Afghanistan: Another Rich Man’s War Ends

BILL BRANNON AND JOE MILLER

Vietnam Veterans Against the War

Construction on the VVAW/Phu Vinh Middle School Library in Dau Pho, Quang Ngai is fast approaching completion. It is expected to be ready for occupancy in the next few weeks. We are happy to see the progress of this library and hope that the monsoon interruptions will remain minimal.

The ground-breaking for the two-story library being built is next to the current middle school and will serve its needs. VVAW’s funding also includes money for some books, a computer, and a printer. After completion, the Ministry of Culture will donate more to the library on an annual basis. VVAW has also expressed interest in funding a full computer lab here, as they did at the high school in Mr. Lai in 2018.

The site is 30 minutes south of My Lai. Mr. Duong, the Librarian who oversaw the preparation and project, and hope the monsoon interruptions will remain minimal.

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The Veteran Staff
Jeff Machota
Bill Branson
Joe Miller

Thanks to Jeff Danziger and Billy Curmano for their cartoons. Thanks to John Crandell, Elise Lemire, Nadya Williams, Phil Hostetter, Joe Hirsch, and others for contributing photos.

Thanks to those who have put VVAW in their wills. These gifts have helped VVAW keep on keeping on and have contributed to the building of the library in Vietnam we are sponsoring. If you would like to put VVAW in your will and don’t know how, contact the National Office at vvaw@vvaw.org. VVAW is a tax exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

PTSD
What is the sound of a scream
From deep inside your head
And how can you dream
When all your dreams have been bled
How do you escape from the dead
How do you avoid
The impending dread
And from here where do I go
Is there a fountain I can drink from
That will heal my tattered soul
And in the night
When I am alone
May I come home now
Would it be possible for me
To ever come home Again

—Lawrence Christie

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  White (M, L, XL, XXL) - $18.00
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• VVAW Embroidered Patch - $6.00
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• Shipping for above items
  $6.00 for first item, $2.00 for each item after
  $2.00 for first item

Total Enclosed

Fall 2021

Annie Bailey and Dennis Krull leading the march at Operation Dewey Canyon IV, Washington, D.C. May 12, 1982.
Vietnam and greeted the soldiers from the North as liberators. "Vietnam has long been wielded as a catch-all term for US foreign-policy failures, yet the gift comparisons in this instance not only distort the past but also distract from the present suffering of African civilians and the imminent danger they face. It is risks alienating the Vietnamese government. There is no moral equivalence between North Vietnamese forces and the Taliban." "If we are making comparisons between 1975 and today, one might ask what it actually means for a superpower to lose a war—and who pays the price. The United States lost more than 2,400 lives in Afghanistan and around 35,000 lives in Vietnam. Alongside that were nearly a quarter of a million Afghans and somewhere between 1.5 and 3.5 million Vietnamese. The United States left both wars still the richest and most powerful country in the world, the Vietnamese inherited a shattered country, and somewhere in between the 1.5 and 3.3 million Vietnamese. The United States left both wars still the richest and most powerful country in the world, the Vietnamese inherited a shattered state and even today earn a fraction of US income." —Chris Humphrey, ForeignPolicy.com, September 1, 2021 Since 1967, VVAW has been engaged in the struggle. We have learned many lessons in that time. We have spent time observing how the Military Industrial Complex and the military operate. Vietnam was a wake-up call for us and most of us have stayed awake. When we came back from the war, we were too bruised and challenged by a vibrant anti-war movement and culture. This led us to action. The draft increased the politicization of those conscripted and led to a revolt in the military by active-duty GIs. They helped sabotage the war-making machinery and helped to bring the folly to an end. By 2004, vets coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan formed Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW). Unfortunately, there was no widespread, significant peace movement, before, during or, after, the invasion of Afghanistan. Very few were there to explain to the returning GIs who the real enemy was. There was no rebellion in the military. There was no draft. There was largely indifference. To modern warmakers, indifference is as good as fervent support. Where do we go from here? This withdrawal should be a start, not an end. Congress just awarded the disagreased US Military over $20 billion in additional funding! There are no conceivable reasons for having over 700, largely clandestine bases around the world. Are the enormous Navy fleets actually required to defend US shores? Of what use do the US taxpayers are the defective F-35, the ancient B-52 bombers, etc.? The trillions of dollars going to fatten the pockets of the 1% do not benefit the students attending dilapidated schools, they don’t repair the ancient and decaying infrastructure on our highways, nor do they protect the citizens from the massive hurricanes, floods, and fires. The $64 million pittance offered to Afghanistan for the Forever War is an example of the bestial indifference the rich war-makers have for their victims. Where are the reparations for Agent Orange, the mining, slaughter, and mass destruction in Vietnam? In the pockets of the 1%, that’s where. Instead of enriching CEOs and trillion dollar corporations, we need our tax money to mitigate Global Warming and fight the COVID-19 plague around the planet. We are sold a bullshit story about doing good in the world, while our real legacy is destruction, death, poverty, disease, and chaos. We must expose the true costs of war and make the rich responsible for the injured in those wars. We’ve been saying this for decades. We also need to abolish bad discharges. The VA must be made available to all veterans injured while in the service, whether the wounds are physical or mental. We must demand accountability from those who benefit from the wars the most—the war-mongering “professional” generals and their bosses in the Military Industrial Complex. The press must have free access to cover future wars and not rely on the spin gurus as commentators. We must remove the “emergency” war powers of the president and the ability to deploy the National Guard in imperial wars. The decision to wage war must be restored to Con. gress. The public must be educated as to the real impact (and cost) of war. Removing “embedded” reporters and military censorship of the press might actually restore some public attention to these ongoing fiascos. We know there is a lot to digest, but we have learned that real organizing is the only way to answer these questions and achieve our goals. We have been there and done that and pledged not to be fooled again. Our mission remains relevant and we hope our experiences can help stop future misguided wars. We believe that service to our country and communities did not end when we were discharged. We remain committed to the struggle for peace and social and economic justice for all people. We will continue to oppose senseless military adventures and to teach the real lessons of the Vietnam War. We will do all we can to prevent another generation from being put through a similar tragedy and we will continue to demand dignity and respect for veterans of all eras. This is real patriotism and we remain true to our mission.
Some thoughts about the Afghan War and the Taliban takeover

Concerning the 2,500 dead American military personnel, Concerning the very seriously wounded. Concerning those who were wounded until they came home with traumatic brain injury or other ghasts of PTSD. These things are what some commentators use to put across their agenda. It was to be a war fought noble to justify respect. And worse. It was a war fought to be just or unjust our civilian responsibility or evoke empathy or something complex. I had no idea what hell is, but maybe this is what we need to say to describe the images of war. War is hell, and part of that hell is what happens to civilians who chose the wrong side or who lived in the wrong place. It also raised the question of whether the wars of America were really fighting for American people or whatever you want to call it that. It was a war fought for the American people or whatever you want to call it that.

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Surprise, surprise! Fox News and the Republican Party are blaming President Joe Biden for the chaotic US withdrawal from Afghanistan and the continuing mayhem and confusion at Kabul Airport in the final days. House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy—born in 1956—calls the withdrawal “a complete failure of leadership” in my lifetime” (Saigon fell in 1975. Well, I’m just sayin’). Senators Josh Hawley and Marsha Blackburn are demanding that Uncle Joe resign. Endlessly mindlessly Talking Head Tucker Carlson called Biden “the Endlessly mindlessly Talking Head” for many, it was a shock to watch the US leave and let the Taliban take over. This makes it seem worse than it was. The US army leaves and the Taliban take over. This makes it seem worse than it was. The US army leaves and the Taliban take over.

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On Sunday, August 13th of this year, the Taliban took Kabul and won the war in Afghanistan. The war with the United States and a few allied countries that started with the September 11 attacks, has now been called the longest war in American history. I believe that our military commanders deceived the American people about the war in Afghanistan. Approximately 2,461 American soldiers died, along with an estimated 3,846 “contracted military officers. Far too many of them are appearing on the network and cable news programs, resplendent in their uniforms with all the many multi-colored ribbons from waist to clavicle. Does anyone really believe there have been that many wars in one man’s lifetime? Even America, the most warlike nation on today’s globe, has not gotten involved in that many conflicts. It seems that the principal of the generals is apolitical! With 2,461 Americans killed, ten of thousands wounded or traumatized, and Afghan casualties in the hundreds of thousands, these greedy monsters dare to suggest that Biden has pulled us out too soon. Without batting an eye, they said it might have taken twenty more years before Democracy would flower in the arid deserts of Afghanistan. Really, General? And how much more military and economic aid are you accruing in another twenty years? Back on September 10, 2001, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Vice President Dick Cheney told a press conference that “according to some estimates we will not track $2.3 trillion in transactions” by the Department of Defense. America’s avant-garde Rumsfeldian war, was not China or Russia. “It’s closer to home: It’s the Pentagon bureaucracy.” The Pentagon’s announcements have attracted more attention in the press had not the next day’s attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon happened. “The Pentagon has never been audited, but cursory investigations have found that more than $21 trillion (approximately equal to our pre-national debt) are inexplicably missing, mostly due to ‘unadjusted spending.’” The first- ever Pentagon audit failed to find a single dollar of waste, fraud or abuse, even though the evidence is clear that a realistic audit was simply impossible. “A Forbes magazine investigation found ‘stone walling, audit concealment’ and unsupported and unexplained adjustments totaling 54 times the Pentagon’s publicized ‘error rate’ for 2015. That year, the Pentagon, as usual, was unable to account for at least $794.8 billion to the army’s account, an amount greater than the Pentagon’s entire military appropriation for the previous year. At the same time, army records showed accounts payable, or bills due, amounting to $929.3 billion. A July 2016 report by the Department of Defense’s own inspector general found that the Pentagon’s Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) based in Indianapolis could not account for $6.5 trillion in 2015. Perhaps it was a mistake to undertake a “War on Terror” when what was really needed was a “war on the errors” in the halls of the Pentagon’s own Finance and Accounting Service. A few years ago, when West Point announced it was discontinuing its ethics course, I reacted with rage. The truth is, we’ve been Czeched out of the course by the time they are teaching now. Tim Timbuk, in his recent book The Cost of Loyalty, claims that the environment at West Point as if fired with fabricated admissions, data (favoring sports stars), rampant cheating, epidemics of sexual assault, archaic curriculums, and shady teaching. The “good of boy” reputation of West Point or exclusive elite pervaded by chronic deceit, Timbuk writes, and its insular reality, and the military leaders are not the only ones to blame. Throughout the military, and especially among graduates of our military academies, politicians and crooks are never held accountable. In their self-congratulatory work series, the Stanley Cup, or an Olympic gold medal. It is a terribly sad commentary on our military academies that our military is the most admired in the world. Our military leaders are not a group that one would call “the world’s best.” The American military is a group that one would call “the world’s worst.” Our military leaders rob the American people to pay for our military. 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to this campaign, allowing vets who want to participate. The MISSION Act was a Congressional response to the scheduling scandal at a VA hospital. The MISSION Act includes a Community Care Program (VCCP) which provides healthcare to veterans, but it is not the only option for veterans.

