



# Florida Veteran

Vietnam and All Veterans of Florida, Inc.

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October 2009

Volume 8 - Issue 2

## Florida's 23rd Annual Vietnam And All Veterans Reunion

The date for the upcoming Reunion is April 23-25, 2010 at Wickham Park in Melbourne, Florida. The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall will be at the park for viewing April 18-25<sup>th</sup>. As most of you are aware, *this is the Nations largest Veterans Reunion*. Make sure to visit the Reunion Website at [www.floridaveteransreunion.com](http://www.floridaveteransreunion.com) for up to date information regarding the schedule of events, including the Wall escort the preceding Sunday, hotel listings, camping information as well as vendor applications.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The recent attempt by the Administrative Branch of the Federal Government to bill the personal health insurance of veterans for VA treatment of service- connected disabilities should be a wake-up call for all veterans. This act demonstrated a radical deviation from the contract the Federal Government has with every man and woman who has served in the armed forces of the United States.

If this had been allowed to become policy, veterans with service –connected disabilities could have lost any health insurance they have for themselves and their families.

The mere attempt by the Administrative Branch to do this to our veterans is an example of the lack of respect they have for our men and women in uniform.

They withdrew the offensive proposal when they were immediately faced with a *unified* confrontation by the veterans' organizations from the entire country. ***This demonstrates why all veterans need to stand together in organizations such as this Coalition, American Legion, DAV, VFW and many others to have our collective voices heard.***

This Administration has shown their hand and we must all be vigilant for further assaults on our brothers and sisters who have served our Country.

“Together Then....Together Again”

Don Wassmer  
President

Vietnam and All Veterans of Florida State  
Coalition

The Vietnam and all Veterans of Florida State Coalition would like to recognize the following members/organizations for awards that were presented at our Annual Banquet held this past January. VVB Chapter 96 – Organization of the year, Mike Dixon – Veteran of the Year, and Doris Johnson– Member of the Year.

In addition, our new executive board members are: Don Wassmer, President, Robert Neitzel 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Leo “Doc” Williams 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Denise Wassmer, Secretary and Jacque Earrusso, Treasurer.



## VVB NEWS

### President's Message

Is it hot enough? Is it wet enough? Is it windy enough? Are we all broke yet or did you manage to make a cash for clunker trade on your gas guzzler?

What a grueling summer it has been . . . some say the hottest in a long, long time! And painful too as several VVB members are not feeling up to snuff. But the dog days are nearly over and we Band of Brothers and Sisters are ready for more action.

As if the highly loyal, traveled, and industrious keepers of our own VVB Traveling Memorial Wall and our leaders who have been successfully negotiating and wheedling for our Bunker replacement site . . . and then there is a highly dedicated member who actually had a major Community Center dedicated in his name . . . have been idling away the Summer.

Mo and Greg Welch will likely be away from home, as they have been for the better part of the past year(s), hauling, setting up, breaking down, and guiding visitors into and through the experience of our VVB Traveling Memorial Wall as you read this. Greg recently reported to the VVB Executive Board that both the Wall and the Wall trailer will need some refurbishment soon. Greg and Maureen are truly heroes and highly effective Diplomats for the VVB.

Ken Baker, Ralph Earrusso, Greg Welch and I have been involved in negotiations with Brevard County that have culminated in the awarding of a very prime piece of property to the VVB to use as a new home. The property is behind Merritt Square Mall; adjacent to the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center and Commissioner Chuck Nelson made the announcement at the VVB Reunion closing ceremony. Ken, Ralph, and Greg have been heroic in this effort to replace the Bunker . . . And the battle continues on as construction planning and financing is currently being addressed.

And then there is Ted Whitlock; a man who has dedicated his entire life to this great country, mostly in service to it. For those of you readers who may not know Ted, he is a very quiet, unassuming, and modest hero with an infectious smile. I imagine that he simply went about the business of serving his country as best he could and know now that he simply honors and serves our troops. The new Community Center in Palm Bay will forevermore be named the Ted Whitlock Community Center. What an honor to know this VVB warrior!

**That's enough for now. Be well, my friends.  
Semper Fi!  
Bill Vagianos, President  
Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard**

## Community Covenant

**A Message from Maj Gen. Craig Whelden** - who along with Don Wassmer developed Brevard County's Community Covenant concept presented at the last Reunion:

[I would like] to solicit your support for a Congressional Resolution in support of Community Covenant, a Secretary of the Army initiative that many of you know I have been working on since early 2008. The lead sponsor of this Resolution is Congressman Ed Whitfield (KY). The Resolution has been submitted to the House Committee on Armed Services. It can be viewed at [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov) by typing into the search menu "H. Con. Res. 170" under BILL NUMBER. In essence, it states:

