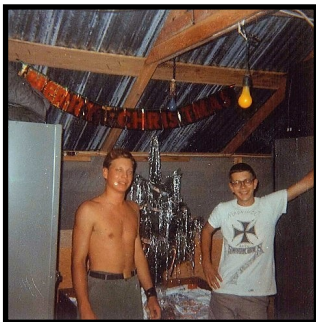
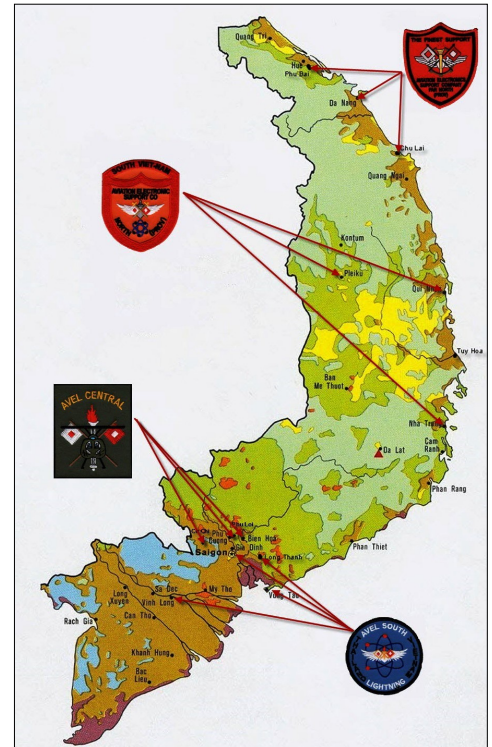


AVEL VIETNAM

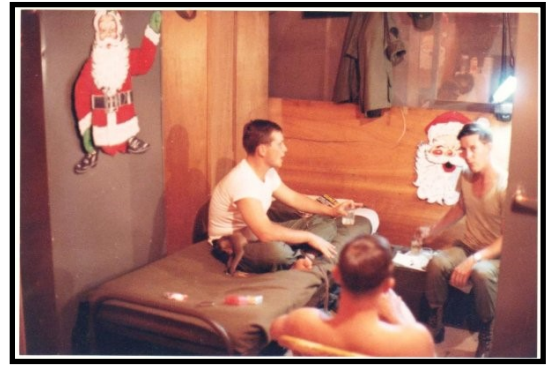
Newsletter - December 2018

Merry Christmas AVEL!



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





Veteran Suicide

The holidays can be warm, fun and a wonderful time to get together with family and friends. But, for those suffering from PTSD, loneliness and depression it can be horrible. Remember that we lose 22 veterans a day to suicide. In actuality we lose more than that as some are categorized as automobile accidents, etc.

If you know a veteran who is suffering call them. Just be yourself and let them know someone is thinking of them. If they seem at risk of harming themselves take action. Don't let our fellow veterans become a statistic.



Confidential crisis chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net
or text to **838255**

RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS OF SUICIDE RISK

- Thinking about hurting or killing yourself
- Looking for ways to kill yourself
- Talking about death, dying or suicide
- Self-destructive behavior such as drug abuse, weapons, etc.
- Hopelessness, feeling like there's no way out
- Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, mood swings
- Feeling like there is no reason to live
- Rage or anger
- Engaging in risky activities without thinking
- Increasing alcohol or drug abuse
- Withdrawing from family and friends

The presence of these signs requires immediate attention. Call us if you experience any of these warning signs.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

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Agent Orange Claims Update

A US Senator (Bill Cassidy, R – Louisiana) – who is an MD – has evidently proposed that Congress change the Agent Orange presumption rules to eliminate those conditions where that has only been a “limited or suggestive association” between the condition and Agent Orange, requiring there to be a more solid scientific/medical basis for granting “presumptive” status.

Unfortunately, this would eliminate most Agent Orange claims. As the article notes:

Indeed, a majority of conditions on the current Agent Orange presumptive list were based on limited or suggestive association to herbicide exposure.