It is important to point out that all the medical professionals working for the VA are salaried. They do not have large office staff preparing insurance claims or attempting to get an insurance company’s pre-approval for a needed medical procedure. While a for-profit general practitioner is expected to spend less than ten minutes with a customer, VA physicians are under no such restrictions. Independent researchers have found that the care provided by the VA is usually superior to that provided by the private sector. The VA is also far less expensive. These office workers see the amount of money coursing through a for-profit medical facility, and they want their share.

Unfortunately, the situation regarding the privatization of the VA has recently become more complicated and more political. Keep in mind, any decisions will be made in Washington, not in the halls of the House and Senate. They respond to lobbyists, and their threats to veterans’ health and well-being that might result.

In a 2017 survey of thousands of VA patients, 72 percent either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that they trusted the VA to fulfill America’s commitment to veterans. Also in 2017, a Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) survey showed, in the words of their National Commander, “The overwhelming majority of respondents said they want to fix, not dismantle, the VA health care system.”

The primary lobbying and information-sharing organization working to fix, fund, and staff the VA is the Veterans Healthcare Policy Institute (VHPI). You can visit VHPI’s website at www.veteranspolicy.org. If you are a veteran or know a veteran, this situation is extremely threatening to his or her future health care. Become familiar with what’s going on, and let your Congressperson or Senator know how you feel about it. Ask them to oppose the Guaranteeing Healthcare Access to Personnel Who Served Act (GHAPS ACT, Senate Bill 1863 and House Bill 4624). The VA is far from perfect, but it can and should be fixed. That will require full funding, full staffing, and less interference from organizations that seek to sabotage its operations.

TheLatest on SOVA – Save Our VA From Privatization

THE VETERAN Fall 2021

THE VETERAN

These Old Bones

These Old Bones
Stuck in the mud
These Old Bones
Don’t believe these eyes
These Old Bones
Passed the test
These Old Bones
Don’t believe no more

—Norwin Haltom

"These Old Bones" by Norwin Haltom

THE BEST DEMOCRACY MONEY CAN BUY, and that about sums up the state of American government today. Well, a new lobbying organization has come to Washington, and it is flush with conservative cash. The Veterans 4 America First (V4AF) is actively lobbying for passage of the Guaranteeing Healthcare Access to Personnel Who Served Act (GHAPS ACT, Senate Bill 1863 and House Bill 4624) which contains several provisions that would send more veterans to the private sector. The chief spokesman for V4AF is Darin Selnick, a former member of the Trump administration and a zealot when it comes to the privatization of veterans’ care. Selnick was previously a spokesman for CVA, but that organization wasn’t sustainable or successful enough, so he has helped launch V4AF. Selnick’s tactics are questionably legal. Like his former boss, he has utter disregard for the truth. His blog claims that veterans can’t get timely appointments in the private sector because the VA is dragging its feet making appointments through the network of providers working under the VCCP (Veterans Community Care Program) which has been set up and administered by private insurance companies. This is not true. VCCP operations.

Mr. Selnick is working feverishly to advance the outsourcing of VA care. Many misleading memos that tend to misstate both the letter and the meaning of a variety of laws. Propped up by a hefty budget and access to the halls of power, Selnick’s tactics are questionably legal. Like his former boss, he has utter disregard for the truth. His blog claims that veterans can’t get timely appointments in the private sector because the VA is dragging its feet making appointments through the network of providers working under the VCCP (Veterans Community Care Program) which has been set up and administered by private insurance companies. This is not true. VCCP operations.

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I could write about the great care I get from the VA from eyes to ears to appendix from dermatology, from tikTok to explosives, from the Agent Orange Registry to the Agent Orange Registry, from Nashville to Seattle, but that is just one of many. This is long but sharp. It is a reprint of an article by Suzanne Gordon and Russell Lemle, published last March in the American Prospect. About the advantage we get from getting our health care from the VA and why it is so important that we get to the way continued and relentless efforts to privatize. This article first appeared in the American Prospect, March 25, 2021.

More than a decade’s worth of scientific studies have established that the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) delivers care that is not only equal, but often superior, to that available in the private sector. Although studies have consistently documented that veterans with cancer, hypertension, diabetes, renal failure, and mental-health problems get better care from the VA than non-veterans with private insurance or Medicare, this data trail was missing one piece of evidence. There was no apples-to-apples study that compared the outcomes of veterans getting care from the VA with care veterans receive in the private sector.

Now, we have the crucial evidence that should settle the debate about VA privatization once and for all. This, along with many other studies, should also become part of the arsenal about V A privatization once and for all. This isn’t just a political talking point; it’s an ethical imperative. If “VA advantage” is coordinated care saves lives, improves health outcomes, and saves money, the same type of care should be available to all of us.

The Importance of the “VA Advantage”

Suzanne Gordon and Russell Lemle with intro by Jim Wohlgemuth

The VA’s results that they coined the term “the VA advantage” is described. To uncover this “VA advantage,” the economists analyzed seven-day, 30-day, and one-year outcomes of 400,000 emergency ambulance rides of veterans aged 65 and older who were “dually eligible,” able to receive care at either a VA or non-VA hospital. Ambulance drivers independently picked whether to transport to a VA or non-VA. This quasi-random assignment of patients allowed a direct comparison of the effects of VA versus non-VA care on health outcomes.

The results in the VA and private sector could not have been more different. Veterans who were treated inside the system for an emergency had a 46 percent reduction in 28-day mortality. Wondering whether these results might fade over time, the researchers tracked the death rates every week after the initial ambulance ride. They found that the survival advantage remained stable for the entire year. This “VA advantage” was, importantly, as large for Black and Hispanic veterans as for non-Black, non-Hispanic ones—a pivotal finding that should inform the debate about the pronounced and long-standing health-care inequities that are rampant in the private-sector system.

What was even more impressive was the fact that the VA spends less than private-sector providers in producing such markedly better outcomes. The VA cuts per-patient cumulative spending at 28 days by $2,548, approximately 21 percent less than private-sector providers. In fact, it’s hard to even get a patient’s notes by phone. We can consult with them on our notes. We can call them if a patient has a cardiac or other problem we can’t handle. If a patient has a cardiac or other problem we can’t handle, we can call them for help. We can call them if a patient is taking too long, or maybe the nurse did not respond quick enough or the Dr. did not show up when expected, instead of complaining about the VA, complain that your CONgresspersons are not doing enough to fix, fund and staff the VA.

This is a message that both Democrats and Republicans in Congress, as well as the Biden administration, should take to heart. Rather than privatizing, the VA should be strengthened and expanded, with benefits available to all veterans and their families. In fact, studies like these shouldn’t only inform political and ethical debates about veterans’ health care but also broader policy discussions about much-needed reform to our fragmented, market-driven system. You don’t have to look to Canada, or the UK, or Sweden for an example of a government-funded health-care program that works. There’s often a homogenized one just around the corner. This isn’t just a political talking point; it’s an ethical imperative. If “VA advantage” coordinated care saves lives, improves health outcomes, and saves money, the same type of care should be available to all of us.
VVAW Library Project Begins Construction

Library foundation work - August 12, 2021.

Panoramic view - September 1, 2021.

View from the south east corner as the roof is worked on - September 17, 2021.
RIP Ann Lynne Bailey

Ann was born in Cincinnati, Ohio and grew up in Hinsdale, Illinois. In the early 1950s, her family moved to Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin. Her parents were Robert Bailey, a WWII Army Veteran who served in Europe, and Ruby Bailey, née King, who was active in theater and spent WWII in New York City. Both of them supported VVAW.

Annie joined VVAW in April 1971 at Operation Dewey Canyon III. From 1971 until her death, she worked hard in the Milwaukee chapter. The small group of women in VVAW grew and participated in all of VVAW's actions. In 1972 Ann was in Miami Beach. In 1973, she was in Gainesville, Florida for the Gainesville Eight trial. At times she traveled and stayed with VVAW chapters to help with their work. The Karl Armstrong Trial is one example. She helped in the 1970s and 1980s with all the work around the Veterans Administration. She was involved in the non-violent takeovers, social events, and the opening of Milwaukee's first Veterans Center. She brought the magic brownies.

The women of the veteran community were strong. They were involved in all of VVAW's activities. Ann was part of the women who put together the Agent Orange Dossier.

Annie was always at the campouts. In the kitchen, in the rolling tray, and she loved entertaining the kids with the pig's eyeballs.

Ann also worked at the city of Milwaukee's election commission and was a proud public employee from 1982 to 1999. Ann also said, "If you don't vote, don't complain."

We will always remember Ann L. Bailey. Her work to help end the war in Vietnam and her work on Decent Benefits for All Veterans was effective. Look at how great our VA system is today compared to 1970! I would say "Annie you had a direct effect. Thank you. Rest in Peace."

John Lindquist is a long-time VVAW member from Milwaukee, now living in England.

Remembrance of Ann Bailey
John Lindquist

Annie Bailey at Dewey Canyon IV - May 12, 1982.
I met Bailey (and John Lindquist) for the first time in the spring of 1972. I was working as a nursing assistant at the Madison, Wisconsin VA Hospital (later renamed for William S. Middleton, he was still working there in '72). There were many Vietnam vets working at the hospital, in many capacities as vets could get hired without any tests, etc.

I had participated in a number of anti-war protests after my Army discharge and somehow I heard about a protest organized by veterans in Stevens Point, about a three-hour drive north of Madison. I had a car and I was interested in meeting other anti-war vets, so I recruited a co-worker and we traveled north.