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—*

- (1) *supports and encourages Community Covenant signing ceremonies between local communities and the Armed Forces throughout the United States ;*
- (2) *encourages Americans to participate in or develop programs and services to support members of the Armed Forces and their families in their communities, especially during and after military deployments; and*
- (3) *resolves to take all necessary steps to support members of the Armed Forces and their families.*

*Congressman Whitfield's staff has indicated that letters of support -- to other Members of Congress -- encouraging them to become co-sponsors would be helpful. They would like to have them as soon as possible in order to gain the traction desired before the August recess. I suspect each of your Members of Congress has a place on his or her web site where constituents can send in a message via email or a simple fax. A simple note along the lines of the following would be greatly appreciated:*

"I've recently become aware of a Congressional Resolution (H. Con Res. 170), introduced by Congressman Ed Whitfield to the House Committee on Armed Services that supports an initiative called Community Covenant. I strongly urge you become a co-sponsor of this Resolution and that you encourage communities in your district to participate in this great initiative that benefits our service members and their families."

Warm Regards,

Craig B. Whelden , Major General , U.S. Army (Retired)

[www.communitycovenant.army.mil](http://www.communitycovenant.army.mil) -- to learn more about Community Covenant

## In House

### Desert Wars Memorial Needs Input

The Brevard Co. FL Veterans Center and Museum is creating a park and a memorial for the many actions that the USA has been involved in. I have been tasked to suggest a memorial for Desert Shield/Desert Storm , OIF and OEF. We have a five foot cube to fill at least a five foot square monument to create. I would appreciate any thoughts that you might have on making a monument/memorial for this recognition to the 5,000+ troops that have been KIA/WIA and the billions that the USA has spent. Thank you for any ideas, you may email in answer to this, call or fax. Thank you for any suggestions and best regards, Ray L. Norman, Brevard Veterans Memorial Committee; 321-749-7121 cell; 321-452-5376 fax.

### School Speaker Program

This program headed by Rod Smith takes veterans to Brevard County schools to give first hand accounts behind the history they are taught. Most often the atmosphere is casual

# The Wall Report

## Brevard County Veteran Service Team

VA's Online Personal Health Record VA's online personal health record, My HealtheVet, located at [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov), provides America's Veterans access to personal, secure, informed health information. Through a Web-based portal, registered Veterans have Internet access at any time to VA health information that allows them to become informed partners in their care with their medical providers.

Any Internet user may record and store important health and military history information and access personal medical information by registering at the Web site. Visitors to the site can keep activity and food journals; record, track and graph their vital signs; record and store their health history and prescriptions; access trusted health information; and read about VA benefits and services.

Veterans enrolled for care at a VA facility can use enhanced functions online after they make a visit to a VA medical center to verify their identity. These registrants can request VA prescription refills online and receive personalized reminders and tips on how to stay well. More than 6.5 million refills have been requested since 2005. The refills are delivered to Veterans' homes in five to 10 business days.

In the near future, Veterans will be able to schedule and change appointments, view their laboratory results, enter and update their own health information for their medical providers to monitor, and communicate with their VA medical care team through secure messaging.

Launched nationwide in 2003, My HealtheVet has more than 740,000 registered users; 72 percent are VA patients.

My HealtheVet's secure portal allows Veterans to own their personal information. The information they track most often is medication history, health history, contact information for health care providers, weight and blood pressure. The program is bringing them incremental additions of data copied from their VA electronic health records.

*Glenn McGuffie is the Brevard County Veteran Services Team Manager. The team is trained by the VA and Nationally Accredited Service Officers for the FDVA, DAV, VFW, American Legion and other smaller National Veteran Organizations. They have 3 service officers to assist veterans/families/survivors with all types of VA claims. For further information contact the office at 321 633 2012*

## **VVB Change of Address**

Please note the VVB has a new mailing address:

**Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard, Inc.**

**1125 W. King Street**

**Cocoa, FL 32922-8505**

The Post Office did away with PO Box 929 and we had to change addresses please do not use the PO Box anymore.

Well we have been busy this summer with the Traveling Memorial Wall; we were in St Paul for Minnesota Welcomes Home Vietnam Vets. We were in Chicago for the 4th of July and then to a small town in Nebraska Geneva where I met the Governor. The big event was Henley Falls MN because it at was the smallest town we have ever been to POP 250 people. People from larger towns 1500 people wanted to know how they got the Wall. It was great they had help from towns 40 miles away. It shows that anyone can sponsor the Wall. I just left Hazard KY and we put the Wall up in Tallapoosa GA. And we'll be home next week. Support for the troops is strong in the heartland, till later.

**We have two appearances left for this year. Both are in Florida! This time of year is a great time to visit Florida. And to visit us at one of these great events!**

We'll be at the [Vietnam Veterans Gathering](#), October 15th - 19th, in Ocala.

