

# Vietnam Veterans of America Lehigh Valley, Chapter 415

## ELECTED OFFICERS AND BOARD

- Rusty Wolfe, VP
- George Puzio, Sec.
- Duane Cerino
- Paul Ciemiecki
- Rich Hudzinski
- Mike Regrut
- Pete Hermany, AVVA 415 Delegate
- Jolen Roseberry
- Chris McAtee
- Barry Willever, President, Chair of Community Services, Agent Orange and Treasurer

## VIETNAM: THE LEGEND OF THE BIG RED ONE

The Big Red One returned to Ft. Riley in April 1970. For nearly five years, the First Infantry Division soldiers battled against an aggressive enemy who made expert use of the dense jungles and inaccessible countryside. During this conflict, the First Infantry Division had mastered the use of helicopters as one of the best means of jungle warfare. **The Division suffered 20,770 casualties during the Vietnam War. Eleven Big Red One soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor for their heroic actions. Eleven Campaign Streamers and two Decorations were added to the Big Red One Colors.**

The First Infantry landed at

Cam Ranh Bay and Vung Tau in July of 1965 making it the first element of an Infantry Division to arrive in Vietnam. It was separated into five base areas: Di An; Phuoc Vinh, Bien Hoa and the 3rd Brigade at Lai Khe and Phu Loi.

In early 1966, the Division took part in Operations Marauder, Crimp II and Rolling Stone. It also participated in Operation Birmingham and in June and July the Division defeated large numbers of Viet Cong in 5 major battles on or adjacent to highway 13 in the battles of Ap tau O, Srok Dong and Minh Thanh Road.

During 1969 the Division conducted operations in the Iron Triangle and Trapezoid jungle areas in the vicinity of An Loc. In March the Division joined with the 25 Infantry

and 1st Cav in a joint operation of Lai Khe called Atlas Wedge.

When the Division returned from Vietnam to Ft Riley, their commander MG Milloy was quoted as saying "We have worked ourselves out of a job!"

**Thank you to Chapter 415 members who fought with the First Infantry Division.**



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## CHAPTER 415: OUR NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR 2012

Meeting in executive session the Board of Directors formulated our Nominating Committee: (1) Rusty Wolfe; (2) Mike Regrut; (3) Ken Howard and (4) Sam Sanguinito. Their charge is to fill all of the positions in the Chapter for the new year.

Positions Include:

- President**
- Vice President**
- Secretary**
- Treasurer**
- Committee Members and Committee Chairs**

The nominations will run for three consecutive months and the individual being nominated must be present!

In addition, you are welcomed to serve as an assistant to any of these positions to learn the ropes!

## 5TH ANNUAL FISHER HOUSE BENEFIT

Ed Banach, an active member of our own Chapter 415 would like to announce that The Second Brigade Motorcycle Club is sponsoring a benefit for the Fisher House!

**Friday**  
**February 24, 2012**

**8 p.m. to 1 a.m.**

There is at least one Fisher House at every major military

medical center to assist families in need and to ensure that they are provided with the comforts of home in a supportive environment. For Event Information:

**Domino (610) 573 9098**  
**Eveready (610) 442 6837**

For more information go to:

**[www.fisherhouse.org](http://www.fisherhouse.org)**  
**Rodeway Inn**

**Conference Center**  
**1151 Bulldog Drive**  
**Allentown, PA 18104**  
**(610) 395-3731**

The facility is very close to Routes 22 and 309. Tickets are \$20.00 per person and they are offering a hotel room rate of \$49.00. Be sure to mention the Fisher House when you are booking.



## VETERANS' SANCTUARY: AN UPDATE



Jolen Roseberry reports that we are in Phase 2 of our relationship with the Veterans Sanctuary. We are working to complete their "Map Room." If you have anything that would work as a display such as patches, medals, maps, military memorabilia and are willing to contribute, we will be sure it finds it's way to the Sanctuary!

Remodeling of the building is beautiful and, although they are currently hosting 9 residents, they are capable of handling thirty!

Many of the residents participate in community service primarily utilized for the purpose of teaching responsibility. Working at the Second Harvest Food Bank,

Assisting the Elderly and helping the Salvation Army are examples.

We will soon be ready to hold a Chapter 415 Meeting at the Sanctuary and maybe join them in a monthly breakfast when their families are there.

(Robert Csandl, Executive Dir. is pictured on the left)

## THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF POW/MIA FAMILIES

Incorporated in 1970, the League's sole purpose is to obtain the release of prisoners, the fullest, possible accounting for the missing, the repatriation of all recoverable remains of those who died serving our nation during the Vietnam War. The league is a non-profit, tax-

exempt 501c humanitarian organization financed from families, veterans and other concerned Americans. The League's office is now staffed by one full-time person.