The protest took place on the campus of the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. There was a march, organized into a grid, and the buildings was Bailey, "manning" an education table with VVAW information available.

The table also included a 16mm film projector showing a film (I think it was War Soldiers?) I had read about the bearings, but seeing the faces and hearing the voices was still a shock. I signed up for the mailing list and went on my way.

I never got involved with VVAW because one of the first mailings was a newsletter. Splashed across the front page was the headline, "Don't Join VVAW." With the explanation that the organization had been infiltrated by the FBI and membership lists were compromised. I felt my federal job would be in jeopardy so I never formally joined and I never connected with the Madison Chapter.

The next time I saw Bailey was ten years later, in 1982.

I was recuperating after surgery at the Milwaukee VA hospital for a huge tumor and half of my colon. I had read a little about that "Agent Orange" stuff, and that it could cause cancer.

So, I was looking for information. Could Agent Orange be the cause of my cancer? The doctors at the VA would tell me nothing. I looked here, and I asked there. Nothing. Finally, I stopped at the Milwaukee Vet Center.

One of the counselors referred me to VVAW. He gave me an address and I made contact.

"Another Vietnam War: Who could forget that face? And that voice?"

She was working with Mariel Hogan on the information for the Agent Orange Dossier. Just what I was looking for. I pitched in and helped with the layout and finished the final product to the printer, and back.

I met other members and became active in the chapter. I drove Bailey to Chicago and sat in on the meeting with the lawyer representing us (and ultimately selling us out in the Agent Orange lawsuit). By that time the fights with the VA were down to a simmer. After a while, the biggest activity was the July 4 campout.

Which leads me into the story of what may be Bailey's most (im) famous page.

Today people would call the campout a retreat, and it was therapeutic. Veterans came from all over, the east coast, the west coast, the south, the north. The campground was a safe place (with a few exceptions), where guys could talk smart, act absurd in many situations. I laughed at them, and at the same time found the humor refreshing. Veterans came from all over, the east coast, the west coast, the south, the north. The campground was a safe place (with a few exceptions), where guys could talk smart, act absurd in many situations. I laughed at them, and at the same time found the humor refreshing.

One of the counselors referred me to make contact. As we were cutting the roasted pig she gathered the kids around once more. I think she was trying to keep the kids from overindulging in the agents orange stuff, but she was keeping them entertained. She gathered all the kids together. As we were cooking a pig on a spit, she gathered the kids around once more. She demanded the eyeball and said, "You bill is peering out of your mouth. So, she stuck out her tongue, which was wearing the eyeball like a glove, with the Iris to the front. I think she was trying to keep the kids from overindulging in the agents orange stuff, but she was keeping them entertained.

She was working with Mariel Hogan on the information for the Agent Orange Dossier. Just what I was looking for. I pitched in and helped with the layout and finished the final product to the printer, and back.

I remember the year, I think it was 1972, but we were hosting the national meeting of VVAW. The large meeting was in the Wobbly Hall on Lincoln Avenue in Chicago. Yes, the Wobbly Hall, the same Wobbles who were so important in struggles long before VVAW was in existence.

John and Annie attended, as did many of the members and supporters from Milwaukee and Wisconsin. I always loved being around John and Annie. Annie in particular was down-to-earth, friendly, strong, and fearless.

Those national meetings were great but after a couple of days, everyone was tired.

I had left the hall to get something and upon arriving back I saw members of the Chicago Red Squad taking pictures of people entering and leaving the meeting. They were working me over in an elevator at a demonstration when Spiro Agnew was outside the hall. An argument ensued in which arrests were made.

I was upset. Here we were, veterans who had served, and we were being surveilled as we exercised our constitutional rights of free assembly and free speech. I entered the hall and loudly said to Annie that the red squad was outside the hall.

She yelled, "Let's go play ring around the Red Squad!"

We left the hall outside. The 4 cops were inside their unmarked car. We held hands and circled the hand of the cop with the revolver and putting it under the chin of the ex-marine telling him he would blow his brains out if he put the ticket under the windshield wiper.

One of the cops gently moved the hand of the cop with the revolver away from the VVAW member. No arrests were made.

I remember the day clearly. I remember the faces of the cops. I remember the steam rising from the red faces of the 4 cops. Someone yelled, "They are parked in the dell, the south.

Memories of Ann Bailey  
JOHN ZUtz

I met Bailey and John Lindquist at a demonstration when Spiro Agnew was outside the hall. An argument ensued in which arrests were made.

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I remember the day clearly. I remember the faces of the cops. I remember the steam rising from the red faces of the 4 cops. Someone yelled, "They are parked in the dell, the south.
We were doing every anti-war demonstration at UWM (University of Wisconsin Milwaukee) that I could find. I was involved in all of the civil rights movements around the city—rock and roll, anti-war, and politics. I'd hang on every word from Cassius Clay, later known as Muhammad Ali, and Dr. King all the time, and he was anti-war and anti-Vietnam. Then good old Muhammad Ali ... who ended up being a black guy from Cleveland who was a misfit. You were an outcast. You were more important than what was going on around you. You were a little Italian towns. You go in, you find your family. You look around you. It only goes by once."

We found that point. That's what I didn't like. Because I was younger, I couldn't be a part of things like that. But I was also active in the anti-war movement before Annie Bailey had already been active (pages 72-75) against the War by Richard Stacewicz. (pages 173-175)

We discovered early on that Vietnamese veterans were mentally anti-organization. The more organized you were, the less response you got. We didn't have a family night. Within six months of forming VV AW, we had a family night. We took over the VA about the war, we were active in their unions, they were into the food co-ops—you know, the kind that you worked for a long time and become leadership. The strength of this chapter was putting together rap groups in Milwaukee. It's been like an extended family. The veterans would come in, have a good time, do some demos, find it too political, or whatever. VAs come in, and they'd pick up on the VVs, and we'd pick up on the VA. What else were you doing?

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Annie Bailey


The 3 Annies at VVAW 30th Anniversary in Chicago (Luginbill, Hirschman, and Bailey) - 1997.

The police and many of the people of Vietnam. Some of the police retaliated, I shaved. There were few wars for me or my military service in Vietnam.

I enthusiastically wore parts of my draft card on my body as I was serving my country as a Vietnam Veteran Against the War. This was really serving my country. It was a bright and shining light that I served my country in that way.

I held a simmering rage, which would explode when I perceived someone trying to establish authority, control, or power over me. The Army life in Vietnam was very different. I was burned out with their incompetence self-preening, and narcissism. I had many friends who felt that same rage toward others, particularly with police officers.

At the police station, attempting to solve a problem that didn't even exist! As usual – Vietnam – Iraq – Afghanistan – the system. To disrupt this scam is to court your downfall.

The sTaFF judge aVoCaTe. The gravity that held our lives in place. The gravity that held most others in place. The gravity that held our lives in place.

I loved almost every minute of my military service in Vietnam against the war, an arm I would never want to forget. I was wearing the uniform of the city. I have numerous stories of these confrontations.

The gravity that held us together. A new gravity that held us together.

No doubt the same bureaucratic madness that held us together will continue to hold the system together. The gravity that held us together will continue to hold the system together.

The gravity that held me together. The gravity that held me together.

The gravity that held me together. Another reason why Vietnam is we are being brought into conflict. The police officers were in combat, and the soldiers who are currently in Vietnam.

The gravity that held our lives in place before the war no longer was there. The gravity that held our lives in place before the war no longer was there. The gravity that held our lives in place before the war no longer was there.

I was confused and asked her what she meant. "About that war, we didn't listen to you back then, Joey, but we will listen to you now." And she was right. Twenty-five years later, I was visiting my family in Chicago. We were in the 3rd of the 5th Armored Infantry, the Black Knights on one arm, and the VVAW insignia on the other. They were close friends. We were close friends. We were close friends.

My friends and I were attempting to bail Jeff out, I was met with the same tired comments about my hair. There were more days when I would have a fight than have a peaceful conversation. I was with my young brother Tommy. He was around 16 years old.

After a few meetings, I convinced Ellsberg the author of "The Younger Men" to fault the policy was that we were being lied to. I knew this was the reason Ellsberg felt he had to do what he did. The motto of bureaucracy is "Kill the system. To disrupt this scam is to court your downfall."

The system. To disrupt this scam is to court your downfall. The system. To disrupt this scam is to court your downfall. The system.

I was wearing the uniform of the city in Chicago. I was active in anti-war organizations. I was in Chicago. I was active in anti-war organizations. I was in Chicago. I was active in anti-war organizations. I was in Chicago. I was active in anti-war organizations. I was in Chicago. I was active in anti-war organizations. I was in Chicago.

I was against the war from that point on. I was against the war from that point on. I was against the war from that point on.

Ellsberg Lessen

Bill Johnston

Our latest failure of US military-foriegn policy “nation building” in Afghanistan certainly reminds us of another—Vietnam! Two tears in a row. Two countries and cultures the United States has invaded and left in a state of war. Two countries and cultures the United States has invaded and left in a state of war. Two countries and cultures the United States has invaded and left in a state of war.

Over 7 million lives lost—billions of dollars wasted for nothing. Corporate America again pushing for free trade agreements and complex and new cheap labor markets. Guess we won’t be seeing any hats or I shouted. "I am in no way justifying what I said. But I am in no way justifying what I said.

In a future story, I’ll write about the time 4 officers, after arresting me, time 4 officers, after arresting me, time 4 officers, after arresting me, time 4 officers, after arresting me, time 4 officers, after arresting me.

"Hey sweetie, how about a kiss." The police searched the van and Jeff, finding a small bottle with a few ounces of alcohol, and they arrested Jeff for possession of alcohol. I knew that Jeff was driving the van in the southern suburbs, I knew that Jeff was driving the van in the southern suburbs, I knew that Jeff was driving the van in the southern suburbs, I knew that Jeff was driving the van in the southern suburbs, I knew that Jeff was driving the van in the southern suburbs.

I recalled an instructive eye-opener experience I had in 1979. I was a 19-year-old student at Amarillo Air Force Base in Texas. I was against the war from that point on. I was against the war from that point on. I was against the war from that point on.