**ESCORT INFORMATION - Meet at RideNow PowerSports, (3920 N Hwy 441 in Ocala) All bikes out at 9:00am. Click Here For The [Escort Ride Flyer](#)**

**On November 10th - 16th we'll be at Lashley Park in Punta Gorda for the Brotherhood Co. D event.**

Our 2009 schedule is about done.. We also have added a few new items to make the Memorial more complete. Hope to see you all at the Reunion in April, and remember check our schedule on our web site [www.TravelingWall.us](http://www.TravelingWall.us) Also if you have any friends that might want to bring in the Please have them contact me for all the info.

See you on the road.

**Greg Welsh**

## **More About The VVB Wall**

The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall is owned and trademarked by the Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard. It is the centerpiece of our annual reunion. Our first reunion in 1988 featured a Wall listing 83 Florida veterans still missing from the Vietnam War. It was constructed by inmates at the Brevard Correctional Institution, who at that time, formed a veterans group. Unfortunately the group dispersed not long after it formed when inmates were scattered throughout other institutions to make way for a juvenile detention center.

For subsequent reunions the VVB used Walls from other organizations.

Frequent scheduling problems mandated our own Wall and that came about in 2005 with the establishment of a Wall Committee. This had been anticipated as early as 2002 when our first donation toward the construction of a Wall was made. Greg Welsh enlisted help from his boss at Kennedy Space Center to estimate the extent of the project and the race was on. A Wall had to be ready by the 2006 Reunion because the VVB could not book one.

Finding a builder was next and several companies were considered. Material samples were made and transported back and forth by VVB members for testing and quality. Greg, Ralph Earrusso and Ray Johnson cut costs by sanding and taping the

panels in a requisitioned garage. That's when Greg lost his job at the Space Center and became the Wall Manager.

Met-Con, Inc. of Cocoa constructed the Wall in 2005 donating a considerable portion of their labor. Precision Powder Coating of Melbourne did the finish work with McCotter Ford of Titusville installing the highlighting of the names. Those three businesses stretched the entire length of Brevard making this labor of remembrance truly a countywide project. It wasn't planned; it just worked out that way. A Truck and Trailer acquired by the VVB served as storage and transport.

Sixteen hours before the 2006 reunion the Wall was still being carefully arranged in the trailer. It met its send off time with only hours to spare, but it got there and the reunion went off without a hitch. The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall is still being improved as it sets to make its 4<sup>th</sup> appearance at our reunion.

Each year there are more requests for the Wall from organizations throughout the country to display at their events.

"Everywhere we go," says Greg Welsh, "The VVB is thanked for building it and making it available for people to see."

## FLORIDA DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION



**Dedicated Unhesitating Service To Our Fighting Forces**

***"So Others May Live"***

On behalf of The Florida Dustoff Association I would like to take a moment to say "Welcome Home." The Florida Dustoff Association is comprised of Dustoff Medics, Pilots, Corpsmen, Donut Dollies, Med-Evacs and many whom themselves have been "dusted-off" from The Vietnam, The Gulf War and OIF/OEF. **ALL ARE WELCOMED AT DUSTOFF!!**

This years elected officers are: Robert Neitzel, President, Brett Brookins, Vice President, Elizabeth Brookins, Secretary, Roberta Neitzel, Treasurer and Doc Combs, Chaplin.

I would like to take a moment to Congratulate this past years recipients of awards in our organization: Member of the Year,

Roberta Neitzel, Certificate of Appreciation for Service to Dustoff – Tony Cartlidge, Bob Gallagher and Tom Bubb, Certificates for Feeding of the Troops to Elizabeth Brookins and Jim "Patches" Watson.

We are currently in the process of completing our website – [www.DUSTOFFFL.ORG](http://www.DUSTOFFFL.ORG), so please feel free to take a peek, but please remember, it is currently under construction.

**Robert Neitzel -President Florida Dustoff Association  
1st Vice President VVOF**

***"WHEN I HAVE YOUR WOUNDED"***

## VVOF needs your Assistance

The State Coalition has been putting forth an effort to support our troops by contacting corporations and placing public service announcements in local papers requesting donations for our fighting forces. It would be appreciated if our membership would join our effort in helping by collecting items our soldiers can use. We are looking for personal toiletry items such as brushes, combs, soap, flip-flops, trial sizes of shampoo, toothpaste, etc., to send over seas. Items or monetary donations (personal or from organizations) would be greatly appreciated. We do have a 501(c) 3 being used if an organization is donating money. If you and your local organizations are interested, please contact Roberta Neitzel,

Treasurer of Florida Dustoff Association at 386-424-1989. ***All your efforts would be greatly appreciated!!***

## KWA Mid-Florida Chapter 173 News

Well, we are now in the summer months and so far it has been a great start. We had our memorial service commemorating the start of the Korean War on June 25 at American Legion Post No. 19. We had a great turnout with over 100 people attending. There were three KWVA chapters in attendance (173, 188, and 210), American Legion Posts 19 and 2093, and TREA Chapter 124. Also attending was the Korean Senior Citizens. They brought fried rice, Korean fried chicken, spicy beef, and of course, Kimchee. After the band played, we honored all Korean War Veterans. Then I asked the South Korean soldiers that served alongside us, to stand and be recognized. Then I proceeded to announce each one, saying that their rank was and what unit they served with. Each one then received our challenge coins. After the program we had the usual cake cutting ceremony.