These include: type-2 diabetes; laryngeal cancer; cancer of the lung, bronchus or trachea; prostate cancer; multiple myeloma; AL amyloidosis; early-onset peripheral neuropathy; Parkinson’s disease; porphyria cutanea tarda; ischemic heart disease; and stroke. VA continues to study whether to add Parkinson-like syndromes, hypothyroidism and bladder cancer using limited or suggestive evidence.

If the Cassidy proposal were to become law, Vietnam veterans newly diagnosed with these ailments after enactment would not qualify automatically for disability compensation and health care. A more thorough review process would be needed to establish service connection.

For veterans who are currently receiving benefits based upon Agent Orange “presumptive” conditions: No need to panic, as the article notes, any change would presumably be prospective and not retroactive. (Politically, I don’t see a scenario where the political folks would have the ... guts...to tell hundreds of thousands of veterans who are receiving disability compensation and/or health care based upon diabetes, ischemic heart disease, Parkinson’s, lung cancer, etc.... that their benefits are going to be terminated.)

However, if the proposed legislation becomes law, I think any future claims (for any of the Agent Orange-related conditions noted above) will require medical “nexus” evidence. (In other words, instead of their being a “presumption” of service connection, a Vietnam veteran with diabetes, ischemic heart disease, etc.... will have to get an MD to sign off on a written opinion to the effect that that particular veteran’s (name of condition) was “more likely than not” caused by exposure to Agent Orange.

Going forward:

While I think that it is unlikely to happen in the immediate future (I’m guessing that Congress may have more pressing issues to consider in coming months), I suspect that this change will eventually take place, and that veterans will eventually be required to “prove” (medically speaking) that their claimed conditions are connected to Agent Orange rather than being able to rely on the current “presumptions.”

Consequently, for obvious reasons, I strongly recommend that any Vietnam veteran (and anyone else who believes that they were exposed to Agent Orange, such as the folks who served on the DMZ in Korea in the late 1960s) who believes that they may have one or more of the current “presumptive” conditions take steps to file a claim (or enroll in VA health care) before the VA and Congress can act to eliminate most of the “presumptive” conditions.



100-year-old bugler Albert Madden, who played taps at countless military funerals, is laid to rest

BOURNE, Mass. (Tribune News Service) — Albert Madden played taps countless times at military funerals during the past century.

On Friday afternoon, the solemn melody was played for him during a funeral with full military honors and a three-volley salute at Massachusetts National Cemetery.

Continued on Page 4



Madden, 100, a U.S. Army veteran of World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War, died at his Hyannis home on Sunday.

"I think he would have been proud of the ceremony," said his son, David Madden, of East Sandwich. "The military played a very big role in his life."

In addition to his service to the country, the elder Madden leaves behind a musical legacy that began as a child playing the bugle, trumpet and coronet and lasted a lifetime. He played throughout the world as a member of the Army's 9th Infantry Division Band, and back home with the Barnstable Town Band.

While he could certainly play the pop tunes of the big band era and beyond, it was his rendition of taps at veterans observances, memorials and funerals for which he will be most remembered.

At 92 years old he was invited by the Pentagon to play taps on arguably the melancholy bugle call's biggest stage: Arlington National Cemetery.

"I'll be the oldest bugler, using the oldest horn, to ever play taps at the Arlington cemetery," he told a Times reporter in 2010.

He even played the horn at his own 100th birthday earlier this year, according to his son.

VVA In Memory Program

How 'In Memory' helped widow of late Vietnam vet find peace after loss

Betty Kelly lost her husband, Dennis A. Kelly, when he passed away from illnesses related to his exposure to Agent Orange in 2012. Dennis was a Corporal in the U.S. Marine Corps and served in Vietnam from September 1965 to March 1966. He served with the 1st Amtrak Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, Amphibious Tractor Unit. Like thousands of other Vietnam veterans who returned home from the war, Dennis succumbed to illnesses that cut his life short.



