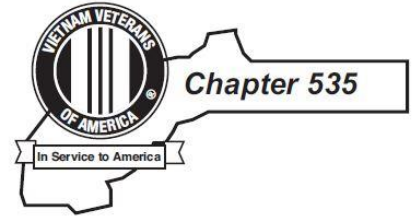




# INCOMING

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA  
**CHAPTER 535**



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

Volume 33 Issue 10

October 2023

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**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA  
CHAPTER 535  
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE  
August 2023**

Hello Everyone,

We had a busy September with our regular meeting on September 7<sup>th</sup>.

We had the opportunity to have as our guest speaker Marilyn Schneider with us to talk about Wreathes Across America and its history of how it began. Thank you, Marilyn, for being with us. We also had our Veteran's Service Officer, David West, who came and updated us on the latest activities in his office and any changes to veteran benefits. Thank you, David.

At remembrance of 9/11 in Downtown Grass Valley all branches of the Military, Fire Fighters, Police and all Veteran Organizations including Viet Nam Veterans of America Chapter 535 were present. Thank you to all organizations that made a solemn ceremony unforgettable.

Several Viet Nam Vets were present in the drive by of the home of World War II veteran Lou Contor's 102<sup>nd</sup> Birthday. Again, Veterans

Organizations were represented as well as many Air Force and Navy active duty Soldiers. I will not be with you for the October 5<sup>th</sup> regular meeting, but our very capable Vice-President, Pete Hidalgo, will be in charge. He has assured that snacks will be plentiful for your enjoyment.

I saw our own Dick Corn, who is a member of the Honor Guard, twice this month---once at a Memorial Service for a Viet Nam Veteran and again at the 9/11 activities in Downtown Grass Valley. Thank you, Dick for that Service, that your Honor Guard provides for our Deceased Veterans.

Ray James  
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.*

**Veterans Crisis Line**

**DIAL 988 then PRESS 1  
Or text 838255**

**(Put these numbers into your phone)  
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 – October 5, 2023  
VVA 535 General Meeting – October 5, 2023  
Nevada County Stand Down – Oct. 13, 14, 2023  
CSC: Oct. 27-29, 2023 - Visalia  
Christmas potluck – December 7, 2023  
December 16, 2023 - Wreaths Across America

### **Chapter 535 Officers**

President Ray James  
rjames1087@sbcglobal.net  
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peterhidalgo45@yahoo.com

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### **Directors**

Doug Becker ..... 530-272-3300  
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Ric Sheridan..... 530-274-1413  
Corbin Smith ..... 916-833-7860  
Enrique Vasquez ..... 530-575-4416  
Mel Williams ..... 707-391-7692

### **Committee Chairs**

Finance ...Ralph Remick & Kent Holley  
Parade and Honor Guard ..... Dick Corn  
Membership Affairs .....Ric Sheridan  
Newsletter ..... Interim Editor Bart Ruud  
Victorian Christmas ...Cancelled for 2022; 2023?  
Nominations ..... Ralph Remick & Dick Corn  
Veterans Assistance ..... Ray James  
NCCVC ..... 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 Services Officer**

David West II  
Nevada County Veterans Service Officer  
988 McCourtney Road  
Grass Valley, CA 95949  
[David.West@co.nevada.ca.us](mailto:David.West@co.nevada.ca.us)

(530) 265-1446 (Office)  
(530) 913-5046 (Cell phone)

"Walk-In" opportunities are available M – F.

### **Placer County Veterans Services Officer**

Richard "Steve" Johnson: 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 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.

### **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.

**Guest Speaker:** Unknown at this juncture.

### **Matters of Interest as outlined at the Meeting of September 7, 2023**

A drive/walk-by parade has been scheduled for September 13, 2025 to acknowledge Lou Contor on the occasion of his 102<sup>nd</sup> birthday. Lou is the last survivor of the USS Arizona which was sunk at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Some 1,177 crewmen on the Arizona lost their lives in the attack.

The Nevada County All Veterans Stand Down is scheduled for October 13 & 14 at the Nevada County Fairgrounds.

Any Veteran rated at 100% disability should ensure that his spouse is enrolled with the VA to assure that survivor benefits will be available should the Veteran pass away. Peruse this: <https://www.va.gov/initiatives/end-of-life-benefits/>

Marilyn Schneider of Wreaths Across America shared information about the WAA program. The 2023 WAA event is scheduled for December 16, 2023.

"Second Courage" presentations continue to be sought.