This month will be our Celebration Ceremony for the ceasefire of the Korean War (July 27, starting at 2 p.m. and until around 4 or 6 p.m. It will be a great event and I hope to see more of our chapter members showing up. If I am not mistaken, we will be having media coverage for this event and it will be in the newspaper or on the news. So, come on and enjoy. Remember this is YOUR event. Let's make it one that no one will forget.

We also will not be having a general membership meeting in August. They will pick up on September Post No. 119, at 11 a.m.



We will still have our executive board meeting in August at Casselberry Veterans Club, beginning at 11 a. m. You are welcomed to come and make suggestions to help make YOUR chapter the best in the state. Remember, your officers are only as good as YOU let them be. Without your suggestions the chapter will not become stale. Let's not let that happen.

**Yours in Comradeship**

**Chuck Travers**

## **A Tribute**

### **The 59<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Korean War**

More than a hundred celebrants gathered at American Legion Post 19 on Lee Road on June 25, 2009 to recognize the 59<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the start of the Korean War. Attendees included Korean War veterans, spouses and friends, and honored Korean veterans. It was a program, chock-full of events, featuring a fabulous concert by the VFW Post 2093 Community Concert Band, and the awarding of Chapter 173 gold coins to a number Republic of Korea war veterans. and other awards, and remarks by guest speaker and chapter adjutant Bill Russell. Traditional Korean and American food was provided by Korean Seniors and Post 19 Chef Jennifer Collins. The VFW Concert Band, considered by the editor to be the "best band in the land," performed "An American Tribute," a special medley of music provided with special permission by chapter quartermaster Ted Trousdale. Chapter 173 Treasurer Bob Johnson was on hand to get a few shots of the event.



## **1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division Association Florida Chapter**

Here it is the end of summer and another Division Reunion is passed and our 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter meeting in Jacksonville. I want to thank all of those from Florida that went to Texas and Jacksonville and truly hope that all made it home safely. Any of you that made the trip out to Hood for the *Homecoming* will agree that that in itself made the trip very worthwhile.

A BIG THANK YOU to Frank and Mary Alverson and Keith Helton (Chef) for setting up and hosting the meeting, and to the ladies who assisted them. They plan to do the 2nd Quarter (July August September) meeting again next year in Jacksonville.

Now it's time to get back to our home matters so please don't forget our next meeting to be hosted by "A" Troop in Bartow and bring some ideas on how to improve the chapter.

We hope to see some of you in Bartow in October at our next meeting and in Orlando on February 5, 6 and 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Till then God Bless and Keep You all well.

John

John R. Gailfoil, Sr. A Co. 227<sup>th</sup> AVN, F Troop 9<sup>th</sup> CAV  
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### **PARADE ON VETERANS DAY**

**SCAVAC (Seminole County Area Veterans Advisory Council)** voted for the Seminole County County's Veterans Day Parade to be on **WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 11<sup>th</sup> 2009 stepping off at 10 A.M.** in the staging area of the Winter Springs High School parking area. The parade will end up at Tuskawilla Road and Blumberg Blvd., one block North of Highway 434. Winters Springs had requested this time and date. Lunch will be served to parade participants following the parade and program

### **FIRST CAVALRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION UPCOMING EVENTS & REUNIONS**

**November 11 2009 Veterans Day in Washington, DC.** Watch your SABER and check the web site as information is added: [WWW.1CDA.ORG](http://WWW.1CDA.ORG) Call 1-800-445-8667 or 1-800-Hiltons to reserve your room at the Hilton Crystal City prior to the deadline of 9 October, 2009 to get our special rate of **\$129 per night plus tax.**

**June 2 – 6, 2010 First Cavalry Division Assoc. 63rd Annual Reunion, BLOOMINGTON, MN (Wed-Sun)** The hotel

**Sept 9 - 12, 2010** Fifth Cavalry Reunion St Louis, MO. Details to follow

**June 8 – 12, 2011** First Cavalry Division Association 64th Annual Reunion, (Wed-Sun). Official Reunion hotel is Shilo Inns and Suites on the top of Y. S. Young next to the Civic Center.

