



VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR, INC

PO Box 355, Champaign, IL 61824-0355 (773) 569-3520

www.vvaw.org

vvaw@vvaw.org

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Dear Friends,

Recently I was talking with long-time VVAW stalwart John Lindquist. John receives his primary health care at the Milwaukee VA, where he receives excellent care. John fondly recalls VVAW's many pickets, protests, and takeovers at that same VA. He, and the rest of VVAW are proud of the "War on the VA" for Decent Healthcare for Vets.

Like so many of us, I receive my primary care at the VA. I am glad that 50 years ago, VVAW began the fight for improving VA healthcare. I also experience the frustration that the VA has not achieved its full potential. Despite the war-mongering rhetoric of many in Congress, when it comes time to pay for the cost of war, the money does not follow the mouth. Or worse, they actively campaign against the very improvements that would help the VA live up to its potential.

Right now, the VA warns that the proposed Republican cuts to raise the debt ceiling with a 22% cut would mean being able to handle 30 million fewer outpatient visits than planned, eliminating 81,000 Veterans Health Administration jobs and 6,000 Veterans Benefits Administration jobs, and increasing the disability claims backlog by an estimated 134,000 claims.

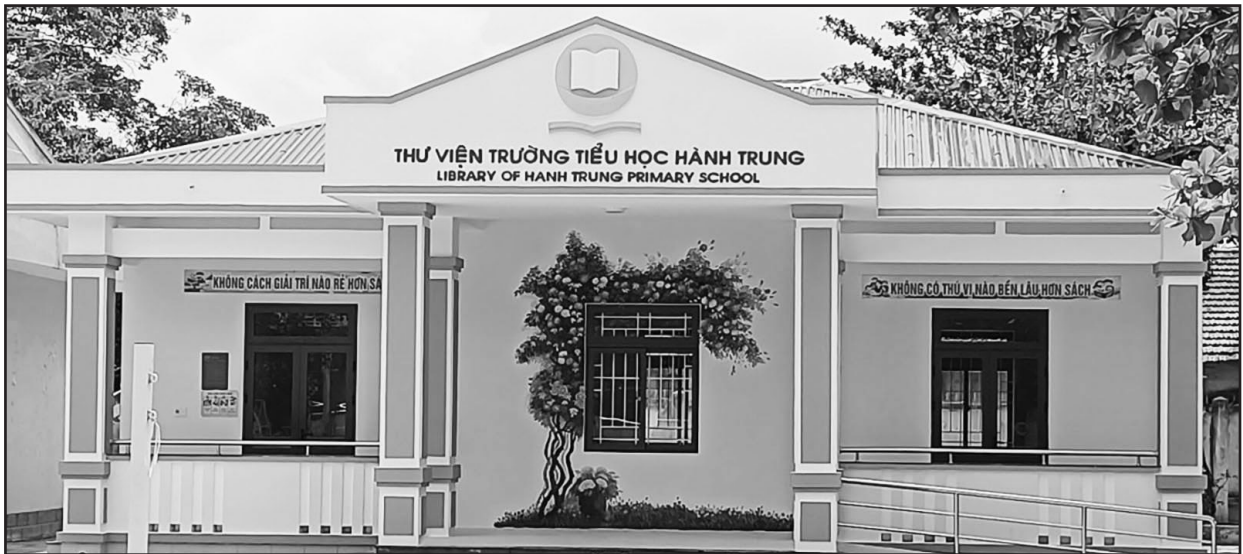
Also, as you and I know, those delivering our care are stretched thin. The chronic understaffing of the VA has been a feature, not a bug, of many administrations in the past few decades. The Trump years were especially harmful. Under the Biden administration, the VA is making unprecedented progress in hiring. However, that's still not enough. The VA says it has over 76,000 vacancies right now, despite adding 113,000 employees over the last decade.

Worse yet, during both administrations, the insidious privatization of VA healthcare has been progressing in the background. We need more VA facilities, fully staffed, in all areas of the country. Vets should not be reduced to units of profit, farmed out to enrich private healthcare.

Now is the time for us to contact our congressional reps. Demand no budget cuts at the VA, increases, not cuts in funding, build VAs, and an end to privatizing. We must continue the fight for decent healthcare for Vets. We will not let these services be jeopardized when we need them most.

We are beyond excited! Our second library in Vietnam, this one in the courtyard of the Hanh Trung Primary School, Nghia Hanh District, in the Quang Ngai Province, is being completed as we write this. The dedication and handover of the library will take place on May 25.

Since our last letter, we have donated more money to pay for five computers, a big screen tv, extra furnishings, and more books. Any donations you can make really do help us and this project. Please consider the lasting good your donation will do to help educate a new generation of Vietnamese youth. Please give what you can now.



Almost completed Small Dreams Library at Hanh Trung Primary School, May 15, 2023.

VVAW intends to continue supporting these library projects with construction, enhancements to equipment, or whatever the libraries need. We hope to continue this support for at least the next five years, with the possibility of adding another library.

We are deeply thankful when our members and supporters make tax-deductible donations to VVAW's work, at whatever level. Your contributions to VVAW help us keep distributing *The Veteran*, to our members, friends, and supporters. Your donations also keep our website going, where we have every issue of VVAW's newspaper online as well as archives of many other articles, photos, and videos. Your donations allow us to make VVAW's legacy not only accessible to all through our website but also to archive them for generations to come. Funds raised will also continue to support the Library of Vietnam Project. We thank all of you for your continued support.

In solidarity,

William Branson

Bill Branson
VVAW Board member

I am sending Vietnam Veterans Against the War ☐\$35 ☐\$50 ☐\$100 ☐\$250 ☐\$500 ☐Other to support its work for peace, justice, and for decent benefits for all veterans. Donations to VVAW are tax deductible. You can also donate online at www.vvaw.org.

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