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I was against the war from that point on. I was against the war from that point on. I was against the war from that point on.
The Westwood United Methodist Church has been hit by jaywalking across Wilshire Boulevard for years. Last night via Netflix, I saw the new film “A Crucible Endured” by John Crandell. The pendulum has hit apogee, and it is reversing direction. If not, I will testify. The pendulum has hit apogee, and it is reversing direction. If not, I will testify. The pendulum has hit apogee, and it is reversing direction. If not, I will testify. The pendulum has hit apogee, and it is reversing direction. If not, I will testify. The pendulum has hit apogee, and it is reversing direction. If not, I will testify. The pendulum has hit apogee, and it is reversing direction. If not, I will testify. The pendulum has hit apogee, and it is reversing direction. If not, I will testify. The pendulum has hit apogee, and it is reversing direction. If not, I will testify. The pendulum has hit apogee, and it is reversing direction. If not, I will testify. The pendulum has hit apogee, and it is reversing direction. 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Put A Flag On It

Amber Zora

The first question people asked me was, “I was preparing to travel to Iowa City for Flag Day was, ‘What is Flag Day?’

Flag Day is a pretty obscure holiday to civilians and service members alike. Most have seen the holiday listed on a wall calendar but don’t know much about it.

Flag Day is celebrated on June 14 to commemorate the day the US adopted the Stars and Stripes and the national flag on June 14, 1777. Flag Day is also an important day for decommissioning unserviceable flags through burning, burying, or recycling.

I met Drew at the Haystack School of Mountain Crafts during a veteran art weekend. After I moved to the Bay Area I frequently stopped by the town of Placerville, California, to visit my son. On one of these visits I was taken to see the Zen’s backyard were finishing up for their flag ceremony.

I eventually realized that every American Flag memorial, kids running around—as a harmless, tongue-in-cheek scene.

The event of flying the American Flag is something the whole country is thinking about right now. A recent New York Times article described how the political left is distancing itself from the symbol and the political right is celebrating it as synonymous with the Trump flag.

American flags and American flag-related items show up in supermarkets in Spring around Memorial Day. They stick around through the 4th of July and later on after Labor Day.

Everything from whiskey bottles to baby hats are adorned with the flag. During the 4th of July, beer companies have cans or bottles that feature the flag, and they will see an uptick in beer sales.

Many Americans say they hate the American flag but have it printed on literally everything—regardless of how the modification being against Flag Code.

“It’s a gesture of love for the flag, and I love the country but it’s just condescending,” Cameron said, “because it’s intentionally sloppy I could get away with it.”

It might be easier to list items that never have the American flag printed on them that I’m not sure are in violation of flag code. The American flag painted onto a roof in my current town of Rapid City, South Dakota.

Love it or Leave it

During the insurgency on January 6, nationalism and hatred surrounded the American Flag. White supremacists, neo-nazis, and conspiracy theorists hijacked the flag, flying it alongside Confederate, QAnon, and countless other hate group flags. One insurrectionist even used a flag pole with the American Flag on it to beat a police officer who was protecting the Capitol.

I’ve been told to “love it or leave it” regarding my criticisms of the United States and its policies. The umbrella of nationalism around the flag and country does not allow for criticism of current wars or domestic tension, especially since September 11.

That leaves anti-war veterans or veterans with some serious questions about the flag. But the American Flag has been in use in social justice, anti-war, and freedom movements since it was born.

The Civil Rights movement— with many veterans in positions of leadership around the flag—fought for freedom. Vietnam Veterans Against the War used the flag and American flags in social justice, anti-war, and freedom movements since it was born. Vietnam Veterans Against the War used the flag and American flags in social justice, anti-war, and freedom movements since it was born.

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Throughout the day people arrived to chat, make paper, and eat food. It was the first WMH I had been to since the pandemic began. It looked like any normal backyard barbeque, except fewer hands were clipping down the stars and stripes.

Several questions that people ask about the flag flying the flag is used. I’m not giving it up to the right.”

The weight of the afternoon was the flag flagging and pulping and papering was very light. Children, parents, and grandparents alike were all able to participate.

It was a day where people could come with their preconceived notions. Leaving it open to interpretation allowed for dialogue and community to take place in a casual and inviting environment.

The event itself provoked a series of questions.

As I write this, I’m doing here? What is America? Where do we go from here?”

Like the pulp itself, maybe it just takes time to dry before we can see the result.

A New Mexico Vietnam Veteran by Cartoonist Jeff Danzer

New Mexico Vietnam Veteran by Cartoonist Jeff Danzer

A Vietnam War Memoir

“Funny, biting, thoughtful, and wholly original . . . one of the best personal accounts to emerge from the Vietnam War.”

-Jeff Danzer

The Veterans

“THE VETERANS” is a memoir by Jeff Danzer, who served as a combat correspondent for the New York Times during the Vietnam War. The book provides a personal account of the war, including Danzer’s experiences as a reporter and his observations of the conflict and its impact on the soldiers and civilians involved. The memoir offers a unique perspective on the war, capturing the realities of combat and the human cost of the conflict. "THE VETERANS" is a powerful and enduring piece of journalism that continues to be relevant and thought-provoking today."
I was missing one day about child prodigies. Every once in a while you hear a report about some incredible youngster who accomplishes incredible things, and then you wonder why no more. What happens to them? By coincidence I ran across a magazine article about just such a child. Philippa Duke Schuyler was a half-black/half white piano prodigy with an IQ of 185 interjected by the New York Times in 1940 when she was eight years old. Why should readers of a US veteran's publication all these years later have any interest in this story? Philippa Duke Schuyler, half black/half white pianist, was a hard book on a typically Harlem dwelling. This is and cultural world away from your own. The well appointed Edgecombe in inconveniences of her racial identity. Experiment. Wasn't that inevitable? At her in the bathroom mirror: a lab an uncomfortable image staring back ing what sort of damage this must parents' obvious and prideful love for thirteen they revealed to her for the scientific breeding. When the girl reached of what the parents considered scien segregated old one. If only.

By coincidence I ran across a magazine article about just such a child. Philippa Duke Schuyler was a half-black/half white piano prodigy with an IQ of 185. She was living in a military hospital called Da Nang, Vietnam in 1967. She was born in a wealthy area of Harlem two years into the depression. George Schuyler, the father, wrote for his living and wrote exceedingly well. A Northern born black journalist, he had been sent by his paper upon menacing undercover trips into the deep South to investigate American racism, as well as into East Africa and Liberia toveeblack or black slavery, something he had posed for a Fauvist novelist. Two these very different, distinct people meet and meld. The young Philippa was design of producing a biracial child whose natural and evident superiorit one way, as they saw it, to solve America's race problem. Miscegenation—mass miscegenation—was to be the answer. stained American racism began locking the Pacific of oblivion, and there she has stayed. As income from foreign recital appearances began to waver, the dis appointed pianist turned to another method of income: writing and her own country's black poverty.

As income from foreign recital appearances began to waver, the dis appointed pianist turned to another method of income: writing and travel. She was becoming quite a celebrity, the American concertista. Alternatively, she was the great unattainable goal, a grail in a and South America, involved stays in Mexico clinics that catered to US black poverty.

The guns trained on each other in the northernmost reaches of the republic, journalists didn't go, especially in the hazardous journeys into places other than the VC after sundown. The guns trained on each other in the northernmost reaches of the republic, journalists didn't go, especially in the hazardous journeys into places other than the VC after sundown. I am emotionally part of the pianist, no longer quite so young and sit for a while on the very bed she had over by the VC after sundown. The guns trained on each other in the northernmost reaches of the republic, journalists didn't go, especially in the hazardous journeys into places other than the VC after sundown. I am emotionally part of the pianist, no longer quite so young and hopeful, says plenty: ‘I am a beauty—but I'm half- color.' I'm not accepted anywhere. I am always destined to be an outsider, never, never part of anything...I hate any country's primary animus or any other. I am emotionally part of nothing and that will always be my destiny. The guns trained on each other in the northernmost reaches of the republic, journalists didn't go, especially in the hazardous journeys into places other than the VC after sundown. I am emotionally part of the pianist, no longer quite so young and hopeful, says plenty: ‘I am a beauty—but I'm half- color.' I'm not accepted anywhere. I am always destined to be an outsider, never, never part of anything...I hate any country's primary animus or any other. I am emotionally part of nothing and that will always be my destiny. The guns trained on each other in the northernmost reaches of the republic, journalists didn't go, especially in the hazardous journeys into places other than the VC after sundown. I am emotionally part of the pianist, no longer quite so young and hopeful, says plenty: ‘I am a beauty—but I'm half- color.' I'm not accepted anywhere. I am always destined to be an outsider, never, never part of anything...I hate any country's primary animus or any other. I am emotionally part of nothing and that will always be my destiny.
Operation Peace on Earth and the takeover of the Statue of Liberty began for me with an ad I saw for the Vietnam Veterans Against the War in Playboy magazine. It really caught my attention! I was still enlisted in the USAF at Homestead AFB near Miami, Florida, arriving there after two consecutive years in Thailand loading munitions on F4 jet fighter bombers. That piqued my curiosity about the group.

After my discharge in April 1971—I listen! I have done a lot of reflection and discussion with Jim Murphy and Don Carrico is a great listen! I have done a lot of reflection and research on my account of the takeover as fresh as possible.

I knew back in the early ‘70s when I was actively involved. This December will mark 50 years since the first takeover. John Lennon and Yoko Ono. I’m so bummed I don’t have mine today as I have so much memorabilia.

I discovered that VV AW had a Facebook group that I joined and have been able to connect with a few of the brothers I knew back in the early ‘70s when I was actively involved. This December will mark 50 years since the first takeover. John Murphy and I have discussed having coffee at the Lady on December 26th in Philadelphia. There are details that I wish I could remember from this memorable event.

Paul Fisher’s audio account with Jim Murphy and Don Carico is a great listen! I have done a lot of reflection and research on my account of the takeover as fresh as possible.