**June 11, 2011** Operation Desert Storm 10 Year Anniversary, Cooper Field, Fort Hood TX

**1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division Association Desert Storm Remembrance Ceremony 2011.** This has been approved by the 1CDA Board of Governors to be held during the 1CDA Reunion 8 – 12 June 2011 – the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Desert Storm. The 1 CDA DS (First Cavalry Division Association Desert Storm), would like to a ceremony similar to the one held in 2001 at Fort Hood. We need to cover this in our upcoming newsletters and the Point of Contact (POC) is Jim Bob Rollins, (936) 633-5432 [rollins@consolicated.net](mailto:rollins@consolicated.net) until he completes his relocation and move to Florida.

**June 6 – 10, 2012** First Cavalry Division Association 65th Annual Reunion Portland OR, (Wed-Sun).

### **Rules for Rendering Hand Salute of U.S. Flag New Law Allows Retirees and Vets to Salute Flag**

Traditionally, members of the nation's veteran's service organizations have rendered the hand-salute during the national anthem and at events involving the national flag only while wearing their organization's official head-gear.

The National Defense Authorization Act of 2008 contained an amendment to allow un-uniformed service members, military retirees, and veterans to render a hand salute during the hoisting, lowering, or passing of the U.S. flag.

A later amendment further authorized hand-salutes during the national anthem by veterans and out-of-uniform military personnel. This was included in the Defense Authorization Act of 2009, which President Bush signed on Oct. 14, 2008.

Thanks  
Doc Pepe

## Call To Action!

**Help us Pass H.Res 111**

### Co Sponsors are still needed for this Legislation

To Establish in the House of  
Representatives a  
Select Committee on POW and  
MIA Affairs.

This legislation needs your  
support!  
We need answers!

"There are too many live sighting reports, specifically observations of several Caucasians in a collective farm by Romanians and the North Korean defectors' eyewitness of Americans in DPRK to dismiss that there are no American POW's in North Korea." Background Paper prepared, in 1996, by I.O. Lee, analyst Defense POW/MIA Office.

"As of now, I can come to no other conclusion,." Former Secretary of Defense and CIA Director James Schlesinger before the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs, when asked

directly if the United States left men behind in Southeast Asia. The Defense POW/MIA Office has failed, miserably, in their responsibility. The comments in our "Reliable Sources" section confirm this.

It's time for Congress to take another look at the POW/MIA issue.

**HELP US PASS H. RES 111**

## 211 Cosponsors and Counting.... Is Your Congressman a Co-Sponsor for H.Res 111

Why We Need H. Res 111? For  
additional information and documents  
supporting the case see

[www.nationalalliance.org/legis.documents.pdf](http://www.nationalalliance.org/legis.documents.pdf)

## FEDERAL LEGISLATION EDUCATION PERTAINING TO VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

These bills are being provided as informational only and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Coalition or its members.

Note: For additional information on federal legislation and complete wording on each bill, please visit <http://thomas.loc.gov> and look up the Bill by the appropriate House or Senate Bill Number provided.

**Release date March 13, 2009:** Earlier this week, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) introduced his comprehensive bill that would authorize full concurrent receipt of military retired pay and VA disability compensation for all disabled retirees.

His bill, **S. 546**, the "Retired Pay Restoration Act," would extend eligibility for Concurrent Retirement and Disability Pay (CRDP) to service-disabled members who were medically retired with less than 20 years of service and repeal the current restriction that limits CRDP eligibility to those with 50% or higher VA disability ratings.

Sen. Reid declared in a roll-out statement, "It is simply absurd to deny disabled veterans every dollar they deserve. Being compensated for disability and for years of good service are completely separate, and one must not be held against the other. We must keep the promise we make to every veteran by ensuring they receive all the benefits they earn."

Sen. Reid's legislation would vest service-earned retired pay at 2.5% times years of service times base pay – the same CRDP formula that is now used for medical retirees with over 20 years of service. In essence, it would "vest" disability retirees in whatever years of service they earned.

### **S.3023**

**Title:** A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve and enhance compensation and pension, housing, labor and education, and insurance benefits for veterans, and for other purposes.

**Sponsor:** Sen Akaka, Daniel K. [HI] (introduced

5/15/2008) Cosponsors (1)  
**Related Bills:** S.3299, S.3376  
**Latest Major Action:** Became Public Law No: 110-389 10/10/08  
**Senate Reports:** 110-449

H.R. 2910

Title: To amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide for reimbursement to members of the Armed Forces of tuition for programs of education delayed by military service, for deferment of students loans and reduced interest rates for members of the Armed Forces during periods of military service, and for other purposes.

**Sponsor:** Rep Davis, Susan A. [CA-53] (introduced 6/28/2007)  
Cosponsors (78)

**Committees:** House Veterans' Affairs

**Latest Major Action:** 6/26/2008 House committee/subcommittee actions. Status: Forwarded by Subcommittee to Full Committee (Amended) by Voice Vote .