HARVEY PRATT

### **The Vietnam War Veteran Who Created the National Native American Veterans Memorial**

By Marc Leepson, The Vietnam Veteran. July/August 2023



Harvey Pratt had a vision.

A renowned artist, sculptor, and Vietnam War veteran, Pratt had learned in 2017 that the National Museum of the American Indian was accepting submissions for a National Native American Veterans Memorial to be built outside the museum on the Mall in Washington, D.C.

When a friend and fellow Cheyenne Arapaho tribal member suggested he submit a design, Pratt's first thought was not to bother, thinking that one probably had been chosen, and, if not, his would get lost among thousands of submissions.

But his friend insisted he submit something "for the tribe, for the people," Pratt said, "And I said, 'Let me dream about it.'"

His grandfather, who helped raise him, told the children, "We're dreamers. We dream stuff and something comes to you. Visions come to you in dreams, so dream about stuff," Pratt said during

his *VVA Veteran Dispatches* interview that went live on [vaveteran.org](http://vaveteran.org) on May 29.

The vision came that night — a tall, stainless-steel circle balanced on a carved stone drum. With the circle representing, as Pratt put it, “the hole in the sky where the Creator lives.”

After he awoke, Pratt immediately made “a couple of little sketches.” When he showed them to his wife, Gina, she said, “That looks pretty good, you need to develop that.”

Which he did, creating a more detailed sketch, which — at the suggestion of his son Nathan, also an artist — he then had animated. Soon thereafter Pratt submitted the drawing and animation electronically of his “Warriors’ Circle of Honor” memorial, hitting “send” a half hour before the deadline.

“There were 524 submissions from people from all over the world,” he said. “They narrowed it down to 120, and then the final five. We went to Washington and made final presentations before the committees.”

Then Harvey Pratt — who will receive the Excellence in the Arts Award at the 2023 National Convention in Orlando — got the call that would change his life. “They said, ‘Harvey, we have some good news and some bad news. What do you want first?’ I said, ‘Give me the good news.’ He said, ‘The good news is you won and the bad news is, now you gotta do it.’”

“Do it,” meaning (among many other things) helping develop architectural designs, choosing the type of stone and metal for the memorial, how exactly to incorporate the key themes, “the water, the fire, the earth and the air,” into the memorial, and how to manage “the water coming out what I called the drum.”



### **THE FINAL LOCATION**

When the day came for determining the exact location for the memorial at the northeast corner of the museum’s grounds, Pratt and a large team of architects, consultants, curators, and museum officials walked the area, still unsure of the perfect spot. As they did so, “a big Red-tailed Hawk came sailing in out of the southwest and landed right there on that area where we were going to choose,” Pratt said.

“He hopped all around, then flew up into a tree above the Path of Life [walkway leading to the memorial] and he stayed there. There’s forty of us walking around, and he just stayed there watching us.

“Everybody said, ‘That’s a great omen.’ And I said, ‘That’s my grandfather.’ My grandfather’s Indian name was Redtail Hawk. He came to see what we were doing and to bless what we were doing. We always ask our ancestors to be with us and to remind us of what we’re doing and that we’re doing things in the right way. And I said, ‘He came to be with us.’”

After the group left that fateful day, Pratt said, “the hawk would show up periodically, and he would sit on the trees and on the building. And then another hawk came with him, and I said, ‘That’s my brother’ because he took his grandpa’s Indian name. Their spirits are here to watch us. And they say they show up all the time, and they sit in the tree and on the building. Sometimes even on the steel circle.”





### **DANANG, 1963-64**

Harvey Pratt, 82, left college and joined the U.S. Marine Corps in 1962. He volunteered for guerrilla warfare training and was shipped to South Vietnam in the early stages of U.S. involvement. He served with the 3rd Marine Division in Military Police at the Da Nang Air Base.

“For the first nine months, I filled thousands and thousands of sandbags, and we also guarded the base and the airfield,” he said. He also took part in operations outside the wire. On those missions, he said, “90 percent of the time I didn’t know where I was. They would just put us in a helicopter and fly us off.”

The war in Da Nang during the 1963-64 tour was “coming on,” he said. “Initially, there were no threats to the base, then more actions around the base, probings and stuff. We captured a sapper who got onto the airfield one time. He was getting in one of the helicopters, and we found some explosives around the perimeter.

“They stored a lot of Agent Orange and fuel” on the enormous base. “Almost everyone in my unit came home with cancer.”

