



Vietnam Veterans of America | Chapter 218 | Santa Barbara

RECON REPORT

"Never again will one generation of Veterans abandon another"

MARCH 2016

***"Together then,
Together now"***



Chapter 218

P.O. Box 4862
Santa Barbara, CA 93140
www.vvachapter218.org
Email: vvachapter218@gmail.com

Officers & Board Of Directors

President: Peter Bie
1st Vice President: John Blankenship
2nd Vice President: Hap DeSimone
Recording Secretary: Tom Elliott
Treasurer: Mike Mauro
Chris Galbraith
Don Matter
Steve Penner
Pat Rumpza

CA State Council Rep: Hap DeSimone
Membership Director: Chris Galbraith
Chaplain: Pattie Murdy
Memorabilia: Cathy Matter

Vance Memorial Fund

The Chapter's Vance Committee distributes funds to qualified disabled American veterans.
Fred Golin (Chair) Madeline Moreaux
Mike Mauro Pattie Murdy

Next Chapter Meeting

March 9, 2016 | 6:00 pm
Santa Barbara Elks Lodge
150 N. Kellogg Ave., Goleta
Dinner Available
\$8.00 per person

Message from the President...

Our next meeting of the chapter on Wednesday, March 9 is of great importance as we will take nominations for officers and board members to be elected for a one year term at the April meeting. You must be a bona fide Veteran, having served in the Vietnam era (1959-1975) with a current membership in the chapter in order to nominate yourself, or someone else and you must do so in person. (No nominations can be accepted via proxy). AVVA members cannot participate in the nomination or election process.

The future success of the chapter is in its leadership and I strongly urge you to be present at the meeting in order to ensure that anyone wishing to serve the chapter, either as an officer or a board member, can have their name placed in nomination.

Saturday, March 5 our Huey Helicopter will be on display from 10am-2pm at the first annual Touch-A-Truck event in Solvang. Volunteers from the chapter will oversee the bird and assist kids (and adults) in and out of the chopper. If you'd like to assist on site, please let me know.

Wednesday, March 30, we will celebrate Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day with a barbeque at The Carriage Museum in Santa Barbara starting at 5:30pm. This will be open to the public and Veterans of all eras and their families. Our Huey Chopper will be parked on site. And the cost for the meal will be somewhere around \$12-15 per person. Mark your calendar now and join us for this annual nationally recognized day.

Plans are moving forward for The Moving Wall to return to Santa Barbara October 12-17, 2016 at Chase Palm Park, the same location we used in 2011. Only this time we will have two tents (one at each end of the Wall) so we will need volunteers (all chapter members, Veterans and civilians) to cover the 24/7 shifts that are required for security as well as assisting visitors to locate a name on the Wall.

Our fundraising efforts have already begun and we'll shortly have the colorful sponsorship brochure available for you to take and give to individuals, families, companies and organizations that may wish to help us in meeting the costs of exhibiting the Wall. A tri-fold brochure, with a sponsorship/donation section, has already been produced (attached to this Recon) and will debut at the Touch-A-Truck event in Solvang this coming weekend.

President's Message Cont'd.

We can also use your help in assisting the various committees that will be set up to handle the various aspects of the display. Mo McFadden has already been hired as our PR agency. She did stellar work in 2011 and we expect no less this time around.

This is an exciting year for the chapter and your participation—whether at meetings or at events—is always appreciated and acknowledged.

And I would be remiss if I did not draw attention to the recent passing of our longtime, Lifetime chapter member William “Bill” Connell in February. He will be missed. (See obit in this Recon).

Peter

Peter Bie
President

SYV Touch-A-Truck Saturday, March 5



611 Atterdag Rd., Solvang

Admission: \$5 per person, \$20 for a family of 5.

Gates open at 10:00am-2:00pm.

No horn hour (for sensitive ears) is 10:00-11:00am.

TAPS...

