

# North Carolina Vietnam Veteran's Veteran's Voice

February 2011

## Attendance

NCVVI held its first meeting of 2011 at the VFW Post 7383 in Cary on 1/25/2011. Dinner was by Col. Sanders.

Members in attendance were: Dennis Abels, Mike Lynch, Bob Allen, Bob Williams, Lee Booher, Ron Harris, Al Ely, Ron Wagoner, Bud Gross, Bob Matthews, Joe Harsch & Bill Dixon



## TET 2011

Members of NCVVI who attended the Vietnamese/American TET celebration, "The Year of the Cat", were treated as guest of honor with reserved tables and food. It was a packed house with a lot of entertainment. NCVVI member and Raleigh City Councilman John Odom presented to the Vietnamese community the Mayors Proclamation.



Charles Meeker  
Mayor

## PROCLAMATION

*WHEREAS*, the Vietnamese-American community is one of Raleigh's most active international groups by making substantial contributions to the cultural, religious, political and business activities of the city; and,

*WHEREAS*, many Vietnamese-Americans came to the United States and Raleigh as a result of the change of government; and,

*WHEREAS*, the yellow flag with three stripes of the former Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) - dating back to 1948 - has long symbolized the resilience, freedom and democracy of the Vietnamese people; and,

*WHEREAS*, the vast majority of Raleigh's Vietnamese-Americans embrace the yellow and red striped flag referred to as the Heritage and Freedom Flag as the symbol of the Vietnamese-American community; and,

*WHEREAS*, it is the expressed desire of the Vietnamese Association of Raleigh that the flag of the former Republic of Vietnam, heretofore known as the Heritage Freedom Flag be recognized as the official symbol of the Vietnamese-American community.

*NOW, THEREFORE*, do I, Charles Meeker, mayor of the City of Raleigh, North Carolina, on behalf of the Raleigh City Council and the more than 400,000 citizens of the Capital City, encourage all members of our community to display and respect the Heritage and Freedom Flag, when appropriate, to support the Vietnamese Association of Raleigh and the greater Vietnamese-American community.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the City of Raleigh,



### NCVVI WEBSITE:

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

### BRIDGE BACK WEBSITE:

[www.bridgebackfoundation](http://www.bridgebackfoundation)

### Special topic

### Education

### Upcoming Events

### Old / New Business

### Information

### Membership renewal form

### President:

Ron Wagoner

### Vice President:

Joe Harsch

### Treasurer:

Bud Gross

### Secretary:

Bill Dixon

### Directors:

Bill Dixon

Bobby Thrower

Dennis Abels

Bo Williams

Lee Booher



### Education

The spring semester has started with several schools having their LOV curriculum starting. Bob Matthews asked that members willing to speak to contact the teachers. Bill Dixon will send the compiled Bio's of members who supplied them to the teachers. Bob supplied all in attendance at the meeting 10 (Ten) copies of the Bridge Back Foundation current "Report" and requested each member send a minimum number of ten to anyone they think may support the education and humanitarian efforts of NCVVI to "Teach A Nation." NCVVI has received an invitation from Texas Tech Vietnam Center to attend and make a presentation to a symposium. Due to lack of funds in the Bridge Back Foundation, the invitation was declined. Members and friends of NCVVI should be proud of all the efforts to reach out to the educational community and the humanitarian efforts. All members are encouraged to step up and reach out for support. Many educational opportunities are in the works.

### Heroes Homecoming Celebration

Fayetteville hometown of Fort Bragg is planning a 10 day celebration and homecoming in November 2011, to honor Vietnam Veterans. Fayetteville Mayor Tony Chavonne has decided to "honor" the vets by reaching out to Quaker House, an anti-Vietnam war protest group. Quaker House has said they are glad to participate and intend to show two anti-war films that include Jane Fonda. The Mayor said he reached out to the anti-war protesters so the "full story" of the war could be told. This has started a great deal of controversy and discussions. NCVVI members voiced their concern and voted to send a letter to the Mayor thanking him for the 10 day event but voicing disappointment in including an anti-war protest group while honoring veterans for their service. Bob Matthews volunteered to write the letter.