Operation Peace on Earth and took over the Statue of Liberty. The group was to be one night watchman that one could get in that way. The Statue was under construction inside and there were building materials that we used to barricade and secure the main entrance. Our mission was a success and left through a back entrance that led to a ladder in the arm up to the torch. We hung off that ladder until our scout at the top could see out through the torch when the last tourist and employee ferry left the island. We then came down and assembled in the no man’s land. We were able to secure so that no one could get in line behind us up the stairwell. We hung off that ladder until our scout at the top could see out through the torch when the last tourist and employee ferry left the island. We then came down and assembled in the no man’s land and left through a back entrance that led to a ladder in the arm up to the torch. The next day we headed out to New Jersey to Gene Halpern’s house where we solidified plans. We spent the night and headed for New York City on the 26th. I remember talking to someone from New York City who in turn informed the main entrance along with various law enforcement agencies although it was the National Park Service police who had jurisdiction. The event was Walter Cronkite’s lead story on the 27th evening news. It was written up in my hometown paper the Pittsburgh Press. We hung a flag upside down from the crown as a symbol of distress. On the 28th a judge in New York City ruled that if we did not leave that the police were going to break in and arrest us. The group again took a vote and we narrowly decided to leave peacefully. We firmly believed we made our point through the awesome global media attention we received on how as a group of Vietnam veterans were against the US aggression against the country of Vietnam and wanted to bring our brother’s home. I’m sure we made a statement as we left the Lady. Gene has must have said something to the press. Photos were taken which have been published by VV AW in the past. The New York City office arranged for us to be taken to a private room in a Manhattan restaurant. There we had a meal and were given a Statue of Liberty postcard from John Lennon and Yoko Ono. I’m so bummed I don’t have mine today as I have so much memorabilia.

It was only recently that I discovered that VV AW had a Facebook group that I joined and have been able to connect with a few of the brothers I knew back in the early ‘70s when I was actively involved. This December will mark 50 years since the first takeover. John Murphy and I have discussed having coffee at the Lady on December 26th in Philadelphia. There are details that I wish I could remember from this memorable event.

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Chris Gregory's father was a moderate-to-conservative Republican who envisioned a future for his son as a part of the American business class. "When I was seventeen, I decided that it would be a good thing to leave," Gregory said.

He enlisted shortly after his next birthday.

It was really the only acceptable way to get out of the New Jersey town where I was living in, the situation I was in."

"I was, for Americans at least, Vietnam was not on anybody's map."

The Air Force trained Chris to be a medic. For almost two years, he worked in hospitals around the country, his longest stint being in a base hospital in the Pacific base near San Francisco's Fort Walton Beach.

When Chris asked the sergeant why he had not been promoted for what he knew to be good work, the sergeant explained that it was because there were people with higher ranking of him in the queue. To make it up to Chris, the sergeant proposed sending him to Vietnam immediately."

"I was sitting there, in the median, and I thought, I can't believe this," Kovic recalls.

Ron's internal confusion with run-on orders he receives. Kovic represents the homophobic and misogynist church square off in his head with training, however, the values of the church are shown the effects of what Dr. Kiernan had written in 1968.

"My life wasn't really going anywhere," he laments, "I would go to Alaska, meet planes there, and just fly over to the base evacuee medical centers."

"They had just realized how much damage they were doing, they were sitting there passive and then banging on the windows and the metal."

"We got people who were quite bad off, who had not been in a hospital, who thought that they had no life, who had nothing to do except to just go out and fight."

"When Chris asked the sergeant why he had not been promoted for what he knew to be good work, the sergeant explained that it was because there were people with higher ranking of him in the queue. To make it up to Chris, the sergeant proposed sending him to Vietnam immediately."

"I was sitting there, in the median, and I thought, I can't believe this," Kovic recalls.
Other victims of boredom were not so lucky. Fred recalls that nearly every American trooper was charged with ensuring that Vietnamese bikini candles didn’t float away on the river swim under the bridge they were guarding and plant dynamics changes were indeed more subtle, but the Americans countered them with tankades, pulling the pin, and dropping the grenades into the water. Well, that got boring and so guys would pull the pin and see how long they could hold the grenade before they’d drop it.

The results were catastrophic.

"In would come a kid without his hand, without his arm, without his leg. "Things like this happened over and over."

What Fred most remembers, however, was the extreme yuuth of the American troops. When he asked what he could do for the wounded at the nearby PX, the request was frequently for comic books. "I remember thinking that there are really little kids here. Here they are in the middle of this war and what they do for entertainment or relaxation is read comic books. I hadn’t read one of these comic books for fifteen years."

Fred was twenty-eight.

"We had a shared experience, "no more of a hawk," he quickly learned of these comic books for fifteen years." "Fred was twenty-eight."

The results were catastrophic.

By September of 1969, Lenny was in Vietnam with the MOS 11 Bravo. ("That guy who carried Vietnam "more of a hawk," he quickly learned of these comic books for fifteen years."

Fred recalls feeling "sort of numb" when he got out of the service in April of 1969 and enrolled as a twenty-two-year-old freshman in a program for veterans at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts. Neither his parents nor anyone else he knew at the time knew about his experience in the service. And while he was pleased to be free of the military’s rules, he was not yet out of the war. The television reported nightly on the increasing number of American casualties.

"Not having anything in common with the sheltered eighteen-year-olds in his class, Fred, found, published alone with his memories about moving among so many wounded soldiers without the time or the emotional strength to address anything but their physical needs.

"This was impossible to talk to people who would not have been able to understand.

"I felt myself to be an administrator of care," Fred recalls. "We had a shared experience, a shared analysis, and a shared discomfort with our participation."

Fred decided to work alongside Lenny and the others at LISP.

One day, Jerry Grossman, the Boston businessman and founder of Massachusetts Political Action for Peace (MAPAX) who had dreamed up the Moratorium to End the War and who helped LISP get a newsletter into wealthy donor hands, approached them about having lunch with a former Naval lieutenant named John Kerry, now working as a spokesperson for Vietnam Veterans Against the War.

Chris recalls saying yes because it was pretty much a sure thing. Kerry recalls that he, Lenny, and the others were very much liked what Kerry was promoting.

"We want to put together a chapter here," he recalls Kerry saying. "We have to organize Vietnam Veterans Against the War during Operation RAW during which VVAM members marched from Fort Devens to the concentration camp in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. "We offer some services. We have rap groups, we have these people who would not have been able to talk about their experiences. We put together a pressure group, a method of pressuring VA to give us better services. Some of these guys have readjustment problems. We help them deal with them, but basically it’s a political effort."

And with that, the New England chapter of VVAM was born.

A photograph of Lenny reveals a portion of the two rooms MassPAX gave the new VVAM chapter at 67 Water Street in Dedham, Massachusetts.

"I went on one silence," as he calls it, "for two weeks." Then he started helping the Legal In-Service Project for veterans at Brandeis University in Dedham, Massachusetts.

"We wanted the Americans there, even those Vietnamese ostensibly working alongside the Americans."

The Vietnam peace movement was in its infancy in 1969. The people who would not have been able to talk about their experiences, were able to start to realize what they named Operation POW.

Fred, who had recently moved his young family to Lexington, which was in the national spotlight VVAM had finally achieved, said to Lenny, "Bring me some VVAM people, I would like to start to talk with you."

Fred did, and he, Lenny, and other VVAM leaders met a group of 600 or so veterans arrived from area VA hospitals.

They knew too.

Fred decided to start attending VVAM-NE meetings.

After the success of Operation Dewey Canyon III, an effort towards which both Lenny and Chris contributed, to bring American生まれの人들은 2021年3月1日の時点で、VWVPPの全国ネットワークを構築することなく、VWVPPの活動は依然として行われている。2021年3月1日の時点で、VWVPPのネットワークを構築することなく、VWVPPの活動は依然として行われている。

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After the success of Operation Dewey Canyon III, an effort towards which both Lenny and Chris contributed, to bring American生まれの人達へ配布することなく、VWVPPの活動は依然として行われている。2021年3月1日の時点で、VWVPPのネットワークを構築することなく、VWVPPの活動は依然として行われている。

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of those who had volunteered to play the Vietnamese look as realistic as possible, Lenny wore fatigue pants with a tiger stripe pattern, a tan jacket from the thrift shop and a pair of jungle boots.

He recalls thinking he had a right to expect a friendly reception and that the veterans would give him respect for what he had done. But with the injection of a new element — that he was not one of their comrades — the reception became more distant. "I thought if I was putting her on Concord, Leominster, the small New England towns, everyone was a war supporter. It was really a hard thing to explain to the kids who cared about me what I had done."

Several days before the march, Lenny and others went to the historic Comics Central shop in the neighborhood to buy fake Vietnamese names for their Vietnamese papers. The shop owner, who was also a former Marine, had a Vietnamese wife and was extremely helpful. Lenny bought 11 names for $3.00 and a swamp stew, which he recalled as the very best Vietnamese stew he had ever tasted. Lenny and his co-conspirators were proud of their efforts and had high hopes that their operation would work. They believed that if they could do something to make the Vietnamese, who were being represented by the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, feel like real Vietnamese, they would be more likely to be taken seriously.

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Dissenting POWs by Tom Wilber and Jerry Lembcke (Monthly Review Press, 2021)

There are many “universal truths” regarding the American war in Vietnam, legends, and myths that have been repeated ad nauseam. These stories are often retold despite abundant evidence and common-sense thinking. There are still folks who believe America’s soldiers remained incarcerated in secret North Vietnamese prisons, or in Russian prisons where they witnessed some obscure reason. Somehow, it is generally accepted that American POWs were tortured in North Vietnamese prisons, most notably the Hoa Lo or “Hanoi Hilton” where such notables as John McCain, POWs, were imprisoned.

Hoa Lo became famous via their accounts of institutionalized mistreatment at the hands of their North Vietnamese captors. Their plight was accepted as being virtually the same as that of Korean War POWs, subjected to “brainwashing” and physical torture. We simply accepted that Communists would abuse our Americans imprisoned in a North Vietnamese prison. This general acceptance was supported by a number of popular movies, including The Manchurian Candidate, Rolling Thunder, Some Kind of Hero, The Deerhunter, and Sylvester Stallone’s much macho Rambo series.

I bought it looking back at my experiences as an American soldier’s fear was of becoming a prisoner of war and being tortured, so I bought these books for the stories of other POWs. John McCain ran for President, I just accepted that his arm wouldn’t work due to torture inflicted at the Hanoi Hilton.

