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Viet Vet Monsoon Tribune

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VVA Chapter 106

May 1986

AGENT ORANGE LAWSUITS

At this month's General Meeting, a program, put together by Louie Leon, will deal with Agent Orange. It will feature a talk by Bill Risner, an attorney for Agent Orange victims. The program will also share up to date information and a video on the subject.

Mr. Risner is the Regional Counsel for Agent Orange claimants and has represented over one hundred claimants to date. He will share with the Chapter some very important information regarding their never ending issue. If you have questions about Agent Orange, don't miss this fine program.

SHARING THE EXPERIENCE

The Chapter is preparing an Educational Program to be given at a local High School. We will be giving young people the opportunity to better understand the Vietnam experience, and part we played. The program will contain a History lesson, personal perspective of Veterans, and a question + answer session.

The History part will be given by Dennis Lee, a member of the Chapter with a teaching background. Dennis will give the History of Vietnam before U.S. involvement, during U.S. involvement, and after U.S. involvement. He will also share what was taking place in the U.S. while Americans were fighting in Southeast Asia.

Three to five Vets from the Chapter will each give a five minute talk on his or her account and perspective, to further enrich the program. The contents of each talk will be left up to the individual Vet. Both in-country Vets and Vietnam Era Vets will be participating in this program.

Continued on page 4

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

David Bentley

Thomas Craig

W.C. Earnheart

PRESIDENTS CORNER

by Albie Ginaro

V.V.A. CHAPTER 106 is movin' right along. There should be many upcoming events in the next year for members, and our families and friends. We haven't been contacted yet regarding Memorial Day or any parades, but if you are interested in these kind of activities then please come to the monthly meeting on the 29th.

V.V.A. NATIONAL has sent word to the Chapter and also there's an article in the V.V.A. VETERAN about the Senate voting for the V.V.A. NATIONAL CHARTER. It also looks very good that the House will O.K. it as well. This will give the National Organization a print out of ALL Vietnam-Era Veterans throughout the country and State by State. Then National would further funnel that information to the local Chapters. Then, hopefully we can expand membership. Until then, however, ALL the responsibility lies on the Board of Directors. As it stands now, we are in dire need of a qualified individual or individuals to re-vamp our membership records, gather information and get a MAJOR MEMBERSHIP DRIVE going. Please speak to either myself or any other Board member at the Chapter Meeting.

As with any organization we must have a basis for operating our organization and that is our Constitution. All Board members have received copies of the new Constitution which was amended and brought up to date at the 1985 Convention. To show you how organized National is getting, there is even now a Code of Disciplinary Procedure. Some people never thought this day would come, but it certainly has.

On Sunday May 15, there was our first even of the year. I've been contacted by 2 T.V. stations and one publication regarding not only the Children's Variety Show, but also requests for information about our Chapter. I'll fill you in on the results at the meeting.

There are going to be several more WELCOME HOME PARADES in different cities throughout the country this year. More info at the Chapter Meeting.

Okay, I know that you're out there. But where is your DD 214 ? In that old shoes box, the old duffle bag, or maybe in that old filing cabinet ? The Chapter would appreciate your kind c-operation by sending us a copy. THANKS ! Oh, by the way, if you have paid your dues sometime in the past and never got a card, or never got your copy of NATIONAL'S V.V.A. VETERAN please drop us a note or give us a call and we'll check it out for you. There have been several Vets that have paid their dues and never received their cards or the V.V.A. Veteran. Come on, we want to get this straightened out.

At this month's meeting we will be electing a NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN. In the new Constitution this is an elected position NOT an appointment by the President. After the election, the Nominating Committee Chairman will open nominations for vacancies in the Board of Directors. At the next month's meeting more nominations will be taken and an election will be held to fill those vacancies. If you are interested in running for the Board of Directors, think about it first. You will be expected to pull your weight.

A couple of thanks are in order. To Neil Mack (A NEW MEMBER) for making a very intriguing and interesting presentation about the M.I.A.-P.O.W. DAY at Davis-Monthan A.F.B.. The more and more I keep learning about this whole issue the more it leaves me in awe. Thanks Neil ! And thanks to Big Jim Porta (A LONG TIME MEMBER) for the media contact information that he put together for the Chapter. It's working Jim, thanks to your efforts.

We want to do some good in our community and we want you to be with us for this venture !.

WE WERE TOGETHER THEN AND WE CAN BE TOGETHER AGAIN !