Cape Fear Studios has put out a call to Vietnam Veterans and their families for wartime photography. As envisioned, select pictures from those submitted will be presented as a series of exhibits in conjunction with the Heroes Homecoming celebration in November. In May of 1970, Jane Fonda was among 2,000 anti-war protesters attending a rally in Rowan Park and they are looking for photos to tell the whole story.

### NCVVI sick list

David Samuels under went an operation and is doing well enough to attend the North Carolina Vietnam Veterans Helicopter Pilots reading of the names at the February POW/MIA. Charlene Esposito under went an operation. There is no word of how she is doing but NCVVI hopes she is doing well and on the mend. Bob Matthews wrecked his jeep; get him to tell you how. At this writing the jeep has been repaired and doing well.

### Elections of Officers

At the February 22, meeting there will be an election of new officers. There has been a slate of officers selected but the ballot is open for nominations. Please attend the meeting with any additional nominations. Ron Wagoner has agreed to run as president again. Joe Harsch has agreed to vice-president again along with Bud Gross as treasurer. Bob Matthews has been nominated for the Board of Directors and the ballot for secretary (newsletter editor) is open. All members willing to serve are asked to step forward. NCVVI's representative to the Wake County Veterans Council also needs a volunteer

### Pins and Patches

The Vietnam Service ribbon was presented to Bob Allen and Dennis Abels. The NCVVI patches supplier was found and Al Ely and Ron Harris have agreed to pay for new patches. Thanks guys for all you do. John Odom had some pins in the shape of North Carolina with the Vietnamese flag colors and has volunteered to have some more made. Thank you John.

## Nuoc Ngot Orphanage Playground

Bob Allen met with the Durham Chapter of VVA and talked about the playground. With Bob's efforts and the VVA's generosity the orphanage has a pledge of \$200.00. "Atta Boy," Bob, well done keep it up. NCVVI has two tri-fold displays to use along with handouts. Just let Bill Dixon know when you need to use them for a presentation or if you need someone to do a presentation. The Dalat Restaurant fund raiser will be held in the early spring date to be determined. The Virginia Casino Night is scheduled for June 11<sup>th</sup>, please mark your calendars, all hands are needed. Ron Wagoner and Bill Dixon are talking with the Vietnamese/American community about a joint Casino night fund raiser for the playground.

## Music Request

The secretary received the following request via email from a man. In the 80's as a member of a small group of vets known as "Forgot Me Not" a group dedicated to keeping the public informed on the POW/MIA issue. A home made cassette tape of songs that were written and sang by fellow vets. A couple of the songs were, "Sgt. Willie" and "Johnny Rambo." I am in hopes of contacting someone who has a copy or could direct me to someone who has a copy. It is important to me so if there is anyway you can help; I would very much be in your debt. Kent Rupert at: [imageryofsound@yahoo.com](mailto:imageryofsound@yahoo.com)

## Matterhorn, a Vietnam Novel wins award

Karl Marlantes, a Vietnam Veteran who spent 30 years writing his epic debut, has won this year's William E. Colby Award for "Matterhorn: A Novel of the Vietnam War." Set in 1969, it tells the epic story of a young platoon leader, Waino Mellas, trying to keep his men alive in the country's unforgiving jungle. "Ironically," wrote our reviewer David Maisel, "the best parts of 'Matterhorn' aren't the battle scenes, which are at times rendered with a literal precision that borders on mechanical. Rather it is Marlantes's treatment of pre-combat tension and rear-echelon politics. It's these in-between spaces that create the real terror of 'Matterhorn': military and racial politics; fragging that threatens the unit with implosion; and night watch in the jungle, where tigers are as dangerous as the North Vietnamese Army." The Colby award "recognizes a first work of fiction or non-fiction that has made a significant contribution to the public's understanding of intelligence operations, military history, or international affairs."

## Peacebombs

During the Vietnam War, the US dropped an average one B-52 bomb load every 8 minutes, 24/7, for a total of 2 million tons of ordnance, making Laos the most heavily bombed country in the world.

peaceBOMB is an inspired project aiming to "buy back the bombs" and deploy them in the pursuit of sustainable socio-economic development for artisans in rural Vietnam through a collection of bracelets made of aluminum war scrap metal.

The project raised \$7,000 on Kickstarter last fall to create video documenting Vietnamese artisans' constructive approach to the devastation of war since the 1970s by repurposing bomb metal into spoons and, now, bracelets.

