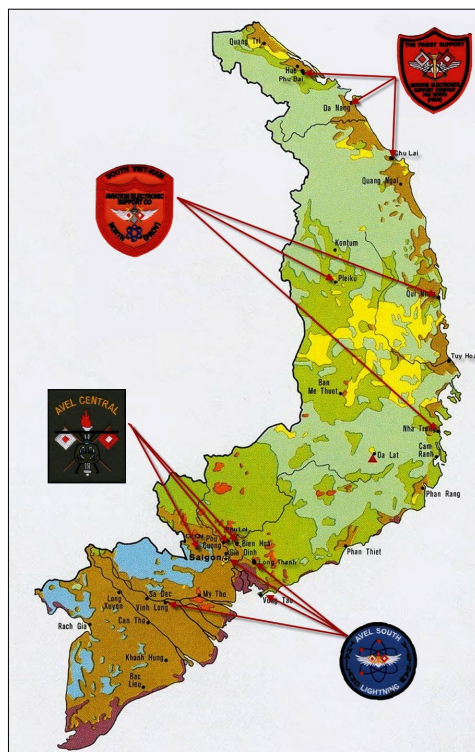


AVEL VIETNAM

Newsletter - August 2019

Top Hits Of 1970



At the start of 1970 there were 475,200 American troops serving in Vietnam. The draft lottery was up and running. There were 162,746 men drafted that year.

1970 was a pivotal year in the war. It was marked with large battles, protests and troop withdrawals.

The Cambodian Incursion began on April 29th, ending on June 30th. The campaign resulted in 338 dead, 1,525 wounded and 13 missing Americans. NVA supply lines and troop concentrations were great disrupted or destroyed. Over 50,000 American and 58,000 South Vietnamese troops were involved.

On March 12th the rebuilding of Fire Support Base Ripcord which had been previously abandoned. This remote base required a helicopter lifeline to get supplies in and personnel out. The firebase was to be used for a planned offensive by the 101st to destroy PAVN supply bases in the mountains overlooking the A Shau Valley. It was periodically under attack from March 12th until the 30th of June. On July 1st they began their attacks in earnest beginning with a mortar barrage. During the 23 day siege 139 Americans were killed. Three American soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor and five the Distinguished Service Cross. It was the last major confrontation between American and NVA ground forces in the Vietnam War.

Nixon claimed in a famous speech that anti-war protesters constituted a small—albeit vocal—minority that should not be allowed to drown out the “silent majority” of Americans. Nixon’s war policies divided the nation still further. The draft lottery incited a vast amount of controversy and caused many young men to flee to Canada to avoid conscription. Tensions ran higher than ever, spurred on by mass demonstrations and incidents of official violence such those at Kent State on May 4th, 1970, when National Guard troops shot into a group of protesters demonstrating against the U.S. invasion of Cambodia, killing four students.

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Don't forget to join us on Facebook. Search for the group: AVEL Vietnam.



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On May 9 in Washington, D.C. 75 to 100,000 demonstrators converged on Washington, D.C. to protest the Kent State shootings and the Nixon administration's incursion into Cambodia. Even though the demonstration was quickly put together, protesters were still able to bring out thousands to march in the Capital. It was an almost spontaneous response to the events of the previous week. Police ringed the White House with buses to block the demonstrators from getting too close to the executive mansion. Early in the morning before the march, Nixon met with protesters briefly at the Lincoln Memorial.