A couple of years ago, I enjoyed a street scene below. For some reason, I was stunned. Why hadn’t the South Vietnamese government paid me? I was already against the war but I didn’t share it. Often referred to as “lifers” by the lower-ranking soldiers, they were tortured in North Vietnamese prisons. Tens of thousands of Americans and millions of Vietnamese people, and against their own American troops! The front line POWs had endured years of the unpopular government. Tens of thousands of Americans and millions of Indochinese lost their lives in the pursuit of a spectacle?

The following is lifted from my forthcoming book, Casualty of Peace, as I became president of North Vietnam died, on September 2, 1969. I happened to be president of North Vietnam died, on September 2, 1969, I happened to be president of North Vietnam.

The disastrous war went on for years under the desperate hope of the unpopular government. Tens of thousands of Americans and millions of Indochinese lost their lives in the pursuit of a spectacle?

John Kettwig is a veteran at least, it is a far more realistic view any longer. Far too often, the war was accepted as being virtually the same as that of Korean War POWs, subjected to “brainwashing” and physical torture. We simply accepted that Communists would abuse our Americans imprisoned in a North Vietnamese prison. This general acceptance was supported by a number of popular movies, including The Manchurian Candidate, Rolling Thunder, Some Kind of Hero, The Deerhunter, and Sylvester Stallone’s much macho Rambo series.

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Full disclosure: the author is a veteran from my town. I was a part of the Veteran's Committee in the 1960s and early 1970s, and I read Wayne's book from cover to cover. It is a remarkable read that left me inspired and with a greater appreciation for the sacrifices made by those who opposed the war.

In the Frontier area of Vietnam, children live over 6km (3.7 miles) from school and do not have a bicycle to get to school. The idea that children are unable to attend school is unacceptable. This is a significant issue, especially in rural and mountainous areas. The Vietnamese government, with support from international organizations, has launched programs to provide bicycles to children who live in remote areas. This has had a profound impact on their ability to attend school and complete their education.

In addition to the bicycles, there is a need to ensure that these children are taught to ride them safely. The Vietnamese government and non-governmental organizations are working to educate these children on the importance of safety while riding bicycles. This is crucial to ensure that these children can continue their education and achieve their full potential.

I encourage all of us to support these programs and contribute to their success. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of these children and help ensure that they have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Please include your contact information (address, phone, email), so you can receive confirmation, tax and, if you wish, make checks payable to:

VFP 69
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Contact info: www.vfp69.org/bikes/
David Clark
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On June 29, 2021, after a struggle lasting over three years, a signpost honoring VVAW member Clarence Fitch was finally installed at the always busy main and only student entrance to James J. Ferris High School in Jersey City, NJ.

The installation was marked by a two-hour outdoor program put together by the Jersey City Board of Education. Speakers included the Superintendent of Schools, an elected member of the Board of Education, a VVAW member, and Clarence’s family. The event received front-page coverage by the Jersey Journal, a local newspaper.

Clarence was a graduate of James J. Ferris High School and died of AIDS in 1990. He was a Marine Corps ground combat veteran of the Vietnam War, a trade union activist at the United States Postal Service, and a fighter for peace and social justice as the East Coast coordinator of VVAW. He is commemorated in Pershing Field Park in Jersey City as a “hidden casualty” of the Vietnam War.

Clarence’s story was the subject of the award-winning 1998 documentary Another Brother which was screened on a national Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) broadcast. It was made by his good friend Tami Gold. VVAW members Greg Payton and Ben Chitty served as project advisors.

The successful effort honoring Clarence was a joint project of VVAW, Veterans For Peace/Chapter 021 (Northern New Jersey), and the Fitch Family led by Clarence’s sister, Reverend Mona Fitch-Elliot. Additionally, the Jersey City Board of Education is now planning to use the documentary Another Brother as a teaching tool at the high school level.


Bronze Star
I cannot carry this.
I am no hero.
When I hold this star in my palm,
I feel the jagged edges of splintered bones.

And I break,
I break like a bronzed mirror reflecting shards of a survivor’s face.
I’m sorry. I will not parade with a star, and a red, white, and blue ribbon round my neck.

There are stars still inside my chest, shrapnel stars within stars flaring in my blood-red heart.
Their tarnished points pierce through my skin as bone fragments as I wash off the blood in my morning shower’s monsoon rain.

—rg cantalupo

Home, 1970
No one asked about the confirmed kill or the rocket that just missed four or five days before. The silence the Monday you returned from the war, it was dawn and the roads weren’t crowded at that hour. You stopped at your brother’s and then went home. And no one asked. No one.

No one asked about the blood splotch, no one asked about the sniper, the mine, Cambodia.
You took your first hot bath in months and thought of that whore in Cam Ranh. That night you dreamt what became years of your recurring Nam dream. And no one asked. No one.

—John Samuel Tieman
Between 1965 and 1975 the United States dropped some 7.5 million tons of bombs on Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, more than double the weight of bombs dropped on Europe and Asia during the entire Second World War. While there were multiple and changing objectives to the bombing, a major one was the disruption of the flow of men and matériel to the south. Consequently, much of that fury was directed at what the Vietnamese called the Truong Son Road and the United States named the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The Truong Son Road (Ho Chi Minh Trail) threaded through the Truong Son Mountains, known in the West as the Annamite Range, that runs roughly north-south through almost the entire length of Vietnam. The Trail was not a paved highway but a track that shifted, changed shape, collapsed, and regenerated over time and in response to changing circumstances. It eluded all attempts to destroy it, though it became an obsession on the part of the United States military to do so. That the military failed is due in large part to the efforts of thousands of women.

These women play a central role in Sherry Buchanan’s On the Ho Chi Minh Trail, which documents the efforts of those who had lived under those bombs. What drew her to the Trail—oddly, for a story that is so much about bombing runs and tonnage and death—were drawings of the landscape and daily life made by both military and civilian artists. Her curiosity was driven by the large number of women who populated the drawings that capture the strength of the landscape and daily life made by both military and civilian artists. Her curiosity was driven by the large number of women who populated the drawings that capture the strength of the landscape and daily life made by both military and civilian artists. She meets as many of these women as she can, starting with the actress Kim Chi who had hiked 600 miles on the Tra Long Son trails after having talked her way into the war. She finds Nguyen Thi Kim Hue who had been given the highest military award by Ho Chi Minh himself for work on one of the most dangerous stretches of the Trail. After her village was destroyed, Hoang Thi Mau trained first as a sniper and then as a nurse. Ngo Thi Thyuen who, at 92 pounds had carried two ammunition boxes with a combined weight of 216 pounds, tells her that the reason Vietnam won was “We were home, they were far away from home.”

She finds the artists, too. In Hanoi, she visits Tran Huy Oanh who has a collection of portraits and lyrical landscapes, surprising large given the grueling conditions under which the drawings were preserved. She speaks with another artist, one who said he had seen the souls of girls killed on the Trail. Two of Nguyen Van Hoang’s watercolors, both called “Crossing the River” and dated in 1971 and 1972, are quick sketches that capture the strength of the landscape and the movement of the Trail. Her fascination with the Tra Long Son Mountains is infectious. She had been captivated by the beauty she had seen in the landscape drawings and, as her journey progressed, hoped for the clouds to break so she could see the mountains themselves. When that happened for the first time she recognized that “the landscape depicted in the drawings expressed more than a geographical place. It reflected a state of mind, ‘the calm mind needed to survive such a cruel war.’” This “calm mind” (the quote is not attributed) seems to be a clue to the dignity and courage she finds in the artists and veterans she meets.

This is a beautiful book. It includes interviews and, for example, it contains maps for each section and color reproductions of art, as well as vignettes of women and landscapes taken by the author. It is also a confounding book. In her Preface, Buchanan says she found the journey to collect stories “from both sides of the frontier line.” She wanted their “testimonies” to confirm the abstraction of war that makes it acceptable to those of us who live in more peaceful places.” That alone makes a profound and almost unique contribution to our understanding of how the Vietnamese have been subsumed into the stories of Americans.

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The welcome that Americans receive in Vietnam, usually called “forgiveness” (although it is unclear if the words are understood in the same way in both cultures) is so mysterious and compelling that many Americans, Buchanan seems to be among these, look to Vietnamese for answers. In an interview, for example, Buchanan asks probing questions, such as whether the person she is interviewing is Vietnamese or feels so located in the place. Buchanan asks probing questions, such as whether the person she is interviewing is Vietnamese or feels so located in the place. She finds Nguyen Thi Kim Hue who had hiked 600 miles on the Tra Long Son trails after having talked her way into the war. She finds Nguyen Thi Kim Hue who had been given the highest military award by Ho Chi Minh himself for work on one of the most dangerous stretches of the Trail. After her village was destroyed, Hoang Thi Mau trained first as a sniper and then as a nurse. Ngo Thi Thyuen who, at 92 pounds had carried two ammunition boxes with a combined weight of 216 pounds, tells her that the reason Vietnam won was “We were home, they were far away from home.”

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At this point, was Al Tons of Congressmen; people fly out in the Playboy jet? that meeting? best friends. apartments. Damato and I became was in the trash, that we pushed. out. We walked the streets looking for organizing for the event there? Moore; but all of them after Hubbard. stuff like that. of stuff, throwing our medals away, way we can bring up we're the legal brought up that Operation Dewey I don't know; okay names. So, we included. Then some people's egos were feminists at this point, myself a big demo? the Objectives, then you talked about talking about having this demonstration, demo? New York City. We held a national stuff like that. said they would; because you had to Hartford to be co-coordinator with Coordinator of VV AW. so, going to call up and talk to people and say yes, so happy when we voted to be violent and therefore should be treated with no respect. So we said, you know, that they're saying we're violent. So, let's dance. So, we could-cans with the California delegation and veterans. Sure enough, we got away without getting beat up. Because of dancing vets. That picture made the front pages of over 200 newspapers the next day. that was the arrest for. Was for not dispersing, for being there? Yeah. For not dispersing. Mayday. We're going to fuck those motherfuckers up. saying: "What was the cops were saying? Yeah. Yeah. were you actually able to sleep that night? Yeah. For ten minutes and then woke up and then went to sleep. It was sort of like Vietnam. We were so happy when we voted to be violent.

So, nobody left the J Street. Those people had more votes to sleep. We did sleep. The cops walked through. They said "We're not going to fuck with you. We're going to give you Mayday. We're going to fuck those motherfuckers up." saying: "What was the cops were saying? Yeah. Yeah. were you actually able to sleep that night? Yeah. For ten minutes and then woke up and then went to sleep. It was sort of like Vietnam. We were so happy when we voted to be violent.