After his Marine Corps service, in 1965, Pratt began a long, distinguished career in law enforcement, starting with the Midwest City, Oklahoma, Police Department. He joined the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation in 1972 as a narcotics investigator and forensic artist,

and retired in 1992 as an Assistant Director, specializing in witness description drawing, skull reconstruction and tracing, and age progression.

His own artistic work includes themes of Native American history and traditions and the Cheyenne people, and he is recognized by the Cheyenne as a traditional Peace Chief — the Cheyenne Nation’s highest honor. He was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame in 2021 and the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame in 2019.

As for his stunning National Native American Veterans Memorial, Harvey Pratt says: “We invite all veterans to come and be blessed and to tie a prayer cloth. People come to pray, burn things, feed the spirits, tie prayer cloths, and to sing and dance. Hawaiians come and place leis. It’s really a moving experience to see.”

### **Electrifying the Navy’s Next Generation of Carriers, Destroyers and Frigates**

#### **Reducing the Navy’s Reliance on Fossil Fuels With Naval Platform Electrification**

There are several factors that are affecting the Navy’s drive towards platform electrification. One main reason is the need for more electric power for payloads, sensors, and weapons. For example, the Navy is pursuing directed energy weapons, mainly lasers, that require significant power that only an all-electric fleet can provide.

Cruise ships went to integrated electric propulsion decades ago, driven by cost of equipment and fuel. A cruise ship’s hotel electrical consumption can be as much as one-third of the propulsion power. In a conventional system, the propulsion power is separate from the electrical power. In an integrated system, the propulsion and electrical power share the same combined system. This reduces the number of engines and improves fuel consumption.

With increased power needs for electric payloads, sensors and weapons, the Navy is in the same place cruise ships were decades ago. If you're wondering what this might look like aboard a Navy carrier or destroyer,

Leonardo DRS builds purpose-built solutions; custom designed to fit and adhere to the specific needs of the forward-deployed ship. For over 100 years, we've designed and manufactured electrical equipment on every USN combatant.

Today we continue to design and manufacture high performance permanent magnet (PM) motors, rugged, military specification power converters, and motor drives to provide the power control of the PM motors, military specification switchgear and we also provide the controls to make all this, and other, equipment, work harmoniously. Simply put, we support the entire electric and propulsion lifecycle aboard our Nation's fleet.

The Navy and shipbuilders understand that it's difficult to retrofit existing full electric drive into ships because it affects too much equipment in an existing space. However, hybrid electric drive can be retrofit.

The challenge there is simply space. Permanent magnet motors make this much more practical because they are much smaller and can be fit onto the shaft or the gears. The Navy developed and tested prototypes for a hybrid electric drive system for backfit onto the DDG51 class destroyers.

There are also forward fit opportunities for hybrid drive into existing ship designs that are still in production, but inserted during the ship construction, versus after the ship is built. This is much easier than back fit; however, there are still space limitations from given engine room designs.

As the Navy looks to build more ships, there are no technology barriers to adopting electric

drive. Electric drive is ready and proven, as evidenced by use among commercial marine organizations.

Despite electric drive becoming common in the private sector, The Navy needs rugged, power dense solutions, not commercial equipment. The Navy should not abandon the Navy Industrial base in favor of commercial suppliers. Commercial suppliers are inexpensive, fickle, and inexperienced in Navy requirements. Not to mention, they're quick to lose interest in developments which don't support a larger customer base. The Navy Industrial Base must develop the means and approaches to adapt commercial technology to Navy requirements. At Leonardo DRS we are committed to collaboration with our Navy partners to maximized leverage of ever-improving commercial technology.

Navy suppliers, like Leonardo DRS, are committed and loyal to the Navy. We understand what it takes to deliver on the mission. And what we deliver is reliable, proven, and cost-efficient solutions that are available today.

See: <https://youtu.be/bCBz1Z3WjPs>

### **How the US Army made the world's toughest sandwich**

By Sarah Sicard. Army Times  
Sept. 11, 2023



A U.S. Army specialist tries a falafel sandwich for the first time. (Staff Sgt. James Selesnick/Army)

There is an old wives' tale that suggests cockroaches would be the only creatures to survive nuclear winter. That will not be the case, however, if the U.S. Army has anything to say about indestructible innovation.

For nearly two decades now, the service has crafted the shelf stable sandwich in flavors such as barbecue chicken, barbecue beef, nacho cheese, bacon cheddar, and Italian pocket. And while that last one sounds like something sewn into a silk robe worn by Robert De Niro, it's actually more like a pepperoni and sausage hot pocket — and is *hopefully* a little less crunchy than those pesky insects.