## Can scientists REALLY make it rain (or are they a useless shower?)

At the height of the Vietnam War, soldiers who heard U.S. aircraft flying high over the Ho Chi Minh trail might have feared bombs were about to fall from the sky, or at least that reconnaissance pilots were taking pictures of the Viet Cong's supply lines. In fact, they had very little to fear. The planes were just trying to make it rain - but they weren't very good at it. The idea was simple: seed the heavy clouds with tiny particles of silver iodide whose electrical charge would pull together the cloud's water droplets. Once enough droplets had gathered together, their weight would make them fall from the sky as rain. The resulting deluge would turn the Vietnamese supply lines into a quagmire and halt the communists in their tracks. Operation Popeye started in 1966 and ran for seven years. Pilots flew 2,600 rain-seeding sorties, but it was a dismal failure. There was a little rain but not enough to halt the supply lines. And it might well have rained anyway, even without U.S. intervention. The American efforts in Vietnam were

the culmination of a military project started by the mathematical genius behind the atomic bomb. John von Neumann had provided many of the essential calculations for designing the weapons that devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

### **“Chips” Star saved from jail by being Vietnam Veteran**

**Larry Wilcox** – star of the '80s show “CHiPs” -- was spared a jail sentence for his role in a financial scheme ... partly because he fought in the Vietnam War. Wilcox -- had recently pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit securities fraud and was facing up to five years in federal prison. Instead, Wilcox was sentenced to 3 years probation and 500 hours of community service. After Wilcox shed a few tears inside the courtroom, the judge explained the actor was spared the slammer because of his service in Vietnam coupled with his extensive record of community service. Wilcox joined the Marines in 1967 and spent 13 months in Vietnam as an artilleryman.

### **Book: War Without Fronts**

Thomas Thayer's [\*War Without Fronts: The American Experience in Vietnam?\*](#)

Here are just some of the things of interest:

The enemy was simply not going to give the Americans the war they wanted. Out of 37,990 enemy attacks in 1968, just 126 were of battalion size or larger. And that was the peak year for large attacks, which declined to 34 in 1969, 13 in 1970, and 2 in 1971 -- before rebounding in the 1972 offensive. (P. 44)

In terms of spending, it was more of an air war than a ground war. In fiscal 1969, for example, U.S. land force operations cost \$4.6 billion, while air operations cost more than twice that, some \$9.3 billion. (P. 25)

American bombers hit Laos hard, with 8,500 B-52 sorties in 1970 (more than twice the 3,697 sorties over South Vietnam that year) and even more the following year. (P. 84) Yet all that bombing, with virtually no political constraints, was unable to interdict the flow of supplies on the Ho Chi Minh Trail, which raises the question of whether more firepower applied against North Vietnam would have made any difference. (P. 86)

The cost of bringing in a Communist defector under the "Chieu Hoi" program averaged out to \$14. The cost of killing the same enemy combatant with firepower was \$60,000. (P. 202) Which method do you think American commanders focused their attention on?

In terms of productivity per dollar expended, "the most effective" allied military force was the much maligned militias, the "Regional Forces and Provincial Forces," aka "[Ruff Puffs](#)." (P. 165)

Two-thirds of Army soldiers killed ranked E-3 or E-4. (P. 111)

More soldiers and Marines were killed by indirect fire (artillery, mortar, rocket, land mines, etc.) than by small arms fire. (P. 117)

Some 613 of the Marines who died in Vietnam were draftees. (P. 115)

The book poses a mighty hurdle to those who say that, despite much proof to the contrary, the Army was a learning organization in Vietnam. The book gives evidence that there was good, solid information about how the Army's approach was profoundly counterproductive -- and also that this information largely was available internally at the time. The author notes in an afterword that the Joint Chiefs of Staff twice tried to stop dissemination of the internal reports on which the book is based. (P. 259) He suggests that Westmoreland was particularly peeved by these analyses.

