defense Department to instate a policy of recycling spent batteries to reclaim “precious metals, rare earth minerals and elements of strategic importance (such as Cobalt and Lithium) into the supply chain or strategic reserves of the United States.” The House’s readiness subcommittee is expected to approve the draft text on 9 JUN, and the Armed Services Committee is set to advance the legislation as part of its annual defense authorization bill later this month.

After Japan cut off the U.S. supply of antimony from China during World War II, the United States began procuring the mineral from ore in an Idaho goldmine. However, that mine ceased production in 1997. “There is no domestic mine for antimony,” according to a 2020 report from the U.S. Geological Survey, a government agency. “China is the largest producer of mined and refined antimony and a major source of imports for the United States.” The report noted that

China is “losing market share with Russia, the world’s second-ranked producer,” with Tajikistan gaining ground in the global market as the world’s third-largest supplier of antimony.

Lawmakers’ recent interest in shoring up the national defense stockpile of strategic minerals marks a significant about-face for Congress, which had repeatedly authorized multimillion-dollar sales of the reserve over the past several decades to fund other programs. At its peak during the beginning of the Cold War in 1952, the stockpile was valued at nearly \$42 billion in today’s dollars. That value has plummeted to \$888 million as of last year. The Defense Department submitted its own legislative proposal to Congress last month, asking lawmakers to authorize \$253.5 million in the defense authorization bill to procure additional minerals for the stockpile.

Rep. Seth Moulton (D-MA), who sits on the House Armed Services Committee, led seven Republicans in April in asking the defense appropriations subcommittee to provide an additional \$264 million in funding for the stockpile for FY23. “The current stockpile is inadequate to meet the requirements of great power competition,” the lawmakers wrote. “The [national defense stockpile] is no longer capable of covering the Department of Defense’s needs for the vast majority of identified materials in the event of a supply chain disruption.”

Coronavirus Vaccines New One May Be Option for Troops with Religious Concerns

The Associated Press | Lolita C. Baldor | June 9, 2022

A COVID-19 vaccine that could soon win federal authorization may offer a boost for the U.S. military: an opportunity to get shots into some of the thousands of service members who have refused other coronavirus vaccines for religious

reasons. At least 175 active duty and reserve service members have already received the Novavax vaccine, some even traveling overseas at their own expense to get it. The vaccine meets Defense Department requirements because it has the World Health Organization's emergency use approval and is used in Europe and other regions. The Food and Drug Administration is considering giving it emergency use authorization in the U.S.

The Novavax vaccine may be an acceptable option for some of the 27,000 service members who have sought religious exemptions from the mandatory vaccine. Military officials say many troops who refuse the shots cite certain COVID-19 vaccines' remote connection to abortions. Laboratory-grown cell lines descended from fetuses that were aborted decades ago were used in some early-stage testing of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines and to grow viruses used to manufacture the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. The vaccines do not contain fetal cells. Novavax, however, says that "no human fetal-derived cell lines or tissue" were used in the development, manufacture or production of its vaccine.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin made COVID-19 vaccinations mandatory last year, saying the shots were critical to maintaining military readiness and the health of the force. Military leaders have argued that troops for decades have been required to get as many as 17 vaccines, particularly for those who are deploying overseas. One group involved in lawsuits targeting the military's vaccine requirement said it's possible some shot opponents may see Novavax as an amenable option.

"I definitely think it is for some, but certainly not for all," said Mike Berry, director of military affairs for First Liberty Institute. "There are some for whom abortion is really the ultimate issue, and once that issue is resolved for them spiritually, then they're willing." Berry added, however, that for others, abortion is "just a tangential issue," and they have broader

opposition to vaccines as a whole. "A rudimentary way of looking at it is that they've asked for God's will, and they believe that it would be wrong for them to get the vaccine," Berry said. "In other words, they believe that God has told them no."