## Navy Capt. Scott Speicher Returns Home

The last of the missing Gulf War servicemen returned home to Jacksonville on August 13. Scott Speicher, an F-18 pilot was lost on the first day of the War and his status has been the center of debate concerning the handling and classification of those missing in action when the remains are not recovered and the loss circumstances are murky. There was also a charge that the Pentagon declared Speicher dead too soon after his loss which resulted in no immediate effort to search for the pilot or his aircraft. Enough credible evidence surfaced over the years to force the Pentagon to reclassify Speicher's status several times. For POW/MIA activists already frustrated over the handling of Vietnam era MIAs those classification changes signified at best, incompetence or worse, obfuscation. It's well known that the DoD and its subsidiaries has lost the trust of many Americans who are convinced that many servicemen were left behind in Vietnam.

Sometime in July, unconfirmed reports surfaced that Bedouins in Iraq's western Province of Anbar had discovered remains near Speicher's crash site. Marines were dispatched to the site and on August 2 the Pentagon announced that Capt. Scott Speicher had been found.

Speicher was a Kansas native but moved to the Jacksonville area as a teen. On August 14 his funeral procession passed by many of his boyhood landmarks including the church where he taught Sunday school and his old high school. He was escorted from Dover by his best friend Buddy Harris and interred at Jacksonville Memorial Gardens.

The end of his ordeal is now over. But he will forever remain a symbol of the Gulf War and the duty and sacrifice of those who served there. Welcome home, Captain.

## Scam Alert

Veterans are reporting that they are receiving calls from people claiming to be from the VA Pharmacy. The callers are telling veterans that the billing procedure for prescriptions has changed, and that the veteran needs to provide his/her credit card number for prescription payment before Pharmacy will fill their medication requests.

The VA is reporting that this is a "scam!" All billing for any VA treatment and/or prescriptions is done through the MCCR Section of the VA. If the veteran wishes to pay his/her account by credit card, the veteran must provide the credit card number to the Agent Cashier. The Agent Cashier is the only VA employee authorized to accept credit card payments. Please make sure to continue to pass this information on.

**IMPORTANT INFO FOR FLORIDA VETS CURRENTLY USING THE TAMPA AND ORLANDO VA CENTERS:** The Orlando VA Medical Center will soon be separate from the Tampa VA and your **CORRECT** contact information is needed for the Orlando VA Data Base.

**Check with your team or next appointment to ensure that they have everything correct so that they will have a green light when it is time for Orlando to take over. Please pass on this info to anyone you may know that this may affect.**

## NATIONAL WORLD WAR I MUSEUM

On 11 NOV 18 an Armistice was declared to end the fighting in World War I. Concerned citizens in the United States reflected on the past War and on the losses sustained, and they wondered what could be done to honor and remember. Just two weeks after the Armistice, Kansas City leaders met to discuss the need for the creation of a lasting monument to the men and women who had served in the War, and most notably to those who had died. R.A. Long, the founding president of the Liberty Memorial Association, said, "From its inception it was intended that this Memorial should represent on the part of all people, a living expression for all time of the gratitude of a grateful people to those who offered and who gave their lives in defense of liberty and our country." A community-based fundraising drive in 1919, organized and led by the Liberty Memorial Association, raised over \$2.5 million in just ten days. This staggering accomplishment for the time reflected the passion of public sentiment for the Great War that had dramatically changed the world. Following the fundraising drive, the Kansas City Chapter of the American Institute of Architects held a national architectural competition to choose a design for the Memorial.

The site for the Liberty Memorial was dedicated on 1 NOV 21. On this day, the supreme Allied commanders spoke to a crowd of more than 100,000 people. It was the only time in history these leaders were together in one place. In attendance were Lieutenant General Baron Jacques of Belgium; General Armando Diaz of Italy; Marshal Ferdinand Foch of France; General John J. Pershing of the United States; and Admiral David Beatty of Great Britain. After three years of construction, the Liberty Memorial was completed (except for the north frieze wall, dedicated in 1935). President Calvin Coolidge delivered the dedication speech to a crowd of 150,000 people. He spoke of how "the magnitude of this Memorial, and the broad base of popular support on which it rests, can scarcely fail to excite national wonder and admiration." In the years following its unveiling, the Liberty Memorial proved to

be a dynamic addition to Kansas City's cultural offerings.

Over time the physical structure of the Liberty Memorial deteriorated, and in 1994 it was closed due to safety concerns. In 1998 the public voiced its support for the Liberty Memorial once again by passing a half-cent sales tax for 18 months to support the restoration. While revitalizing the Liberty Memorial, plans took shape for expanding the site by building a museum. The Liberty Memorial Association had been collecting objects and documents related to World War I since 1920, and the new museum was envisioned as an inspiring and engaging experience for visitors showcasing the collection, much of which had never been viewed. Prior to the expansion, the institution had only 7,000 square feet to present exhibits. The new museum was built as an 80,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility. In total, the Liberty Memorial Association raised \$102 million dollars for the restoration and expansion. Supporters included the City of Kansas City, the State of Missouri, the United States Federal Government, and generous individual donors. In 2004 the Museum was designated by Congress as the United States' official World War I Museum, opening to the public on 2 DEC 06, as the National World War I Museum at Liberty Memorial.