We have made reference to this organization several times at meetings while dis-

cussing the POW/MIA issue. For more information, including updates, league meetings, recognition day, events, how you can help or simply if you wish to contact them, please google:

[www.pow-miafamilies.org](http://www.pow-miafamilies.org)



## A POSSIBLE VETERAN SCAM IN OKLAHOMA!

Recently, I received an e-mail from our VVA President, Larry Holman, asking me to pass along information regarding a scam operation involving veterans. NBC News in Oklahoma reported on an organization by the name of "Veterans Outreach Mission, Inc," run by a man called Bruce Wayne Rhoades. He is a convicted felon and was running a house raffle collecting possibly thousands of

dollars which was supposed to be used for a Veterans' Rehab' center in Oklahoma. Rhoades used senior citizen employees through an AARP program but never paid them any money. Any money taken by the seniors was immediately taken by Rhoades and there were no receipts or books kept on exactly how much was taken in or where any of the money went. Upon checking, the organization does not hold a 501 c

status. Could this happen in the Lehigh Valley? Please be careful!!!!



## VIETNAM: PAST AND PRESENT

### Trade Agreements — Are they in the Works?

Returning to Bien Hoa, you are likely to run into the sprawling Nike plant just north of Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City). This is one of five complexes owned and operated by contractors in South Korea and Taiwan that employ over

45,000 employees making \$120 shoes. Yet, there is a big reluctance between the United States and Vietnam to sign a trade agreement and stop the import duties.

Nike (based in Beaverton, Ore.) is only one of dozens of foreign and local companies in Vietnam waiting for a trade

agreement to materialize so they can expand the portion of its shoes made in Vietnam

Actually Vietnam's exports far exceed those from the United States. Vietnam sells about \$650 million worth of goods to the U.S. while we only export about \$350 million to Vietnam!



## FLORIDA'S 25TH ANNUAL VIETNAM AND ALL VETERANS REUNION

Do you have Kokomo, Indiana already programmed in your GPS for 2012? If you're very ambitious, why not try the Sunshine State and shoot for Florida's premier veterans' reunion! They call it the largest reunion in the nation and it runs:

**April 26th–29, 2012**

In addition, the Vietnam traveling Memorial wall will be there April

22nd through the 29th. There will be live music, food and drinks for the public, military vendors and military displays. There will be POW/MIA ceremonies. ALL veterans, families and public are invited to enjoy the pride. It will be held in Wickham Park, Melbourne, Florida. Reservations can be made by actually calling the park that hosts the reunion. Visit the reunion web site and peruse to see if it catches your interest:

[www.floridaveteransreunion.com](http://www.floridaveteransreunion.com)





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Meetings: First Thursday of each month at the **Banko Building**, Muhlenberg Hospital off of Schoenersville Road. Turn onto Westgate Drive until you can make a right into the hospital.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial was founded by Jan Scruggs, who served in Vietnam in the 199th Light Infantry Brigade from 1969 to 1970. The Memorial Fund raised nearly \$9,000,000 entirely through private contributions. No federal funds were needed! The design was selected through a national competition and Maya Ying Lin, born in Athens, Ohio in 1959 was the winner.

She wanted to create a park within a park — a quiet protected place onto itself, yet harmonious with the overall plan of Constitution Gardens. The walls have a mirror-like surface, reflecting the images of the surrounding trees, lawns and the Lincoln Memorial, to the west, thus bring the Vietnam Veterans Memorial into a historical context.

With the addition of six names added in 2010 the total number of names is now 58,272. Actually, nine groups of names have been added since the Memorial was dedicated. There are no civilians listed on the wall.

On July 1, 1980, in the Rose Garden, President Carter signed the legislation (P.L. 96-297) to provide a site in Constitution Gardens near the Lincoln Memorial. It was a three and half year task to build the memorial and to orchestrate a celebration to salute those who served in Vietnam.

## HAVING THE LAST WORD!

### ( EDITORIAL )

The Lehigh Valley is full of organizations and individuals who let the world know they are there. They manage, in many way, to let you know of their presence by sound or manner. Even though their contributions to mankind are small you know they were there because they claim credit for everything they possibly can!

Then there are quiet, dedicated people who leave their mark because they love their fellow man. The things they do, and the good they do are done quietly—without fanfare, and often without credit. Chapter 415 is truly blessed to include this type of individual in it's membership. I have come to learn that Chapter 415 was instrumental in passing legislation at the federal level and actively in-

involved in the POW/MIA issue. Back in the day, chapter leaders established goals and created a master plan to accomplish those objectives. In the formative years of chapter development, our founders influenced through words and by example.

But like people, organizations often times get sidetracked and lose perspective. Organizations go through transitional years and then reorganize with a replenishment of purpose and a renewal of spirit and a deeper insight into their mission.

I believe Chapter 415 is endowed with an impassioned refusal to accept mediocrity. Our membership

today is very capable of enjoying their individuality while contributing as an organization! Having the unique perspective of facing the membership during every meeting, I am truly humbled to be associated with men and women of principle. In unison, we are an organization that can make a quite, albeit significant difference in the Lehigh Valley. In closing, I simply say "Carpe Diem, Brothers and Sisters."

"Editorials are invited! Please submit to [georgepuzio@verizon.net](mailto:georgepuzio@verizon.net).