### **Basket Ball game on carrier**

Michigan State and North Carolina are moving forward with plans to play a basketball game aboard an aircraft carrier on Veterans' Day. Michigan State athletic director Mark Hollis said that the long-discussed game is to take place this year in San Diego's harbor. The schools have been working with Morale Entertainment to produce the

event, which will include a concert on the converted flight deck. "We're very pleased with the progress that we've made with the Pentagon, Morale Entertainment and the University of North Carolina," Hollis said. "We've been looking at doing this for eight years to give something back to those who put themselves in harm's way and to the families they leave behind when they're away on duty. We wanted to do something unique that could be shown to troops worldwide on Veteran's Day - 11-11-11 - as a sign of appreciation." Hollis says organizers are in discussions with television networks and potential sponsors to ensure the event is financially viable. Hollis said capacity on the carrier will be 6,000 with both schools getting about 500 tickets. The rest will be distributed to enlisted men and women and their families. Magic Johnson, who led Michigan State to the national championship in 1979, is expected to participate in a basketball clinic for children of troops, possibly with North Carolina legend Michael Jordan. "I've got Magic confirmed to be a part of it and you can imagine who we're trying to get from the other side," Hollis said.

### **Army Denies Vang Pao Arlington Burial**

A board composed of senior military and civilian officials reviewed the request and unanimously recommended that officials decline the burial waiver.

### **Vietnam in Wonderland**

Published and Authored by William M. Price. This book chronicles the experience of Price and fellow Marine, Major Jerry Platt. "This book (90 pages) is for those that want to understand the lasting effects of the war in Vietnam more clearly. They want to know what animated this war and how history will tell the story. They want to know what the era did to our moral compass," says Price.

### **Texas Tech to Commemorate 43 Anniversary of TET Offensive**

Tet Offensive Online exhibit – <http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/exhibits/tet>

Tet offensive Subject Guide- <http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/resources/tet>

### **Teams to search Cambodia for Vietnam War MIAs**

Two archeological teams from the US Joint Prisoners of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command are scheduled to arrive in Cambodia to search for Americans unaccounted-for from the Vietnam War. More than 40 recovery team members excavate a burial and an under-water aircraft site in search of four missing Americans in Cambodia's Kampong Cham and Kracheh provinces.

### **Calendar of upcoming events**

Blue Star Mothers fund raisers: Eat at Chic-fil-A in Wake Forest, tell server you're there for Hearts From Home on Feb. 17<sup>th</sup> and at The Forks on Feb. 24<sup>th</sup>.

NCVVI Membership Meeting and Elections February 22, 2011

1<sup>st</sup> annual Freedom Classic Baseball Game, Air Force vs. Navy. Kinston Feb. 25 @6pm. Feb. 26@2pm, Feb 27@12:30 pm. Seniors and veterans \$2.00

POW/MIA Ceremony March 5<sup>th</sup>

NCVVI Membership Meeting March 22, 2011

Monte Carlo in Virginia June 11-12<sup>th</sup> for Orphanage

**THIS NEWSLETTER AND ITS CONTENTS ARE DONE BY THE SECRETARY ANY MISTAKES AND/OR MISSPELLINGS ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SUCH**

**HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES YET? TO VOTE YOU MUST BE PAID UP**

## **MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

NCVVI is proud to have **you** as a member.

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(Last Name) (First Name) (MI)

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(Spouse's name)

---

(Street Address)

---

(City) (State) (Zip code)

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( ) ( ) ( )  
(Home Phone) (Work Phone) (Occupation)

\_\_\_\_\_ Full Membership (\$20 per Year) \_\_\_\_\_ (check amount)

\_\_\_\_\_ Associate Membership (\$10 per year)

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**(E-MAIL ADDRESS :) {Need this to send the unit's monthly newsletter}**

**(Signature)**

**(Date)**

**Reminder:** NCVVI holds a remembrance service on the Capital grounds, Raleigh, NC, the first Saturday of each month (12:00 noon) and the monthly business meeting on the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) Tuesday of each month in Cary, NC. (6:00 PM)

North Carolina Vietnam Veterans, Inc.  
601 Compton Road  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27609

Member of: N.C. Vietnam Veterans Council, Wake County Veterans Council, National Vietnam Veterans Coalition

**TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT THE GREATEST BUNCH OF MEN AND  
WOMEN IN THE WORLD, THE NORTH CAROLINA VIETNAM  
VETERANS, INC. INVITE THEM TO ATTEND A MEETING WITH YOU**