William “Bill” Connell, 1954-2016



William Connell, longtime resident of Carpinteria, CA and owner of All American Surf Dogs, died peacefully at his home of natural causes on Feb 5. Bill was a Vietnam era Veteran having

served in Germany in the mid/late '70s where he won the European Heavyweight Boxing Championship in 1978. Bill was a proud military veteran and fought hard for Veterans benefits. He waged and won a 16-year battle to pass State Senate Bill 809 which granted state sales tax relief for itinerant, disabled Veteran vendors. He knew, and was known by, nearly every politician in the State Capitol (including Gov. Jerry Brown), plus the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and local city leaders. Bill was immortalized in a song written by Bruce Springsteen called “Rosalita”. In the tune is a line that refers to a character named “Weak Knees Willie”; the nickname given by Bruce when Bill worked as a bouncer at the New Jersey club where Springsteen and his band were just beginning their career! Bill was a Lifetime member of VVA Chapter 218, Santa Barbara. (Thanks to the Coastal View News)

George Kennedy, 1925-2016



Academy Award winning actor George Kennedy, 91, passed away at his home in Boise, Idaho on February 28. Kennedy was honored for his supporting role in the 1967 film “Cool Hand Luke” starring Paul Newman. He served in the U.S. Army, enlisting in 1943 at the age of 17 and served in the infantry in Europe, where he fought in the Battle of the Bulge. He

reenlisted after WWII, earned a commission as an officer and was assigned to the Armed Forces Radio Network in Frankfurt and Berlin and later in Tokyo and South Korea. He was an advisor on the popular TV series “The Phil Silvers Show” (aka “Sgt. Bilko”) in the mid/late '50s and was pressed into playing a few bit parts, mainly as an MP. One thing led to another and before long he was seen as “the heavy” in westerns and cop dramas, both in films and on TV. He had two series of his own in the '70s: “Sarge” and “The Blue Knight”. His size (6'3” and 230 pounds) made him stand out among most actors, so he often had fight scenes with the likes of Clint Eastwood, John Wayne, James Arness and Clint Walker. (Thanks to the LA Times)

Schedule of Events

Saturday, October 15 | 11:00 am
Dedication Ceremony

Sunday, October 16 | 6:30 pm
Non-Denominational Candlelight Service

The Wall Will Be Open and Staffed
24 Hours a Day
from Wednesday, Oct. 12 at 12 Noon
to Monday, Oct. 17 at 12 Noon

The Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 218 of Santa Barbara thanks you for your support of all veterans and for visiting **The Moving Wall**.

We remember the lives, service and sacrifice of more than 58,000 men and women whose names are forever etched on The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. and we honor the millions who served during the Vietnam era.



www.vvchapter218.org

“Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another.”

Yes, I'd like to support The Moving Wall, presented by VVA Chapter 218, Santa Barbara, Oct. 12-17, 2016

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 218 | Post Office Box 4862 | Santa Barbara, CA 93140 | (805) 284-6372

Name: _____

Enclosed is my check made payable to VVA Chapter 218, Santa Barbara

Please charge \$ _____ to my _____

VISA MC

Credit Card Number _____

Name (as it appears on card) _____

Billing Address (if different from above) _____

Signature _____

This gift is made (if applicable)

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

Name _____

Please send acknowledgement to (no gift amount will be disclosed)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

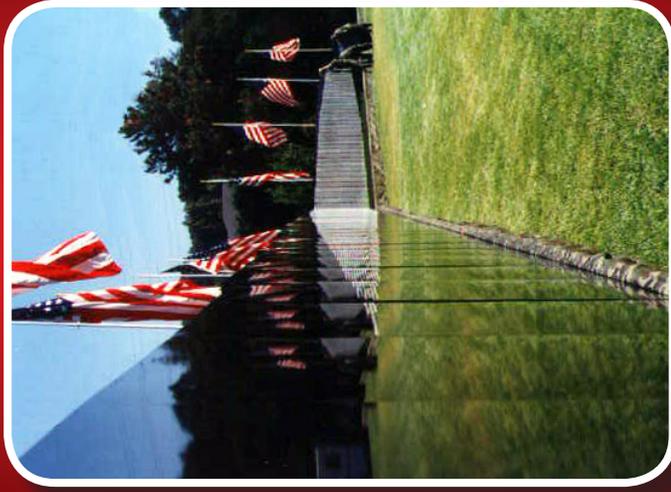
State _____

Zip _____

Thank you for your tax deductible contribution. Federal tax ID #77-0071944

VVA CHAPTER 218 PRESENTS

THE MOVING WALL



OCT. 12 - 17, 2016

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CHASE PALM PARK
SANTA BARBARA

About The Moving Wall

The Moving Wall is the half-size replica of the Washington, D.C. Vietnam Veterans Memorial and has been touring the country for more than twenty years.