The demand for these seemingly indestructible heroes for heroes, which are currently included in the First Strike Ration, arose out of a need for more on-the-go eats. And though a number of Meals-Ready-to-Eat menu items could be used to construct a sandwich, that would take time ... and some serious ratf\*\*\*ing.

Instead, the U.S. Army Natick Soldier Systems Center in Massachusetts invested in a dehydration process involving humectants, which eliminate the potential for the dreaded scourge of soggy bread. After the sandwiches are made, they're then stored in foil tri-laminated pouches that absorb oxygen and prevent the food from breeding bacteria.

For those curious non-military folks and doomsday preppers, the good news is that these tasty morsels are available at places like Walmart and Bass Pro Shops, according to the Army.

Whatever your background, these make the perfect snack for nuclear winter — as long as you aren't planning to live more than three years after the apocalypse. The shelf stable sandwich — unfortunately — does have a shelf life.

## North Korean weapons likely won't help Russia's war on Ukraine—Milley

By Lolita C. Baldor, The Associated Press  
Sept. 16, 2023



Russian Malka artillery systems fire from an undisclosed location in Ukraine, Aug. 25, 2022. (Russian Defense Ministry Press Service via AP)

OSLO, Norway (AP) — North Korea may be able to boost Russia's supply of artillery munitions for the war in Ukraine, but that is not likely to make a big difference, the top American military officer said as he arrived in Norway for NATO meetings that began Saturday and will focus in part on the conflict.

U.S. Army Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the recent meeting in Russia between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin will probably lead North Korea to provide Soviet-era 152 mm artillery rounds to Moscow. But he said it was not yet clear how many or how soon.

"Would it have a huge difference? I'm skeptical of that," Milley told reporters traveling with him. He said that while he does not want to play down the weapons assistance too much, "I doubt that it would be decisive."

Foreign governments and experts have speculated that Kim will likely supply ammunition to Russia in exchange for receiving advanced weapons or technology from Russia.

Milley and the other defense chiefs from NATO countries are meeting at the Holmenkollen ski

area on the edge of Oslo over the next several days to discuss support for Ukraine and other regional defense issues. From there, Milley will attend the monthly meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group in Germany on Tuesday. That group, led by U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, is the main international forum for drumming up military support for Ukraine.

The NATO meetings come as Ukraine forces are making slow progress breaking through Russian battle lines in a counteroffensive that has not moved as quickly or as well as initially hoped. Kyiv's leaders are lobbying for a new round of advanced weapons, including longer range missiles.

Adm. Rob Bauer of the Netherlands, the chair of the NATO Military Committee, said Saturday at the meetings that history will show "Ukraine has transformed modern warfare and they are moving forward every day. Every success is one step closer to victory." He said Russian forces "keep losing more and more ground, and the whole of Russia is suffering under the impact of economic sanctions and diplomatic isolation."

Milley said there is a continued need for more weapons and equipment in Ukraine and that allies and partners will be discussing how to address that. He said he believes there continues to be broad, bipartisan support in the United States and the U.S. Congress for the aid.

But American lawmakers are increasingly divided over providing additional assistance for Ukraine as the war is well into its second year. President Joe Biden has proposed a package of \$13.1 billion more in military aid and \$8.5 billion for humanitarian support. Conservative Republicans are pushing for broad federal spending cuts and some of those allied with former President Donald Trump are specifically looking to stop money to Ukraine.

The issue will be a prime topic in Washington in the coming week when Ukrainian President

Volodymyr Zelenskyy visits the White House and Capitol Hill during his stop in the United States to attend the U.N. General Assembly.

In Norway, the NATO chiefs of defense will follow up their meeting Saturday with a smaller gathering Sunday of about a dozen Western and Indo-Pacific military leaders that Milley said will focus on lessons learned in the Ukraine war and how they can be applied to the Pacific.

The U.S. considers China its key national security challenge and tensions between the two nations have grown as Beijing continues an aggressive military expansion in the region. Over the past year, China has stepped up military activities around Taiwan, sending warships and warplanes on a near-daily basis.

China claims the self-ruled island as its own, and there are ongoing worries that Beijing is preparing to use force to try and take control of Taiwan. Global leaders have warned that failure to stop Russia's invasion of Ukraine could encourage other countries to try similar takeovers and upend the rules-based international order in place since the end of World War II.