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Records of Dewey Canyon III
continued from page 25

the highest-ranking people. On top of that, he had great food for his men, and he gave medals to people who were super brave and honorable in combat. So, he came up, I think, with the first medals like that; for everyone, not just for officers.

So, I bought up that and the fact that we had to tear at masculinity and turn our backs on medals being worth people’s lives. This would prove the world had not been worth lives.

JM: How did that vote go down?

BR: I can’t remember, but I think it was big.

JM: The next day was the return of the medals?

BR: Right.

JM: Any specific memories that you have of that day?

BR: The ones you’ve seen in Only The Beginning.

JM: How long did it go out? Because all the video coverage is only the same couple of minutes over and over.

BR: It went on for hours and hours. I think twelve or fifteen hun and over.

JM: Where did they come from?

BR: Television and radio cover age.

JM: They weren’t from Califo尼亚, they just showed up?

BR: No. They were from Cali fornia.

JM: They flew out there and joined in?

BR: No. They were on active duty at bases near DC.

JM: So there were a bunch of active duty people who joined up at the last minute?

BR: Yes.

JM: They were there many non-vets at this event or was it all vets?

BR: Very small number, except people’s girlfriends and wives who were there.

JM: Was the returning of the medals the culmination of the event?

BR: That was it. We left and went from there. We were just filled with PTSD and Joy! I mean showing our medals away was one of the most amazing things for me to do, personally, in terms of atoning and shit, and saying “No Longon.”

So then, we went to the DC Airport and out in front of the planes and said “Well, you can’t leave now. (I just thought we could fly, and others thought the same) “You can’t leave until now, from here but not from Baltimore.”

JM: Who was telling you that?

BR: The head of the airlines. Whichever airlines. We said fuck that. We just got through sleeping on the Mall. We can sleep in your waiting area. (I had rowdy vets backing me up from California). The guy says “Oh no, let me check with Baltimore.” So, they drove us to Baltimore. We got on a plane there, instantly. Because we had just made the pages of the papers by sleeping in DC. Sleeping there would have been nothing to us.

So, a 747 back. They had a bar on the second floor of the airplane. We went up there and it was all the business class people drinking their brains out. The whole group of us went upstairs. The business people said “Whatever you want to drink, we will buy your drinks.” We made jokes about people and they said “We support you.” In fact, they collected money and bought us free drinks. That was pretty intense.

We got off at LA and we are just higher than a kite, from drinking, no sleep, PTSD, and happiness. The delegation (not me, I had no energy left) can’t-card off the plane.

The local press was all impressed. We met thirty people being from San Bernadino and LA.

BR: So, this is still just April. What about the rest of 1971? What else did you do with VVAV, locally or nationally?

BR: VVAV quadruples in size. After all that coverage, everybody wanted to join. Our generation were TV kids, not radio kids. We knew the power of the press and also the written press. I had been a paperboy, like you. We knew how to play upon the press. We didn’t feel like the press was our enemy. Even though, of course, a lot of them didn’t cover us. Especially as time went on.

People held local Winter Soldier Investigations, all over. In California, we had a gigantic one at Pacifica, KPFA in LA, which was a gigantic leftist event.

JM: So how many of those day other events, think happened across the country?

BR: At least ten or fifteen.

JM: Since there was no national VVAV newspaper, yet did those just get covered in the local press?

BR: Yes.

JM: For the rest of 1971, did you go to any more of the national demos, like Operation Peace on Earth, or was that more of a regional demo?

BR: Those were more regional. So, you stayed organizing in California for the rest of the year?

BR: Yeah.

JM: And you were still a Regional Coordinator then?

BR: Yeah.

JM: As 1971 is ending, what thoughts did you have on where the anti-war movement was going, where you were going, where VVAV was going, in general?

BR: We had people refusing to go to Vietnam, in a revolt that we hadn’t seen in centuries. Plus the anti-war movement was just getting bigger and bigger, holding bigger demos. Every DC, LA, San Francisco, and New York anti-war regional or national demo brought out twice as many people. We always had speakers. We had a ton of money.

JM: The national, or the regional or chapters?

BR: National. I’ve never been good at collecting money.

JM: I’ve seen you passing the bucket at events, Barry. BR: But, that’s now!

JM: Any closing comments?

BR: Why is what happened in 1971 important to talk about today?

JM: People before us, wouldn’t criticize us until they got old. Like Japa nese vets from the Nanking massacre or American vets from World War II. Like Band of Brothers. There were scenes in there where they shot pris oners, scenes where they sent their home, stealing Nazi stuff. We knew they were terrorizing to war criminals, we couldn’t just hide by the medals we got. Our grandparents would know that too! By bringing up racism; I mean the Klan was still super strong in the South.

In one the local areas, we were giving a speech to the local ACLU. Afterwards, everybody wanted to talk about Kerry. It was ok. He did a great job! His speech “How do you ask the last person to die in Vietnam.”

JM: You weren’t in there when he did that, were you?

BR: Not in there, but heard about afterwards. I wish I was. There were a bunch of our VVAV people in there.

We had such a reactionary, racist Congressman (Petri), Republican, evil person, non-vo. Most of the vets didn’t feel it was worth it to lobby him. But other vets went to Senators and stuff.

We were giving that speech to the ACLU. Before us, Chukia Lawson, the wife of Gary Lawson, was asking the ACLU to back her husband who had been arrested and framed on killing two white cops. Afterwards, we went oh, my god, fuck us! And the ACLU was mostly white. We were asking why when you fire-axed of the Gary Lawson case?

BR: I had gone, prior to that, to civil rights demos, in Riverside, and heard him speak. Friends pointed him out as being the Mayor of the Black part of Riverside. Seeing his wife say that he was being framed. We had already worked on other anti-racist stuff. So, then, we hooked up with her and started going to the trial and pre-trials and stuff. Gary Lawson’s case ended up becoming a major focus of my time and VVAV’s.
A Soldiers' Home Companion

**Marc Levy**

The building in heavy artillery fire from LZ Ranch—a remote firebase in Cambodia which I’d had the pleasure to occupy while it was overrun—and moments later I swore I heard the welcoming sound of incoming 155 shells whistling overhead. In the eye of my mind, I witnessed their fiery crumpBANGs exploding upon the building’s immense front doors. Two seconds later I focused power diving Cobra gunsships unloading salvos of white-tailed rockets, 40 mike-mike grenades, and withering miniguns at the building’s immense front door.

I was momentarily elated. Please note that I am not discounting the proven efficacy of the B-40 rocket-propelled grenade launcher, the primitive but deadly Chicom grenade, or the wicked grenade launcher, the primitive but deadly Chicom grenade, or the wicked.

The Cobra gunships unleashing salvos of white-tailed rockets, 40 mike-mike grenades, and withering miniguns at the building’s immense front door.

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Cobra gunships unleashing salvos of white-tailed rockets, 44
Bayonet Etiquette

"You can get a lot done with a bayonet, but sitting on it is uncomfortable!"
—Sgt. Sondra L. Thompson, US Army

**I. Things you can do with a bayonet**

- **Kill people.**
- **Persuade people** to do things they don't want to do by threatening to kill them.

**II. Things you should not do with a bayonet**

- **Sit on it.**

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Dian Waterhouse, 2021

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**Veterans Day**

**Years**

Away from over there
I traveled through the decades,
Through the bottles, the kegs
Names and places I don't
Remember or never knew.
The faces and bodies,
They're not new.

The war is never more.
Than a few minutes away;
A restaurant or bar,
I sit facing the door.

There is a camaraderie
That can only be shared
By those who were there.
For a while there is peace.

--- Daniel E. Rihn, 2021

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W. D. Ehleart, 1967

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Fall 2021
THE VETERAN

A Tale of a High School Class Going to War

Ed White (reviewer)

The Shadows From Which We Rise

By Dennis G. Pregent

In writing this short 232-page book, Dennis G. Pregent has created a one-of-a-kind story about 11 of his high school friends who went to Vietnam. Heshares their experiences and brings the reader up to where they are today. I am not aware of any author, or study of this kind. In the graduating class of 1963, from Saint Joseph’s Catholic High School, North Adams, Massachusetts, there were 80 students, 66 of whom, on 40 men served in the Vietnam era. According to an unofficial statistic of those names which appear on the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington, DC, 29% were Catholics; another 29% were categorized as Protestant, and 16% came from Baptist churches. So, the author's 1963 class was in line with the Catholic church's push against communism and support for the war. The students of Saint James came from blue-collar families where the mother stayed at home. Most of the group had fathers who served in World War II. North Adams has the same population today as it did in 1965: 13,000 residents. Perched in the foothills of the Berkshire mountains, North Adams is described as a Norman Rockwell kind of a town, and the photos and description of the town certainly confirm that notion.

Pregent's book is divided into two parts: in the first part—My Vietnam—the author describes his experience in the second part, Their Vietnam, describes the life and experiences of his other eleven classmates. When the book begins, the author has a map (I love maps!) where he indicates where each classmate served. The author also researched the Corps Tactical Zones, 1963-1973: US Armed Forces Organizational Structure, which I found to be very helpful. Additionally, he referenced Military Occupational Specialties (I augmented each branch of military service). Again, I found this unique contribution offering an important context for how the war was organized.

The format of the chapters of the veterans goes into deep research of each of those classmates who served. I do mean deep research. Dennis Pregent spent hours on the phone; he wrote numerous letters, attended the 50th Saint James High School Reunion, conducted extensive interviews, and reviewed countless family photos. He begins each chapter with their experience of being in Vietnam, and then the author details each individual's life growing up in North Adams. He concludes each chapter with family photos. Before the two parts classmate lives today. I believe each chapter could be a novel, as he has poured everything into it.

For example, Mike Gorman was an Air Force Helicopter Crew Chief Gunner. In the Growing Up section of the book, Pregent traces his family history, including his Catholicism and his military family, each family member and the places they moved, high school jobs, where he studied, and family photos. He detailed many photos of the family, as well as his military connections.