Novavax also may appeal to people who are uncomfortable with the new genetic-based technology used in Pfizer and Moderna's so-called mRNA vaccines. They deliver genetic instructions for the body to make copies of the coronavirus' outer coating, the spike protein. The Novavax vaccine is made with a more familiar technology, like those used for years to prevent hepatitis B and shingles. It trains the body to fight the coronavirus by delivering copies of the outer coating which are grown in insect cells, then are purified and packaged into nanoparticles that to the immune system resemble a virus, according to Novavax research chief Dr. Gregory Glenn. While some religious groups oppose the shots, when COVID-19 vaccines first started rolling out the Vatican's doctrine office called the options "morally acceptable" and Pope Francis, who has received Pfizer shots, has strongly encouraged widespread vaccination.

First Liberty and the law firm Hacker Stephens LLP represent a number of Navy sailors in one lawsuit, and First Liberty and Schaerr Jaffe LLP represent nine airmen in another. Berry said he doesn't know how many would consider Novavax acceptable, but guessed it may be a small percentage. Military officials declined to publicly detail the nature of any service members' religious exemption requests, but spoke on condition of anonymity to provide some descriptions. They said that the most predominant issue mentioned in waiver requests is the remote link to fetal cell lines, while others argue that their body is a temple that must remain pure.

Berry said his firm carefully screens individuals for the lawsuits, to make sure their objections are based on sincerely held religious beliefs,

rather than political or other opposition masquerading as faith-based views. The military can't administer the Novavax shot now, and won't pay for anyone's travel overseas to get it. But tens of thousands of American forces are based in Europe, where Novavax is available. Earlier this week, advisers to the FDA backed the Novavax vaccine. Next, the FDA must decide whether to authorize it. A final FDA decision isn't expected immediately, as the agency finishes combing through the data.

Across the military, more than 5,000 service members have been discharged for refusing the vaccine, according to the latest statistics provided by the services. Of those who requested religious exemptions, only slightly more than 100 have been approved.

- In the lawsuit against the Navy, a federal judge in Texas agreed the case can go forward as a class-action lawsuit and issued a preliminary injunction barring the service from taking action against sailors who objected to the vaccine on religious grounds. Berry said the Justice Department has said it will appeal the ruling to the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals.
- In the Air Force lawsuit, Berry said, lawyers have asked that it also be a class action, and they are seeking a temporary restraining order preventing the Air Force from taking any adverse actions. The court has not yet ruled.

Post-COVID-19 Syndrome

Vaccinated People Can Get Long COVID

Government Executive | Washington University in St. Louis | June 1, 2022

Even vaccinated people with mild breakthrough COVID-19 infections can experience long COVID with debilitating, lingering symptoms that affect the heart, brain, lungs, and other parts of the body, new research shows. The study of more than 13 million veterans also found that vaccination against the virus that causes COVID-19 reduces the risk of death by 34% and the risk of getting long COVID by 15%, compared with

unvaccinated patients infected with the virus. However, vaccines were shown to be most effective in preventing some of the most worrisome manifestations of long COVID—lung and blood-clotting disorders—which declined about 49% and 56%, respectively, among vaccinated people.

“Vaccinations remain critically important in the fight against COVID-19,” says Ziyad Al-Aly, a clinical epidemiologist at Washington University in St. Louis, and first author of the paper in *Nature Medicine*. “Vaccinations reduce the risk of hospitalization and dying from COVID-19. But vaccines seem to only provide modest protection against long COVID. People recovering from breakthrough COVID-19 infection should continue to monitor their health and see a health care provider if lingering symptoms make it difficult to carry out daily activities.”

The researchers classified patients as fully vaccinated if they had received two doses of the Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines or one dose of the Johnson & Johnson/Janssen vaccine. At the time the research took place, the database used for this study did not include information about whether patients received boosters.

“Now that we understand that COVID-19 can have lingering health consequences even among the vaccinated, we need to move toward developing mitigation strategies that can be implemented for the longer term since it does not appear that COVID-19 is going away any time soon,” says Al-Aly, who is also the chief of research and development at the VA St. Louis Health Care System. “We need to urgently develop and deploy additional layers of protection that could be sustainably implemented to reduce the risk of long COVID.” Such protective layers could include nasal vaccines that are more convenient or potent than the current shots, or other types of vaccines or drugs aimed at minimizing the risks of long COVID. 66

“Getting COVID-19, even among vaccinated people, seems almost unavoidable nowadays,” says Al-Aly, noting that 8 to 12% of vaccinated people with breakthrough infections may develop long COVID. “Our current approach will likely leave a large number of people with chronic and potentially disabling conditions that have no treatments. This will not only affect people’s health, but their ability to work, life expectancy, economic productivity, and societal well-being. We need to have a candid national conversation about the consequences of our current approach.” Since the pandemic started, more than 524 million people globally have been infected with the virus; of those, more than 6 million have died—including more than 1 million in the United States alone.