Milley said the group will include defense chiefs from Britain, Norway, Netherlands, Italy, Germany, France, Denmark, Canada, Belgium, Australia, New Zealand and Japan.

## **HOW DEATH OUTLIVES WAR: THE REVERBERATING IMPACT OF THE POST-9/11 WARS ON HUMAN HEALTH**





Summary: The total death toll in the post-9/11 war zones of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen could be at least 4.5-4.7 million and counting, though the precise mortality figure remains unknown. Some of these people were killed in the fighting, but far more, especially children, have been killed by the reverberating effects of war, such as the spread of disease. These latter indirect deaths – estimated at 3.6-3.8 million – and related health problems have resulted from the post-9/11 wars’ destruction of economies, public services, and the environment. Indirect deaths grow in scale over time. Though in 2021 the United States withdrew military forces from Afghanistan, officially ending a war that began with its invasion 20 years prior, today Afghans are suffering and dying from war-related causes at higher rates than ever. This report examines the devastating toll of war on human health, whoever the combatant, whatever the compounding factor, in the most violent conflicts in which the U.S. government has been engaged in the name of counterterrorism since September 11, 2001, including in the above countries as well as Libya and Somalia. The report does not focus on attributing responsibility to particular warring parties over others, or to disentangling various intensifying factors, such as the actions of authoritarian governments, related political upheavals, global economic sanctions, climate change, environmental disasters, or the accumulating devastations of previous wars. Rather than teasing apart who, what, or when is to blame, this report will show that the post-9/11 wars are implicated in many kinds of deaths. In a

place like Afghanistan, the pressing question is whether any death can today be considered unrelated to war.<sup>2</sup> Ultimately, the impacts of the ongoing violence are so vast and complex that they are unquantifiable. In laying out how the post-9/11 wars have led to illness and indirect deaths, the report’s goal is to build greater awareness of the fuller human costs of these wars and support calls for the United States and other governments to alleviate the ongoing losses and suffering of millions in current and former war zones. The report highlights many long-term and underacknowledged consequences of war for human health, emphasizing that some groups, particularly women and children, suffer the brunt of these ongoing impacts.

To read the entire article, see:

[https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/papers/2023/IndirectDeaths?utm\\_source=sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=hnt-hnn-theme](https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/papers/2023/IndirectDeaths?utm_source=sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=hnt-hnn-theme)

The author, Stephanie Savell, is co-director of the Costs of War project and Senior Researcher at Brown University’s Watson Institute for International & Public Affairs.

### **Ukraine is ushering in a new uncrewed era at sea**

By Nick Childs. Defense News  
September 11, 2023



A seaborne drone approaches a Russian tanker on the Black Sea. (The Associated Press)

Ukraine has grabbed international attention with its asymmetric attacks using explosive-laden “sea drones” against Russian shipping and facilities in the Black Sea. They have no doubt embarrassed Moscow’s political and military leadership and added to a sense of Kyiv confounding the odds in the face of Russia’s aggression.

They have also been something of a wake-up call for many navies. The maritime domain has seemed for some time to be on the cusp of a new era embracing uncrewed surface and sub-surface platforms and systems, and these technologies look to be reaching a break-out point. These are among the factors behind the decision by the IISS to incorporate such capabilities into its military databases for the first time.

Ukraine has shown the way in quickly assembling some relatively modest technologies and fashioning them into an effective weapon system at moderate cost. Their overall success rate may be debated. They have had some luck in finding some poorly defended targets. The Houthi rebels in Yemen had already shown the way in using remotely operated explosive boats in the Red Sea, albeit not on the scale as the Ukrainians.

Ukraine’s use of these weapons against Russian ships in their bases has certainly alerted navies generally to refocus on some basic lessons of port security. In a way, these attacks have been the modern equivalent of the fire ships from the days of sail. But there are other lessons to be learned.

Several major navies have been grappling with how to deal with swarm attacks by fast boats, again with the Middle East experience in mind. Ukraine’s remote boats may add some further challenges, like very small radar and electro-optical signatures. Some of the counters to them may in the end be straightforward. They will include remote surface vessels themselves,

equipped with appropriate monitoring and surveillance equipment and/or rapid-fire close-in weapons.

Such systems, both offensive and defensive, exist today and are increasingly in the portfolios of defense companies and on display at equipment exhibitions around the world. Interest in them will surely only increase.

But there is also a much broader transformation underway involving uncrewed, semi-autonomous and autonomous systems at sea. The problem has been that the transformation has been quite slow.