In Camaraderie,



Albert W. Ginaro
President, V.V.A. 106

Across the Fence

The following was prepared by the incarcerated Vets from the Santa Rita Veterans Association:

VETS STILL GIVE

The incarcerated Veterans at Wilmot Facility still give help to their community. They operate a toy factory that produces wooden toys for disadvantaged children in Pima County. These toys are donated by the Vets to agencies that need them. The Santa Rita Veterans Association has purchased a few tools, and using donated wood scraps, they make toys. Staff members at the prison help the inmates by taking their own time to pick up supplies and wood.

Lumber Country gives the toy factory the wood they have left over from special projects. Warden Hallahan and Security Captain Garvin arrange to get the materials to the inmates for processing. Because of the nature of the equipment, several employees of the Department of Corrections donate extra time and effort to satisfy security regulations. Prisoners and Guards work together to provide a needed service to the community. Vets are still in there doing the job.

The 5th Annual National Vietnam Veterans Pow-Wow and Conference will be hosted by the Navajo Nation and the Vietnam Era Veterans Inter-Tribal Association on Thursday, May 29 to Sunday, June 1. The Pow-Wow will be held in Window Rock, Arizona, located 28 miles north of Interstate Highway 40 on the Arizona-New Mexico state lines. There will be rodeos, traditional tribal ceremonies, songs, dances, and plenty of food. Highlight of the event will be a special Pow-Wow honoring Vietnam Veterans on Saturday, May 31st from 7PM to 12AM. Take a tent and camp out. For more information call Oscar House at (602) 871 6335 or John Beagle at (602) 323 3272.

Trivial Pursuit

No one won the trivia quiz last month. As a matter of fact we didn't receive **any** entries!! The questions couldn't have been that hard could they? Well, you are going to get a second chance at the \$25.00 gift certificate from Mervyn's. Here are the questions again. The deadline for this month's drawing is June 12, 1986.

All of the Air Force Vietnam aces (five or more kills) were stationed at the same base when they became aces. Can you answer the following questions?

1. Name of the base?
2. Names of the aces in the order they achieved their ace?
3. What type of aircraft did they fly?
4. How many were pilots?
5. Which one had the most kills?

"There was a time, not long ago, when thoughts of home were as distant as forever; where loves were those of strangers, yet friends, and where the cold fingers of Death's boney hand silently rapped the cadence of persistant loneliness on once gentle hearts."



Continued from page 1

The class presentation will be 90 minutes long and will be given 6 times in two days. All participants in the project share a common desire to inform the young people of our experiences in the past so they may be better prepared to face the future.

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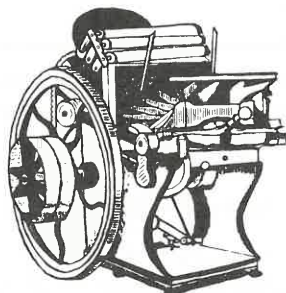
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The Secret Agent

Back To Square One: Women's Agent Orange Study Stuck

No progress has been reported in the nearly two years of a VA-initiated study of the possible health effects of Agent Orange on women veterans. It now appears congressional action will be necessary to get the VA study off the ground.

According to VA documents, one Agent Orange study protocol was submitted by the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control to a VA science panel studying Agent Orange health effects in April 1985. But the study was rejected by the agency's panel. Instead, the review panel recommended a specific hypothesis be proposed by the CDC prior to the development of a research design.

"That would seem to put it (the study) back to square one," commented Leslie Feldstein, a VVA board member who is monitoring the study's progress.

"No other proposal has been submitted, and it would appear that without appropriate legislative action this study will not be done," Feldstein added.

Currently there are bills in both the House and the Senate that would mandate such a study. Both bills are stuck however, in their respective veteran affairs committees. Senate bill 1616 is sponsored by Senator Alan Cranston (D.-CA). The legislation only has five cosponsors. But House bill 3297, sponsored by Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (R.-OH) has over 70 cosponsors giving it a much better chance of final passage.

Kaptur has also inserted a provision pertaining to the study in a House reconciliation bill (HR 3128) in hopes of spurring congressional action. The original bill has been in the Veterans Affairs Committee since September 1985.-

Feldstein suggests that people interested in seeing the study completed should write letters to their representatives and senators urging them to sponsor the three bills. Feldstein also suggests VVA members write Dr. Barclay Shepherd, Director of the VA Agent Orange Projects office and stress the importance of including civilian and military women in any Agent Orange study. Shepherd can be reached at: Veterans Administration, 810 Vermont Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20420.