“Let’s say SARS-CoV-2 is here for 10 years,” Al-Aly continues. “People are sick and tired of masking and social distancing, and it’s simply not sustainable to ask that they continue to do so. We need to come up with additional layers of protection that allow us to resume normal life while co-existing with the virus. Current vaccines are only part of the solution.”

LONG COVID DATA

For the study, researchers analyzed the de-identified medical records of more than 13 million veterans. The records are in a database the US Department of Veterans Affairs, the nation’s largest integrated health-care delivery system, maintains. The researchers examined data of 113,474 unvaccinated COVID-19 patients and 33,940 vaccinated patients who had experienced COVID19 breakthrough infections, all from January 1 through October 31, 2021. The patients with COVID-19 were mostly older, white men; however, the researchers also analyzed data that included more than 1.3 million women and adults of all ages and races.

- The study does not include data involving the virus’s Omicron variants, which began

spreading rapidly in late 2021. However, Al-Aly says prior studies have suggested the vaccine is effective against all current variants. Among the study’s other findings:

- In addition to complications involving the heart, brain, and lungs, other symptoms associated with long COVID included disorders involving the kidneys, blood clotting, mental health, metabolism, and the gastrointestinal and musculoskeletal systems.
- Long COVID risks were 17% higher among vaccinated immunocompromised people with breakthrough infections compared with previously healthy, vaccinated people who experienced breakthrough infections.
- An analysis of 3,667 vaccinated patients who were hospitalized with breakthrough COVID-19 infections showed that they experienced 2.5 times the risk of death than people who were hospitalized with influenza. They also had a 27% higher risk of long COVID in the first 30 days after diagnosis compared with 14,337 people who were hospitalized with seasonal influenza.
- The datasets also compared long-term health outcomes with a prepandemic control group of more than 5.75 million people (meaning they had never had COVID-19 because it hadn’t yet existed). Across the board, people who had breakthrough COVID-19 faced 67 significantly higher risks of death and illnesses such as heart and lung diseases, neurological conditions, and kidney failure.

“The constellation of findings shows that the burden of death and disease experienced by people with breakthrough COVID-19 infections is not trivial,” Al-Aly says. Original Study DOI: 10.1038/s41591-022-01840-0.

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, Mike Laborico and Dave Johnson. (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.

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 November 1, 1955 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 2021

June

2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 VVA-535 Board & General Meeting	3	4
5 Pentecost	6	7	8	9	10 Creighton Abrams takes over command from William Westmoreland (1968)	11
12	13	14 Flag Day Army Birthday	15	16 CSC- Visalia	17 CSC- Visalia	18 CSC- Visalia
19 Father's Day	20	21 Summer Begins	22	23	24	25 Chili Cookoff
26	27	28	29	30		

July

2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Penn Valley Gateway Park Community Event
3	4 Independence Day	5	6	7 VVA-535 Board & General Meeting	8	9
10	11 U.S. Resumes Diplomatic Relations with Vietnam (1995)	12	13	14	15	16 Dave Middleton Memorial 1:30 p.m. Veterans Hall
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

August

2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Gulf of Tonkin incident 1964	3	4 VVA 535 Coast Guard Birthday	5	6
7	8 Nixon resigned 1974	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

September

2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 VVA 535	2	3
4	5 Labor Day	6	7	8	9	10
11 Patriot Day	12	13	14	15	16 National POW/KIA Recognition Day	17 Constitution Day
18 Air Force Birthday	19	20	21	22 Autumn Begins	23	24
25 Rosh Hashanah (Begins at sundown)	26	27	28	29	30	