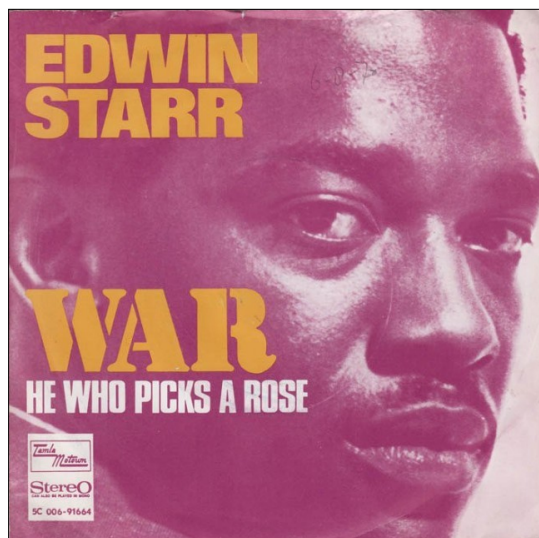
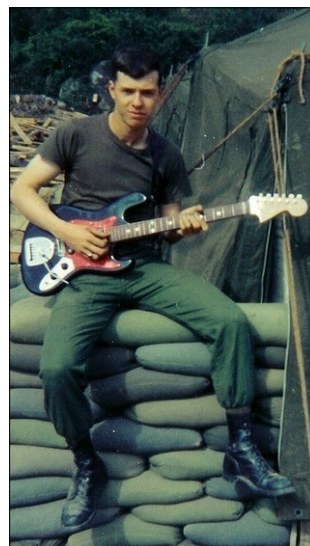
In a televised speech on October 7th, President Nixon proposed a cease-fire in place in South Vietnam. Previously the U.S. had demanded the withdrawal of all North Vietnamese forces from South Vietnam. North Vietnam rejected the proposal as it required an eventual withdrawal by North Vietnam which claimed that it had to right to maintain forces in South Vietnam as South and North were a single country.

The writing was on the wall.

Troop strengths in 1970 shrunk to 334,600 by years end. In 1970 there were 6,173 deaths and 30,943 troops wounded that required medical attention at a hospital.

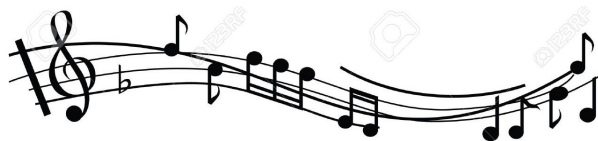
Check out the Top Ten songs of 1970!

- #1 Simon & Garfunkel "Bridge Over Troubled Water"
- #2 The Carpenters "(They Long to Be) Close to You"
- #3 The Guess Who "American Woman"
- #4 B.J. Thomas "Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head"
- #5 Edwin Starr "War"
- #6 Diana Ross "Ain't No Mountain High Enough"
- #7 The Jackson 5 "I'll Be There"
- #8 Rare Earth "Get Ready"
- #9 The Beatles "Let It Be"
- #10 Freda Payne "Band of Gold"



Top Ten Albums of 1970

- #1 John Lennon "John Lennon/Plastic Ono Band"
- #2 Simon & Garfunkel "Bridge Over Troubled Water"
- #3 Neil Young "After the Gold Rush"
- #4 Van Morrison "Moondance"
- #5 Derek and the Dominos "Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs"
- #6 George Harrison "All Things Must Pass"
- #7 Black Sabbath "Black Sabbath"
- #8 Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young "Déjà Vu"
- #9 Led Zeppelin "Led Zeppelin III"
- #10 The Stooges "Fun House"



What songs do you immediately associate with Vietnam? Send them to me so I can put them in the next newsletter. Email me at jmccabe51@gmail.com

Bile Duct Cancer (Cholangiocarcinoma) and Liver Fluke Infection

Bile duct cancer (cholangiocarcinoma) is a cancer of the biliary duct system, which includes the gallbladder, bile ducts, and certain cells inside the liver. It is a rare cancer but becomes more common as people grow older.

One risk factor for bile duct cancer is past infection with tiny parasitic worms called liver flukes, which are found in the fresh waters of Southeast Asia. People can become infected by eating fish that have these parasites. Once eaten, the liver flukes grow to adulthood inside the human biliary duct system. The irritation and scarring caused by liver fluke infection can lead to bile duct cancer.

Two parasites are commonly involved. One is *Opisthorchis verrini*, which is found in Southeast Asian countries, including Thailand, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Vietnam, and Cambodia. The other is *Clonorchis sinensis*, which is common in rural areas of Korea and China.

Veterans who ate raw or undercooked freshwater fish during their service in Southeast Asia, such as Vietnam War Veterans, might have been infected. However, currently VA is not aware of any studies that show that bile duct cancer occurs more often in U.S. Vietnam War Veterans than in other groups of people.



