

— THE POINT —

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC.

Chapter 172

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The First VVA Chapter in the State of Maryland - The Gold Standard

OCTOBER 2012

Here We Go Again *Editorial Opinion*

Back in the last century the United States got involved in an undeclared war in a country called Vietnam. This war although being a gallant effort in ideologies was very unpopular with many citizens. Most people refused to support the war effort and openly protested. Still, many others made fortunes with what was called "The military industrial complex." But, a courageous minority agreed that this was a fight worth getting involved in. When they came home they were called "veterans" some were welcomed home, mostly by their families. Many others were scorned and found that their effort was not appreciated or worth being acknowledged, and many of them were not welcomed home. For several years many of these veterans sort of went into hiding refusing to admit to their participation in this generational event which had become known as the Vietnam War. But change was in the air.

After a great effort and about ten years things started to change. With the erection of the "National Vietnam Veterans Memorial" aka "The Wall" a new attitude came across the country, it was now cool to say that you were a Vietnam Veteran. It was not only cool, people started coming up with the paperwork that theoretically proved them to be heroes' and a new phrase was added to our lexicon. "Stolen Valor." We had and have some of these imposters using their phony DD-214's to join the various veterans groups and even running for elected positions within these groups. So we went through a cleansing process and eliminated a lot of these lepers. There's still some out there, but many have been exposed for what they are. Now that should be the end of that story, but it's not.

Now a new phenomenon has reared its ugly head. Veterans who served honorably have started claiming to be more than they were. Suddenly they have all become "airborne" qualified or Rangers, SEALs, Special Forces or CIA. Why they can't just be proud of what they did is beyond me. At a time when most people were running around screaming "Hell no, we won't go" they said yes I will. That should be enough; for the most part the rest was just a roll of the dice to see where you ended up. Take me for example; I joined the Marine Corps as an "aviation guarantee" and ended up being a truck driver, but I'm cool with it. I mean I wasn't just a truck driver, I drove a five ton wrecker and yes it's true I was probably the best wrecker driver in Vietnam. Once I got sent to Marble Mountain to move some conex boxes around at the 5th Special Forces base. However I do not refer to this as the time I was working with the Special Forces, but I did do a good job and they were truly impressed with my abilities. Several years ago I coined the phrase, "There were only 500 Navy SEALs that served in Vietnam and I have met all 2000 of them. I guess by now you see where I am headed. We have enough phonies in Washington holding the veterans back without our own people dragging us down. Be proud of who you are and what you did.

Steve Parsons

October 2012

The Steak Feed

If you missed the steak feed at the Mt.Savage Fire hall September 15 you missed a great event. About 230 people made the trip to the forbidden zone to enjoy the food and fun. The food was great as usual and the fundraising knocked a large chunk off the bill and everybody made it home alive. Thanks to all those who pitched in to help make the annual event a success.

Christmas Party

The next big thing is the Christmas party, and unless you've been asleep at the wheel, you know that we have had to move it to the Cumberland Holiday Inn. This event will be December 1st; the doors open at 17:00. The price is \$20 per person, due to an unfortunate lack of space only 250 tickets will be sold, as of this writing only 71 tickets remain.

Just One More Thing

Like many of us I have to make the trip to Martinsburg more than I want. One of the bright spots in the trip is when I top Polish Mt. and there at the top of the cut is that lone American flag flying from the top of that small pine tree. It has been there for several years and replaced when needed. I don't know who is responsible for this but whoever it is good on them. I think that this would be an activity that the Chapter members could take part in. No not the flag at Polish Mt. but just about anyplace else. Remember just after 9/11 flags appeared just about every place? Let's renew that fervor, let's us as veterans plant some flags around the county. Put them on the freeway overpasses and the top of road cuts through the mountains and just about any place where there is none now. Let's raise the flag maybe we'll get something started and as always be smart and be safe. In case you are wondering we sell flags at the Chapter Office.

From the Sky Pilot....

Monthly Reading: I Peter 4: 12-16

Whatever life burdens oppress you and trials are too much to face, remember, God's strength in your weakness: He'll give you His power and grace. (Vs. 12) "Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; (vs. 13) but rejoice to extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed , you may also be glad with exceeding joy. (Vs. 14) If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed , but on your part He is glorified. (Vs. 15) But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. (Vs. 16) Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.'

Prayer: God, you are so good! You have provided all we need and so much more. Help us to be content with what we have, knowing that with out you we would have neither life nor breath.

Rodger Long, Chaplain

POWMIA Day

The post homes of many veterans service organizations have a small table and chair set aside where no one sits. It is reserved seating, held open for someone who has yet to come home. The third Friday of September is the day America has set aside to honor those of our service members who have been held Prisoner of War or remain Missing In Action. It is those for whom these table have been reserved. Since the start of World War II, about 142,000 Americans have been POWs and more than 17,000 of them died in enemy captivity. According to Bob Peck, second Vice-President of the chapter, an estimated 1 million American service member are still MIA—many of them from the Civil War. America's first POWs included 11,500 men who died on British prison ships during the Revolutionary War and are buried in a mass grave in Brooklyn.

"We call them comrades," said Bob "They are unable to be with their loved ones and families, so we join together to pay our humble tribute to them and bear witness to their continued absence. We always have a moment of silence before all our meetings and functions at our chapter in remembrance. We can't forget any of them."

The POW/MIA flag is the only flag displayed in the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol and the only flag to have flown over the White House. You know the flag. It is displayed in many places, not just on flagpoles but on vehicles and on the pins and shirts many of us wear, and elsewhere. The flag is black, with a white disk that contains the silhouette of a man's head. He is looking downward, as if feeling forgotten and forlorn. There also is the silhouette of a watchtower and a guard holding a rifle, and a strand of barbed wire. Printed in what below the man are the words, "YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN".

America's list of POW's contains many from this area, and some of them are still living. The list of MIAs includes those whose families from this area are still waiting for some word. America continues to hunt for those who are missing. Because of this, a few times a year, someone who once was lost in a faraway land is found, and for those families the waiting ends. Even when they finally know, and they have a measure of closure, they can never forget. Never should we.

Bob Peck

Submitted to Cumberland Times News

Veterans Savings Day

Every **Monday** is Veterans Day at
International
Beauty School

We invite any veteran to come visit us and receive free haircuts and manicures any Monday.
Walk ins welcome/Appointments available

International Beauty School
119 N. Center St.
Cumberland MD
301-777-3020
Clinic Hours: 10-2 & 5-8

All work is done under supervision of a
licensed instructor

Wreath Winner??????

No one has claimed the Autumn Lottery Wreath that was raffled off at the Steak Feed.
The ticket number is 679195
Please call the Chapter Office if you have the winning number by **Oct. 15th.....**
If no one claims it.....then we will run it off again.

Museum Needs Your Help

We would like to put together a tribute to a Vietnam Military Units. We are asking our member to donate any unit patches you might have. We have a few army patches, and could use any patch from the other branches.

Please drop them off at the chapter.

Thank You, Ray Everly

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Disclaimer

The newsletter The Point is a monthly publication of chapter 172. The viewpoints or opinions expressed in this publication are solely those of the writer and are meant only for informational and entertainment purposes. These opinions do not represent the official policy of VVA National or Chapter 172. All unsigned articles are by the editor; All other submissions will have the contributor's name as a byline.

Chapter Meetings

Chapter meetings are the first Thursday of each month at 2000 hours at the Chapter Home 17 North Liberty Street, Cumberland, Maryland. Boards of Directors meetings are the first Thursday beginning at 1900 hours. All members are encouraged to attend both the membership and Board of Directors meetings.



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