When John Devitt attended the 1982 dedication in Washington, he felt the positive power of The Wall. He vowed to share that experience with those who did not have the opportunity to go to Washington.

John, Norris Shears, Gerry Haver, and other Vietnam veteran volunteers built **The Moving Wall**. It went on display for the first time in Tyler, Texas in October of 1984. Two structures of **The Moving Wall** now travel the USA from April through November, spending about a week at each site.



What are the dimensions of The Moving Wall?

The Moving Wall is 253 feet in length, making it slightly longer than half the length of the Memorial in Washington, D.C., whose length is 493.5 feet. Composed of 74 separate frames, seventy frames contain two silk-screened panels. Each of the two walls that make up the entire Wall is 126.5 feet in length.

The tallest panels have 137 lines of names, while the shortest panels at each end of the Wall have only one line. At the vertex of **The Moving Wall**, where the two walls join at an angle, the panels are six feet in height. In Washington, D.C. these same panels are 10.2 feet in height.

Why are the dates 1959 and 1975 on the Wall?

1959 is the year the Department of Defense has given for the first American casualties in Vietnam. The first two names listed were military advisors, killed on July 8th in Bien Hoa while watching a movie in a mess tent.

However, after the dedication of the Memorial in November, 1982 it was learned that a Captain Harry Cramer had been killed in action in 1957. His name was subsequently added to the Memorial, but it was impossible to change the 1959 date on the granite panel. In 2000, Richard Fitzgibbon, Jr., who had been killed in 1956, had his name inscribed on the Wall. Further research has revealed that the first U.S. casualty in Vietnam was actually in 1945. On September 26, Lt. Col. A. Peter Dewey was accidentally shot by Viet Minh troops while he was driving his jeep to the airport. He was the nephew of New York Governor Thomas Dewey. His name is not inscribed on the Wall.

1975 was the year the last 18 casualties occurred. They were killed on May 15th during the operation to rescue the crew of the U.S. freighter Mayaguez being held in Cambodian waters.



Which wall is "East" and which is "West"?

When facing **The Moving Wall**, the East wall is always to your right, starting with panel 1E (the panel with 1959 at the top, no panel number at the bottom). The West wall, starting with panel 1W (the panel with 1975 at the bottom) is just to the left of panel 1E. At the Memorial Wall in D.C., the East wall is pointing toward the Washington Monument and the West wall points toward the Lincoln Memorial.

What are the numbers at the bottoms of the panels?

The numbers at the bottom identifying each panel are used in locating a name and are merely reference numbers. They do not signify dates. The numbers for both East and West walls start out from the center, extending to the far ends with number 70E or 70W. The last two panels on each end are blank. These blank panels merely finish out the artistic design and are not locations for adding additional names.

What are the dots?

The white dots are used to help locate the line on which a name appears. Each dot marks 20 lines. They are located in the margin of each panel having more than 20 lines.

What are the symbols beside each name?

The diamonds and pluses indicate whether a person is confirmed dead (including those who died from accidents and natural causes), or those missing. The diamonds indicate that a person's death was confirmed. The pluses—or what some have thought to be a "cross"—indicate that a person remains missing and/or held as a prisoner of war, and are in no way meant to be a religious symbol.

A plus symbol can be turned into a diamond if a person is declared dead or their remains recovered. A circle symbolizing the "Circle of Life" will be inscribed around a plus if a person is freed or brought home alive.



What is The Moving Wall made of?

The Moving Wall is made of aluminum panels and the surface is painted with a two-part polyurethane gloss black which gives a mirror-like finish. It is mounted to angular aluminum frames and supported from the back by 76 steel square tubular braces.

Why are there flags of other nations flying at The Moving Wall?

These nations participated directly or discreetly in support of the war in South Vietnam: Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, The Philippines, South Korea, Cambodia and Laos. While Canada had no involvement in the war whatsoever, many of its citizens chose to join the U.S. military during that era. Over 120 of them were killed in Vietnam, so we honor their service and sacrifice by flying the Maple Leaf. Their names are not on the Wall. The flag that represented South Vietnam at the time is yellow with three red stripes.