Liver Fluke Photo credit: CDC

Hmong Veterans Ask for Burial Rights in US Veterans Cemeteries

By Frederick Melo, St. Paul Pioneer Press

The CIA's 40,000-member Long Tieng military base was the second most populous city in Laos, though it did not exist on any map of its era.

For officially, there was no war in Laos, at least not one that would draw in American forces already occupied in Vietnam. In reality, men like Pang Mang Thao spent much of the 1960s and '70s under the tutelage of the CIA, attempting to block the North Vietnamese from using the Ho Chi Minh Trail supply routes through Laos while preparing to defend the Laotian monarchy from Communist takeover.



And when U.S. pilots crashed into the Laotian jungles, it was men like Thao who came to rescue them.

"For one American life, we used 200 to 300 Hmong to go out into the jungle and find (him)," said Thao, president of the Minnesota Lao Veterans of America.

On Saturday, 44 years after the fall of Long Tieng, Lao-Hmong veterans from across the U.S. are expected to gather in St. Paul for the fourth annual Lao Hmong Veterans National Conference.

The day-long conference will be held at the offices of the Lao Family Community of Minnesota, Inc., 320 University Ave. W. Policy discussions are scheduled in the morning, followed by an evening reception.

The gathering is expected to be more than simply nostalgic, ceremonial or symbolic. Almost since their arrival in the U.S. in the late 1970s, Hmong survivors of the CIA's failed "Secret War" in Laos have asked the U.S. government for military veterans benefits, with limited success.

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In 2018, U.S. President Donald Trump signed into law the Hmong Veterans' Service Recognition Act, which allows Lao-Hmong veterans to be buried in U.S. national cemeteries. The law, however, only recognizes veterans who became naturalized U.S. citizens after the year 2000.

By some estimates, the Service Recognition Act leaves out half the Hmong veterans in America.

"It excludes about half the veterans because of a technical problem in the bill," said Philip Smith, executive director of the Center for Public Policy Analysis, one of the conference's co-sponsors. "We're looking for a technical correction."

Interpreter Pa Lee addressed a small crowd at the Lao Family offices on Friday while standing next to her father William Lee, who had worked for the CIA in Laos from 1960 to 1975. He became a U.S. citizen in 1990.

"My father would not be eligible," Pa Lee said.

William Lee, right, worked with CIA 1960 to 1975 to block Ho Chi Minh trail in Laos to North Vietnamese. When US pilots crashed in Laotian jungle, he +150 Hmong would go out to rescue pilot. He's not eligible for VA benefits or VA burial even under 2018 Service Recognition Act. pic.twitter.com/n33cXDWmdQ

"This is a big deal for all the Hmong veterans, because up until last year they got nothing," she added, calling upon political leaders to expand the Service Recognition Act before too many veterans pass away. "I believe that the Hmong community has enriched the melting pot in the Twin Cities."

The war against Communism in Laos ended badly, with thousands of Hmong executed, forced to flee across the Mekong River or sent to Communist re-education camps.

Many spent years in massive refugee camps in Thailand before being relocated to unfamiliar new lands like Minnesota.

In 1997, a "Laos and Hmong Memorial" etched in granite was dedicated at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

In 2000, Hmong veterans became eligible for fast-tracked U.S. citizenship through the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act.

The Lao Hmong Veterans National Conference is co-sponsored by the Center for Public Policy Analysis in Arlington, Va., the Minnesota Lao Veterans of America, Inc., and the Lao Family Community of Minnesota, Inc.



Chaplains in Vietnam

Since 1775, more than 25,000 chaplains from a multitude of religions have provided spiritual guidance and counseling to the men and women serving in our armed forces. While chaplains were non-combatants, they often became targets as they put themselves in harm's way to pull the wounded to safety or to administer comfort and last rites.

The Chaplain Corps of the United States Armed Forces has been active in more than 270 major combat engagements and more than 400 have died serving their country.

During the Vietnam War, chaplains were resolute in offering compassion and connection to all service members. They were responsible for holding memorial services for those killed, conducting religious services, raising troop morale, lending an ear, and offering spiritual counsel to service members under duress.

Peaking at 300 chaplains serving in Vietnam in 1967, this number alone is not representative of the amount of steadfast care and compassion these men were able to provide and the danger they often faced. There are 16 chaplains with their names inscribed upon the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and thousands more served their country and fellow man.