The Museum presents a comprehensive interpretation of World War I (1914-1919) and its lasting consequences, providing a vivid and memorable experience for all. The state-of-the-art facility gives you the chance to explore and discover the nation's most extensive assembly of artifacts, photography, art and narratives of the Great War ever presented in a single collection. It introduces the war in unprecedented ways - through visual and audio sensory stimulation. The collections and exhibitions tell more than an American story. They cover the entire war from the first shots in 1914 to the last attempts at peace in 1919. All the belligerent nations involved, reflecting both the battlefield and the home front, are represented. The Museum located at 100 West 26th Street, Kansas City, MO 64108 is closed Mondays, except for Memorial Day and Labor Day, and is also closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. Hours of operation are 10-1700. However, the Liberty Memorial Tower, Memory Hall and Exhibit Hall closes at 4:30 p.m. Admission from \$4 to \$10 depends on visitor's age. There is no charge for Active Duty Military, Career Military (20+ years service) and kids under six years of age. The Museum is handicapped accessible and has a limited number of wheelchairs available on a first-come, first-served basis at no charge. For additional info call (816) 784-1918, email [info@theworldwar.org](mailto:info@theworldwar.org), or refer to <http://theworldwar.org>. [Source: <http://theworldwar.org> Sep 09 ++]

## VA DISABILITY COMPENSATION

Approximately 3 million veterans—about 2 million of whom are under age 65—receive compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for their service-connected disabilities. The amount is based on a rating of an impairment's effect on a veteran's earnings capacity, on average; disability ratings range from zero to 100%. Additional allowances are paid to veterans whose disabilities are rated 30% or higher and who have dependent spouses, children, or parents. Veterans with disabilities may also qualify for cash payments from other sources, including workers' compensation; private disability insurance; means-tested program benefits, such as Supplemental Security Income; and, for veterans under 65, the Social Security Disability Insurance (DI) program. About 146,000 veterans who receive disability compensation from VA also receive DI payments. When Social Security beneficiaries are eligible for disability benefits from more than one source, ceilings usually limit combined disability benefits from public sources to 80% of a recipient's average pre-disability earnings. Those DI payments—after any reduction—are adjusted

periodically to reflect changes in the cost of living and in national average wages. Veterans' compensation payments for disabilities are not considered for that purpose, however, and thus do not apply toward limits. That same exclusion applies to means-tested benefits and to some benefits that are based on public employment.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has provided to Congress an option to reduce government spending that would limit disability compensation for veterans who receive VA disability benefits and DI payments. The option would reduce VA's disability compensation by the amount of the DI benefit. Applying that change to current and future recipients of veterans' compensation would affect an estimated 153,000 recipients in 2010, saving almost \$1.8 billion that year and approximately \$9.6 billion between 2010 and 2014. Applying the change only to veterans who are newly awarded compensation payments or DI payments would affect an estimated 3,000 recipients in 2010, saving about \$40 million in outlays that year and about \$1.1 billion through 2014. A rationale in favor of this option is that it would eliminate duplicate public compensation for a single disability. An argument against it is that the change would subject veterans' disability benefits to a form of means-testing (VA benefits are considered entitlements). Moreover, to the extent that this option applied to current DI recipients, some disabled veterans would have their income reduced. [Source: CBO Budget Options Vol 2 Aug 09 ++]

## SBP WITHDRAWAL

Retirees participating in the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) who have a service-connected totally disabled rating by Veterans Affairs may request to stop participating in SBP. This applies to retirees who have held the VA totally disabled rating for at least 10 consecutive years or, if for a lesser period, at least five years from their discharge date or release from active duty. Based on the provisions of Public Law 96-402 (1 Dec 80), the initial date for determining the five- or 10-year period is the effective date of the VA rating of total disability. Validation must be obtained from the VA if not available from the retiree. Withdrawing from the SBP under this option ensures the surviving spouse will receive a full refund of the SBP premiums the member paid for the five- or 10-year period if the VA awards Dependency and Indemnity Compensation to that surviving spouse. Refund of SBP premiums is not authorized if the member terminates SBP coverage under the provisions of Public Law 105-85, the option that allows a one-year period, beginning on the 25th month following commencement of retired pay for participants to end their SBP coverage. To request discontinuation under Public Law 96-402, provide a written request accompanied by the written consent of the spouse beneficiary under the SBP to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service in Cleveland. [Source: Afterburner Sep 09 ++]

## Military Addressing Tips

### Make sure your mail reaches our troops

Our troops look forward to receiving your letters and packages. That's why it's important to make sure your mail gets there, to the right person, in the right place.

The Department of Defense has issued the following guidelines for addressing your mail to military and civilian personnel deployed in Operation Iraqi Freedom.