All female veterans are urged to take part in the Agent Orange screening test available at local VA facilities. The exam consists of a chest x-ray, EKG, bloodwork, and a brief interview by a VA physician. The testing will provide a record of women who believe they have been exposed to Agent Orange and will help locate participants for a final study.

Leslie Feldstein
Committee on Agent Orange.
VVA. Chapter 106
Tucson Arizona.

POW/MIA UPDATE

Poor is the nation that has no heroes; shameful is the nation having them that FORGETS!

Recent information brought forth by former congressman John LeBoutillier indicates that 2500 Americans, officially acknowledged by the U.S. Government, are those missing or killed in action from Vietnam and Laos. There are an additional 2000-2500 men and women lost during secret missions in North Vietnam and Laos. Or they were in areas when they shouldn't have been--after the signing of the Paris Peace Agreement of January 1973, or after the fall of Saigon in 1975.

LeBoutillier states there are at least three systems of prisoners:

1. The North Vietnamese system--men shot down or captured by the North Vietnamese and held in North Vietnam.
2. Men shot down or captured in Laos by the Pathet Lao and kept by the Pathet Lao, separate from the North Vietnamese, unbeknownst to the Vietnamese.
3. The third set are men shot down and/or captured in Laos and held jointly by the Vietnamese and the Laotians. In most cases they are in Laos, guarded by Laotians and Vietnamese together. They, too, are moved around.

BLACK COWBOYS--This is a term used to describe U.S. military men/women who may have remained in Vietnam covertly and eventually captured/killed. There are some 1200 U.S. personnel who fall within the Black Cowboy category, and an equal number of American special mission "operatives" missing from clandestine excursions prior to April 1973.

The Black Cowboy is an individual who will be shown on the Vietnam Memorial as KIA/BNR (killed in action/body not recovered) or will not be listed at all.

The word is already going around Washington, D.C. that Americans will be coming out of Southeast Asia. The Vietnamese are going to release some of the Black Cowboys and the U.S. Government will be charging them as "defectors/deserters." This is an easy way out for the USG--with this type of charge against these people, there is no military backpay to dole out. Keep in mind this is exactly what happened to Marine PFC Bobby Garwood, who returned to the states in 1979! Intelligence documentation proves that Bobby was actually a prisoner for 14 years, and still he was convicted of collaboration!

The North Vietnamese have continued attempts to return American prisoners--all they have basically wanted was the \$3.25 billions in reconstruction money which was part of the Paris Peace Agreement. It was President Nixon and the U.S. Congress who refused to pay it in 1973. The U.S. Congress has continually refused paying it!

John LeBoutillier is basically correct in his overall view of the situation regarding our unreturned men and women. He has forgotten; however, that our people are captive in Cambodia, Russia and China as well. Not all U.S. personnel were military or involved in special missions. Therefore, we have an unknown number of civilians still unaccounted for, many known to be alive and captive in various areas of Southeast Asia.

These missing Americans have continued to honor their country. Now, we must ask, "What will their country do for them?" We, individually and collectively, are their country. WHAT PART WILL YOU PLAY IN THEIR REPATRIATION?

Eleanor Apodaca Reitz
Sister of Major Victor J. Apodaca, USAF
June 8, 1967 North Vietnam

MEETING DATES

GENERAL MEETING - May 29th at D.A.V. Chapter 18, Time: 8:00 Sharp

BOARD MEETING - June 12th at D.A.V. Chapter 18, Time: 8:00 Sharp

GENERAL MEETING - June 26th at D.A.V. Chapter 18, Time: 8:00 Sharp

REMEMBER The last THURSDAY of each month is the General Membership meeting.



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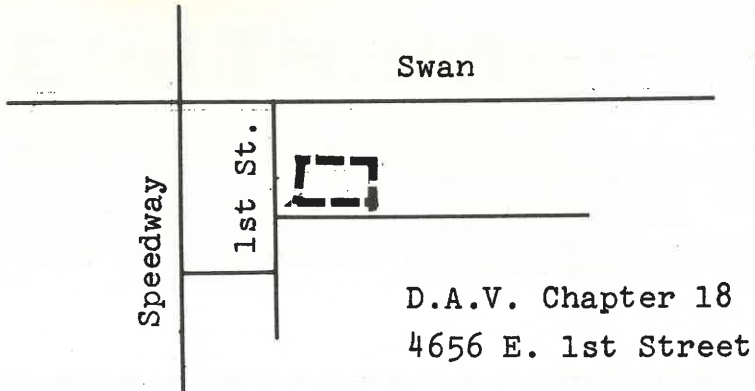
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