WILLIAM J BARRAGY

While meeting with troops of the 101st Airborne Division on May 4, 1966, Army Chaplain Barragy was killed when the CH-47 he was riding in crashed due to mechanical failure. From Waterloo, Iowa, he was serving the Roman Catholic Church. Panel 7E/22.

DON L BARTLEY

With less than one month left in Vietnam, Army Chaplain Bartley was assisting in the filming of a television program on Vietnam chaplains when he was killed after the explosion of a hostile mine. From Rockbridge Baths, Virginia, he was serving the United Presbyterian Church at MACV headquarters. Panel 23W/109.

ROBERT R BRETT

During the siege of Khe Sanh, Navy Chaplain Brett was killed during an artillery attack while caring for the wounded on February 22, 1968. Assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 26th Marine Regiment, Chaplain Brett served the Roman Catholic Church and was known to have provided up to ten masses per day. Panel 40E/58.

MERLE D BROWN

On Easter Sunday 1971, Army Chaplain Brown was calling upon soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry, AMERICAL Division when his helicopter was shot down by enemy fire. From Columbus, Ohio, Chaplain Brown was serving the Lutheran Church. Panel 4W/118.

VINCENT ROBERT CAPODANNO

While administering comfort and last rites to Marines, Navy Chaplain Capodanno was wounded by small arms and mortar fire while serving with 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines. Advancing to aid a wounded corpsman, he was killed by enemy fire in an act of heroism that would earn him the Medal of Honor. From Staten Island, N.Y., he is being beatified by the Roman Catholic Church. Panel 25E/95.

MEIR ENGEL

A veteran of World War II and Korea, Army Chaplain Engel died of a heart attack shortly after admitting himself to a hospital in Saigon on December 16, 1964. Chaplain Engel was born in Israel and immigrated to the United States. Based at MACV Headquarters, he served service members of the Jewish faith. He left behind two sons. Panel 1E/77.

WILLIAM N FEASTER

Army Chaplain Feaster was injured by artillery fire on September 18, 1966. Only after helping other wounded was it learned he had also been wounded. He died several weeks later of an infection. From Portsmouth, N.H., he served Congregational Christian Church while serving with the 196th LIB. Panel 11E/109.

WILLIAM J GARRITY JR

On October 26, 1966 in the Gulf of Tonkin, a fire engulfed the USS Oriskany killing 44 crewman and injuring another 156. While attempting to provide last rites and comfort to those injured and dying, Chaplain Garrity was overwhelmed by the heat and smoke. He was from Havre, Mont. and was serving the Roman Catholic Church. Panel 11E/110.

AMBROSIO S GRANDEA

While conducting a church service on May 25, 1967, Army Chaplain Grandea was wounded by a hostile mortar round. Evacuated to Clark AFB in his native Philippines he died several days later from infection. He was serving the Methodist Church with the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry. Panel 21E/97.

ROGER W HEINZ

While serving the 5th Special Forces Group, Army Chaplain Heinz was killed when his helicopter crashed into a hillside in poor weather on December 9, 1969. From Coventry, Conn., he was serving the Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) and left behind a wife and two daughters. Panel 15W/42.

JAMES J L JOHNSON

As a passenger aboard a Navy VC-47 airplane on March 10, 1967, Army Chaplain Johnson died with 14 other service members when the wing failed during a flight. He was serving the Baptist Church in the 4th Infantry Division. Panel 16E/53.

ALOYSIUS P MCGONIGAL

On February 17, 1968, Army Chaplain McGonigal joined the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines in the final assault on the Citadel in Hue. While administering comfort and last rites, he was killed by small arms fire. A former physics teacher from Washington, D.C. he was serving the Roman Catholic Church. Panel 39E/75.

PHILLIP A NICHOLS

Known for his clean green uniforms and guitar playing, Army Chaplain Nichols was killed by an enemy booby trap while travelling between units in the field on October 13, 1970. Serving the Assemblies of God Church, from Kalispell, Mont., he was attached to the 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry, AMERICAL Division. Panel 7W/133.