1. **Use the service member's full name.** The Department of Defense cancelled the [Any Service Member program](#) so mail must be addressed to someone specific.
2. **Include the unit and APO/FPO** (Air/Army Post Office or Fleet Post Office) address with the nine-digit ZIP Code™ (if one is assigned). [Click-N-Ship®](#) customers should be advised that the Postal Service and the Military will continue to add and update valid APO/FPO addresses for your online labels.
3. **Include a return address.**
4. **For packages, print on one side only** with the recipient's address in the lower right portion or print a postage-paid label online with [Click-N-Ship®](#). (Please note that ZIP Codes 093XX and 964XX are currently unavailable for electronic labels)

4. Please allow 7-10 days for delivery.

**Note:** These are free supplies, postage must be affixed.

Additionally, you can find guidelines for packing, addressing, and shipping items to U.S. troops at [www.usps.com/supportingourtroops/](http://www.usps.com/supportingourtroops/).

## MAIL BY DATES

- Dec. 4 Military mail destined for Iraq or Afghanistan
- Dec. 11 Military mail to other international destinations

## What special precautions should I use when packaging overseas military mail?

Following these precautions will safeguard your package on the way to its final destination:

- 1 Place the mailing address inside the parcel on a separate piece of paper.
- 2 Use a box that is constructed to conform to the contents you are sending.
- 3 Ensure the weight of the items in the box is evenly distributed.
- 4 Add packing material on the inside if any portion of the box sags or is easily depressed.
- 5 Use packaging tape for wrapping the outside of the box. Do not wrap with string.
- 6 Cross out or cover excess markings or printing to prevent your box from being misssent.
- 7 Enclose all personal hygiene items, such as deodorant, lotion, or shampoo, in a sealable bag.
- 8 Place all perishable items, such as cookies, chips, etc., in a plastic container.
- 9 Do not mail liquids of any kind, especially carbonated drinks, which can explode during transit.

## Military Care Package Mailing Kit

Since Priority Mail service supplies are the packaging of choice for families preparing care packages for service members overseas, the USPS has created a "Mili-kit" based on the items most frequently requested by the **military**.

The kit contains:

- Three (3) each of flat rate boxes O-FRB1 and O-FRB2
- Two (2) each of Cube boxes OBOX7
- Address labels - Label # 228: 8 each
- Address labels - Label # 106-A: 1 each
- Customs FORM 2976-A: 8 EA.
- Customs FORM Envelope 2976-E: 8 EA.

The kit may be requested by calling **1-800-610-8734** (Packing Supply) and:

1. Choose your language ("1" is English, "2" is Spanish).
2. Choose option 1 (it states it is for Express Mail service, Priority Mail or Global Express Guaranteed).
3. When you reach a live agent, request "**CAREKIT04**."

## INTERESTED IN JOINING THE COALITION?

There are many benefits to join the Vietnam and All Veterans State Coalition. A voice of many is heard above a voice of one. The coalition meets quarterly at various locations in the State of Florida and we discuss and disseminate information pertaining to veterans and their benefits. To obtain information regarding joining the coalition either as an Organization, or an individual, please visit our website at [VVOF.ORG](http://VVOF.ORG).

If you, or your organization is already a member of the coalition, and there has been a change in officers, please immediately advise the coalition of these changes, including mailing addresses, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers so we may keep you up-to-date with all pertinent information.

**FAIR USE NOTICE:** This newsletter contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. The Vietnam and ALL Veterans of Florida, Inc. are making such material available in our efforts to advance understanding of: POW/MIA, Military, Veterans, Health, democracy, and scientific issues, etc.

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All inquiries, questions or comments may be directed to the President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer. All articles printed in our newsletters are strictly the opinion of the submitter and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Vietnam and All Veterans of Florida State Coalition or its member organizations. Updated September 17, 2006

# THE VIETNAM TRAVELING MEMORIAL WALL



## About Our Wall

Our Wall is a 3/5 scale of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington DC, it stands six feet tall at the apex and covers almost 300 feet from end to end. The Memorial Wall is sponsored by The Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard (VVB). Work to build our Wall was started in April of 2005. The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall was completed and first shown to the public April 24, 2006.

This Traveling Memorial stands as a reminder of the great sacrifices made during the Vietnam War. It was made for the purpose of helping heal and rekindle friendships. The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall also allows people the opportunity to visit loved ones in their home town, who otherwise may not be able to make the trip to Washington.

The names on The Wall were painstakingly researched from five different data bases and cross-referenced with the Department of Informational and Organizational Reports (DIOR) in Washington, DC, and is one of the most correct and up-to-date traveling walls in the country.

Feel free to take a look at our website [www.travelingwall.us](http://www.travelingwall.us), read about what we have to offer. Please [contact us](#) with any questions you might have in regards to The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall coming to your town.

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