"As he lay dying, knowing that Agent Orange was causing his death, he said he would serve all over again for his country," Betty wrote.

A few years following his death, Betty chose to honor his sacrifice through the In Memory program, hosted by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF). The In Memory Program honors Vietnam veterans who returned home from the war and later passed away as a result of their service. Having a veteran honored through the program includes an invitation to honor them at a ceremony in Washington, D.C.

In June of 2015, Betty traveled from Long Island, New York to read her husband's name on the National Mall, at the place our nation set aside to remember our Vietnam veterans. She did not know what to expect when she arrived. The emotional power had not come over her until she sat through the ceremony and watched hundreds of family members read their veteran's name aloud. She listened as they shared the struggles their veteran endured, sometimes silently, for decades. Betty noticed how everyone spoke from the heart. It was as if dignity came through every word they spoke. A flood of emotions were left floating in the air and she came away with an overwhelming sense of peace.

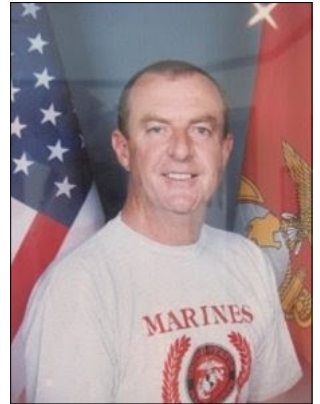
"I felt that this was the welcome home that was never there when Vietnam veterans returned home," she said. The ceremony became a place so many had searched for – a place of acceptance, inclusiveness and compassion. After Dennis was inducted into the In Memory Honor Roll, Betty found comfort. She came away with a profound sense of closeness to the widows she met. An unspoken bond was formed and never left.

Continued on Page 5

“I came home from the ceremony feeling so many emotions,” she added. There was pride in honoring Dennis and she felt parts of her grief lifted when she worked to keep his memory alive.

Betty has made it a tradition to return to the In Memory Ceremony every year since her husband was inducted. The ceremony has given her so much, including a place of understanding. People are there to listen during life’s most painful moments and no one is turned away for their suffering and grief. She can’t imagine not coming back every year.

Over the years, the In Memory Ceremony has transformed into an entire weekend. Events include a Friday evening reception and participation in the Father’s Day Rose remembrance on Sunday.



Betty has made it a point to attend the gathering, where she meets the families of new honorees. “I listen to their stories, I feel their heart-break and pain, I understand why they have come, I understand what the weekend means to them,” she said. The stories are all similar, and also agonizing, she admits.

During the Father’s Day Rose Remembrance, the public lays roses at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to honor the dads whose names are on The Wall, the men who never got the chance to become fathers, and the men in the In Memory program.

Betty takes this day to soak up the meaning of the weekend. She collects her white roses from VVMF and places them near the In Memory plaque to honor Dennis. She then sits on a nearby bench in gratitude. She is grateful for this experience, for the chance to share in sadness, in stories, and in a newly found peace with so many others.

NEW AVEL, AVIONICS AND VIETNAM VETERAN REGISTEREES

Scott, Joseph (SSG)

2298 Morgan Rd
Carlsbad, CA 92008
760-494-8887

614th Maint Co. (LEM), Tuy Hoa: May 1971- Jan 1972

ssj@usa.com
MOS: 76P40

Also assigned to: 101st ABN Div,
Army Retired: MSG

TAPS

None Submitted

PHOTOS

None Submitted

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/EMAIL

Submit changes to Jack McCabe so you can continue receiving updates and Newsletters.

Nick Montecinos (Avel Central) has a new phone number: 847-436-9624

Rodney Young (Avel South) has a new phone: 651-272-9216

www.avelvietnam.com

IN-COUNTRY



IN-COUNTRY



**MERRY CHRISTMAS
and
HAPPY NEW YEAR
to all of our AVEL Brothers
and their families.
Have a happy and healthy 2019!**



**AVEL
VIETNAM**



December 2018 Newsletter