MICHAEL J QUEALY

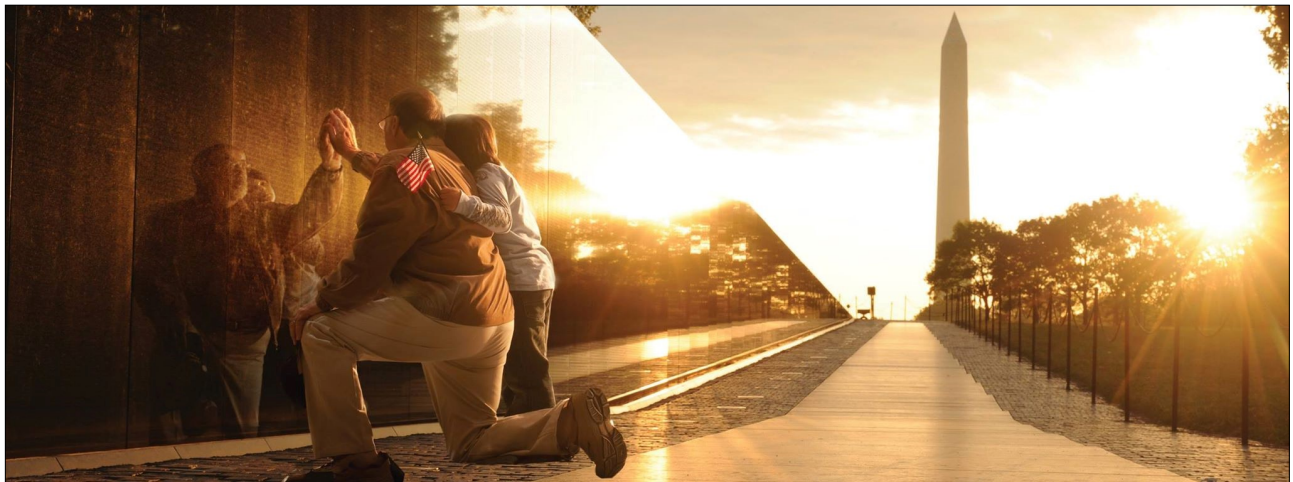
Against the advice of leadership, Army Chaplain Quealy flew to a battle site near Saigon on November 8, 1966. While administering last rites and comforting the wounded, he was killed by enemy machine gun fire. From New York, N.Y., he was serving the Roman Catholic Church with the 1st Infantry Division. Panel 12E/43.

MORTON H SINGER

Army Chaplain Singer had been in Vietnam for one month when killed while flying aboard a C-123 plane which crashed after takeoff en route to perform Chanukah services on December 17, 1968. From Flushing, N.Y., he served service members of the Jewish faith and was attached to the XXIV Corps. Panel 36W/37.

CHARLES J WATTERS

While assisting medics and providing spiritual assistance on November 19, 1967, Army Chaplain Watters was killed by fragmentation wounds. For his actions, he posthumously received the Medal of Honor. From Berkeley Heights, N.J., he was serving the Roman Catholic Church with the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Panel 30E/36.



NEW AVEL, AVIONICS AND VIETNAM VETERANS REGISTERED

Tavilla, Tony (SP/5)

54 Pondside Dr.
Bolton. MA. 01740
978-505-9132
263rd Maintenance Co. (LEM), Red Beach,
Da Nang: April 1970-April 1971
ttavilla@juno.com
MOS: 35B20

Allen, Samuel (SGT)

3321 Pinehurst Dr.
Norman, OK 73072
405-706-6309
Avel North, Pleiku: Nov. 1968 – Jan. 1970
sam.allen1946@gmail.com

TAPS

Lawrence “Larry” Watts
Avel North, Pleiku

Larry died on 6 May 2018. April 2019. He was born in Webb City, MO on September 17th, 1949.

While in Vietnam he was diagnosed with cancer and spent many months in Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, DC before returning home to his family.



PHOTOS

None Submitted

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/EMAIL/PHONE

None Submitted

IN-COUNTRY VET



UNFORTUNATELY, TOM DECIDES
TO START A CONVERSATION!

IN-COUNTRY



AVEL VIETNAM

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