Doris Duvall fought with emotion was Russell Roulleur, a Marine, as was the author. The detail of the firefights and the killed Russell could only be described by those who were present. Again, the author also includes details into growing up in North Adams. There are family photos of Roulleur growing up; photos of his girlfriend's relationships with his friends, as well as at his final rites at Notre Dame Church in North Adams.

What really stands out is the telegram that his family received from the Commandant of the Marine Corps informing them of his death, relating the details of his funeral expenses. There are excerpts from letters the Marine wrote his parents from Paris, and Vietnam, ending with the last letter he sent his sister.

What I found interesting is that he included detailed information about the details of the class historian, Carol Bleau Boucher, a war reporter. Again, the author references the details of his family, and the arguments she had with her father over the Vietnam War. Boucher's father was the town's barber.

For instance, I am not aware of any study of the town. In the end, the author realized he had PTSD, and in 2017 became part of a therapy group. The book was therapy for Dennis Pregent, and we are grateful for what he has shared. I do mean deep research.

Sometimes I think the doctors took too much and sharpened from my brain. I think they took some part of my being that made me who I was. However, I do remember that I wrote in my bones like monsoon rain, still wake up drenched with sweat, still have those three kinds of dreams, and think through my last month in the bush.

The war feels more real to me than anything else.

Fragments of firesight play over and over in my dreams, and I wake up with my fingers clutched tight around a trigger, my trigger guard.

I know you don't want to hear this. I know you don't want to hear this. I know you don't want to hear this.

And then I stop, read the letter over, fold it up, and put in my pajama pocket. Maybe I will send it.

I will write a new letter to a different writer. To on't want.
October 30, 2021

Veteran: Joseph Giannini  
VA Claim: Chronic Ischemic Coro- 
...nary Disease, due to exposure 
...to Agent Orange in Vietnam 1967-1968 
Service-Connected: 1966-1970 
Military Occupational Status: In-
...fantry 
Rank: CaptianUSMCserved1001088 

Veteran's Statement in support of Agent Orange Claim 
I am 73 years old. Since 1973 I have practiced law in Long Island as a trial 
attorney. I am known for taking on 
difficult cases, including organized 
crime, drugs, and violent crimes.
...In 1975, during my first felo-
ny trial, I defended an Army War 
Veteran who was framed, by 
...over kHz anti-cool police officers, 
for selling drugs. He had been 
indicted under the recently enacted 
Rockefeller Drug Laws. He was facing an 
...mandatory sentence of 15-Life.

The trial was so difficult that I 
...many years of experience in the 
Army. I have clients depending on me. 

Respectfully,

Joseph Giannini 
Capt. USMC Retired
Vietnam Veterans Against the War, Inc. (VVAW) is a national veterans’ organization that was founded in New York City in 1967 after six Vietnam vets marched together in a peace demonstration. It was organized to voice the growing opposition among returning service men and women to the still-raging war in Indochina, and grew rapidly to a membership of over 30,000 throughout the United States, including active duty GIs stationed in Vietnam. Through ongoing actions and grassroots organization, VVAW exposed the ugly truth about US involvement in Southeast Asia and our first-hand experiences helped many other Americans to see the unjust nature of that war.

Today, VVAW also look up the struggle for the rights and needs of veterans. In 1970, we began the firstlap groups to deal with traumatic aftereffects of war, setting the example for readjustment counseling at vet centers today. We exposed the shameful neglect of many disabled vets in VA hospitals and helped draft legislation to improve educational benefits and create job programs. VVAW fought for amnesty for war resisters, including vets with bad discharges. We helped make known the negative health effects of exposure to chemical defoliants and the VA’s attempts to cover up these conditions as well as their continued refusal to provide treatment and compensation for many Agent Orange victims. Today, our government still fi nances and arms undemocratic and repressive regimes around the world in the name of “democracy.” American troops have again been sent into open battle in the Middle East and covert actions in Latin America, for many of the same misguided reasons that were used to send us to Southeast Asia. Meanwhile, many veterans from all eras are still denied justice—fac ing unemployment, discrimination, homelessness, post-traumatic stress disorder and other health problems, while already inadequate services are cut back or eliminated. We believe that service to our country and communities did not end when we were discharged. We remain committed to the struggle for peace and for social and economic justice for all people. We will continue to oppose senseless military adventures and to teach the real lessons of the Vietnam War. We will do all we can to prevent future generations from being put through a similar tragedy, and we will continue to demand dignity and respect for veterans of all eras. This is real patriotism and we remain true to our mission. Anyone who supports this overall effort, whether Vietnam veteran or not, veteran or not, may join us in this long-term struggle. JOIN US!

Insignia of Vietnam Veterans Against the War

We took the MACV patch as our own, replacing the sword with the up-side-down rifle with helmet, the international symbol of soldiers killed in action. This was done to expose the lies and hypocrisy of US aggression in Vietnam as well as its cost in human lives. The original MACV insignia also put forward lies. The US military was not protecting (the sword) the Vietnamese from invasion from the People’s Republic of China (the China Gates), but was instead trying to “save” Vietnam from itself.

Our insignia has come to represent veterans fighting against new “adventures” like the Vietnam War, while at the same time fighting for a decent way of life for veterans and their families.

Our insignia is over 46-years old. The insignia, VVAW’s and Vietnam Veterans Against the War, Inc.’s are registered trademarks belonging to VVAW and no other organization or group may use it for any reason without written permission from the VVAW Board of Directors.

Beware of VVAW-AI

This notice is to alert you to a handful of individuals calling themselves the “Vietnam Veterans Against the War Anti-Imperialist” (VVWA-AI). VVWA-AI is actually the creation of an obscure ultra-left sect, designed to confuse people in order to associate themselves with VVWA’s many years of activism and struggle. They are not a faction, caucus or part of VVAW, Inc. and are not affiliated with us in any way. We urge all people and organizations to beware of this hocus outfit.

Support VWA!”

DONATE OR JOIN TODAY!

Vietnam Veterans Against the War, Inc.
VVWA Membership
P.O. Box 355
Champaign, IL 61824-0355

Membership Application

Name ___________________________________________
Address ___________________________________________
City_________________________ State____________ Zip__________
Phone __________________________ Email________________________
Branch __________________________ Dates of Service (if applicable) __________
Unit __________________________ Military Occupation ____________
Rank ________________________________________________
Occupational Duty ____________________________________
Dates ________________________________________________

Yes, add me to the VVWA email list.
I do not wish to join, but wish to make a donation to the work of VVWA.
I sign up for a lifetime membership in VVWA. $250 is enclosed.
Membership in VVWA is open to ALL people who want to build a veterans’ movement that fights for peace and justice and support the work of VVWA and its historic legacy. Most of our members are veterans of the Vietnam era, but we welcome veterans of all eras, as well as family members and friends to our ranks.
The annual membership fee is $25.00 (not required of homeless, unemployed or incarcerated vets).
Signature ___________________________________________
Date ________________________________________________

Total Amount Enclosed __________________________

Make checks payable to VVAW. Contributions are tax-deductible.
I stood there with watery eyes, a thickening throat, and feelings of sadness. Was this a flashback? My war was more than a half-century old. Did it have something to do with my failure to listen a lifetime ago?

I was on holiday. The excursion included a RibB accommodation. Although the host was out when I arrived, she was available. I filled the antique front door lock not seeing the symbol of wartime sacrifice on the wall near the doorway.

The circa 1890’s red brick farmhouse included a camera in every room, wide plank floors, high ceilings, and a memorial. Standing in the living room I noticed the symbol not seen on the way in. A son of America had lived within these old walls, in his place an award of honor no one wants, the Gold Star Service Flag.

An antique display cabinet held the memories. My body felt a shiver of emotion as I learned what happened to a nineteen-year-old infantryman. Prominently centered was the photograph of a handsome youth in uniform. The Tropical Lightning patch of the 25th Infantry Division on his sleeve. Elements of the Division were in Mosul, Iraq in August 2005. To the left, I saw the tale’s tragic end, a Veteran's Burial Flag. Custom dictates the flag be given to a family member of the fallen warrior’s family. I was part of the low-level scout team searching for the enemy. His aircraft was hit by several rounds. He crashed in flames. My pilot took us in to pick him and the observer up. He was on fire, badly injured. Fourteen days later the unit’s command conducted a memorial service.

The deceased pilot’s parents learned in a letter from the new platoon leader of my part in the rescue. They wrote to me in Vietnam; the letter arrived at my home. I was shocked. They lived thirty miles away.

These parents were reaching out to someone who had been with their son at the end. They assumed we were buddies. They were expressing gratitude for my actions that day. Words of grief were in the letter, they wanted to meet me to say it in person and hear about their boy. They longed for some closure.

They did not have the full picture. I was not their son’s friend because of his rank, nor did I like him. I saw him shoot at innocent civilians like a little boy with a BB gun shooting birds for fun. He seemed to disdain anyone not white. I wanted no part of meeting his relatives. What could I say? They were desperate to fill in some blanks for themselves and his wife and baby. Survivors hold on to their memories; to grieve is to remember. He was their hero. There were medals awarded posthumously. The memory of the letters I felt disgusted for my behavior. Was I feeling guilt for the enemy. His aircraft was hit by several rounds. He crashed in flames. For the enemy. His aircraft was hit by several rounds. He crashed in flames. My pilot took us in to pick him up. He was on fire, badly injured. Fourteen days later the unit’s command conducted a memorial service.

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Although the broken heart would never be whole, the military funeral service at Arlington gave her some comfort. The Gold Star Mother felt honored; the dreadful sacrifice recognized. “The Old Guard” service members were present: casket team; firing party, buglers. The grieving woman appreciated the customs and traditions guiding the process of a nation saying goodbye to her boy; The flag draped across the casket later given to her; taps played; three volleys fired; three spent-shell casings; three words—duty, honor, country.

The sixteenth anniversary of her son’s death was approaching. So was the fourteenth anniversary of her husband’s death. He could not overcome the loss of his namesake. She grieved for two. This time I listened and had my answers.

RECOLLECTIONS

Gold Star Mothers

TOM GERY


RETURNED FROM VIETNAM WITH SEPARATION

The Gold Star Mother’s son was an Army helicopter pilot. I was part of the low-level scout team searching for the enemy. His aircraft was hit by several rounds. He crashed in flames. My pilot took us in to pick him and the observer up. He was on fire, badly injured. Fourteen days later the unit’s command conducted a memorial service.

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