For some time, major fleets have been looking to uncrewed solutions to deliver effect in every scenario from the lethality of modern high-end warfighting to the requirement for persistent presence and domain awareness at the lower end of the maritime security scale.

It includes everything from basic surveillance and military data gathering to providing remote, distributed weapons platforms, on and below the sea surface. It could involve providing sustainable barrier defenses against submarines, because high-end crewed platforms are in too short supply and possibly transforming undersea warfare generally.

While Ukraine has been agile and rapid in coming up with a working solution, the process – not least in the case of the U.S. Navy – has seemed slow and painful. In part, that is down to the need to convince skeptics in places like the U.S. Congress. There are genuine design and doctrine challenges. The technology continues to evolve.

But a further contributory factor has seemingly been endless experimentation and indecision.

Among the first operational tasks identified for such systems was mine countermeasures (MCM). But navies are only now beginning to

come to grips with the use of such systems. The Royal Navy has only just procured a “mother ship” from the commercial sector to test the deployability of an autonomous MCM capability.

The new theater of seabed warfare may also be an attractive application of the technology. The Nord Stream pipeline attacks were another wake-up call, underscoring the deficit in Western capabilities to monitor and protect critical undersea infrastructure.

The UK again is seeking to press an adapted commercial vessel rapidly into service as a first “multi-role ocean surveillance ship” hosting various sub-sea systems. But what exactly the critical capabilities should be, whether military or commercial, and to what extent this should be a naval mission, remain open questions.

Perhaps to make up for lost time, the U.S. Navy has been attempting to socialize the potential of various remote systems from experimental formations in real-world situations. The trailblazer has been Task Force 59 with Central Command in and around the Gulf and the Red Sea, using relatively small and simple platforms networked together to help improve maritime domain awareness and support maritime security operations.

However, experience so far suggests there is still some way to go in terms of reassuring allies and partners in the region. Deterring the opposition, in the shape of Iran, and proving that such systems can make up for fewer, more traditional crewed platforms also remains to be accomplished.

Clearly the right balance of trade-offs still needs to be struck between capability, affordability, and expendability, and how the different systems envisaged will need to be operated. Providing defensive capabilities to the platforms, even optionally crewing them in certain circumstances, may be answers, but they will add to cost and complexity. In some cases,

in exposed operations even in grey zone scenarios, such systems will be lost.

U.S. Navy leaders insist these lessons are being learned. They need to be as a matter of urgency – not just in the United States - and some bets need to be placed to turn long-assumed potential into reality. In that sense, events in the Black Sea have sounded the alarm that both the opportunities and challenges of this technology are coming into focus now.

*Nick Childs is a senior fellow specializing on naval forces and maritime security at the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies.*

### **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](mailto:bruud45@gmail.com) or hand deliver to Bart.

### **VVA 535 Member Biographies**

**Do you know \_\_\_\_\_**

*Now, our readership and Brotherhood knows  
\_\_\_\_\_ better than we might ever  
have known this man, this leader.*

*Who will be next to share?*



**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

# SEPTEMBER

# 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4 Labor Day	5	6	7 NCCVC VVA-535 Board & General Meeting	8	9
10 Grandparents Day	11 Patriot Day	12	13	14	15 POW/MIA Recognition Day  Rosh Hashanah Begins (sundown)	16
17 Constitution Day	18 Air Force Birthday	19	20	21	22	23 First Day of Autumn
24 Gold star Mother's Day  Yom Kippur Begins (sundown)	25	26	27	28	29	30

# October

# 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5 NCCVC VVA-535 Board & General Meeting	6	7
8	9 Columbus Day (Observed)	10	11	12	13 Navy Birthday Nevada County Stand Down	14 Nevada County Stand Down
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 CSC Visalia	28 CSC Visalia
29 CSC Visalia	30	31 Halloween				

# November

# 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 VVA-535 Board & General Meeting	3	4
5 Daylight Saving Time Ends	6	7 Election Day	8	9	10 Marine Corps Birthday	11 Veterans Day
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 Thanksgiving Day	25	26
27	28	29	30			



# December

# 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7 VVA-535 Board & General Meeting & <b>holiday potluck.</b>  Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.  Hanukkah Begins	8	9
10	11	12	13 National Guard Birthday	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 First Day of Winter	22	23
24	25 Christmas Day	26 Kwanzaa Begins	27	28	29	30
31 New Year's Eve						