

AVEL VIETNAM

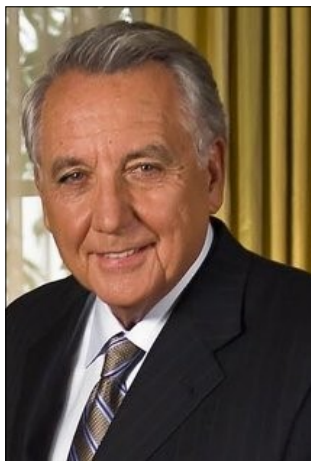
Newsletter - January 2017

Celebrity Vietnam Vets

Bob Gunton

Bob was born in Santa Monica in 1945 as Robert Patrick Gunton, Jr. At one point he planned on becoming a priest.

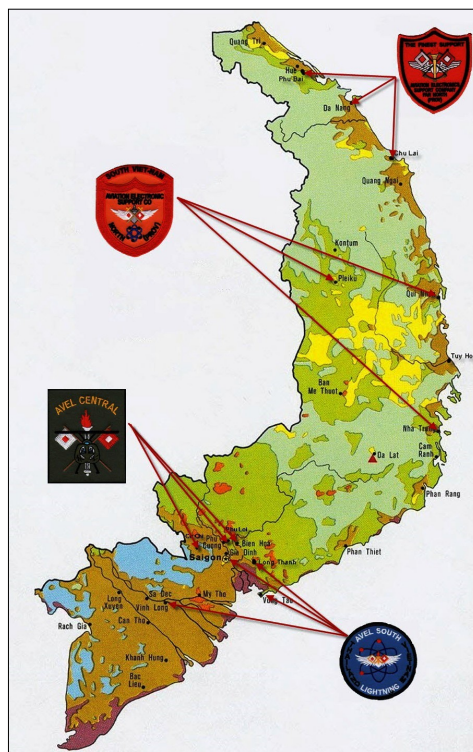
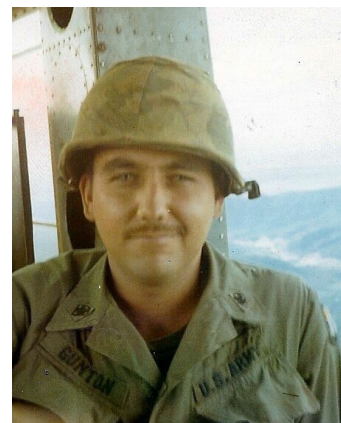
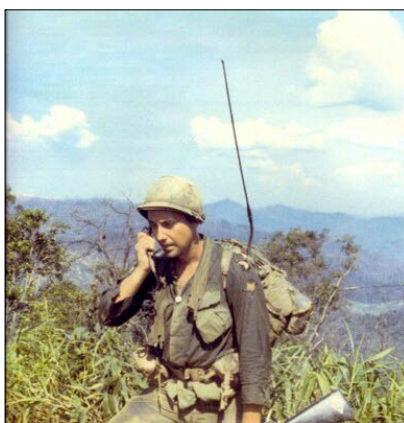
Bob was drafted into the Army in 1969 and was trained as an infantryman with an 11B20 MOS. He was sent to Vietnam in 1969 and assigned to the 101st Airborne Division in I Corps. While serving there he was awarded a Bronze Star for Valor. He was discharged in 1971 and took up acting as a career.



He started his career as a Broadway actor and singer in 1971 and continued until 1991 when he became active in film and TV. He is known for playing strict, authoritarian characters, with his best known role as Warden Samuel Norton in the 1994 prison film The Shawshank Redemption.

He also played Chief George Earle in 1993's Demolition Man, Dr. Walcott, the domineering dean of Virginia Medical School in Patch Adams, and President Juan Peron in the original Broadway production of Evita, for which he received a Tony Award nomination. He also appeared in the Daredevil TV series as Leland Owlsley.

Welcome Home Bob



Last active NYPD officer to serve in Vietnam retires

The last active NYPD officer who served in the Vietnam War retired on Friday, 13 January 2017 after 18 years as a cop.

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



Thomas Ollis, 66, was honored with a “walkout ceremony,” where fellow officers lined the entrance to the First Precinct Stationhouse in Lower Manhattan. He’d been assigned there for his entire police career and was at the World Trade Center on 9/11.

His daughter, Sandy, 87-year-old mother, Marion, as well as his sister and brother all attended.

Ollis joined the Army in 1969 and was sent to Vietnam a year later. He also served in the Army Reserve from 1984 to 2006. His unit was deployed to Kuwait and Afghanistan in 2003 and 2004.

He was awarded 10 military commendations.



San Jose council unanimously approves banning communist Vietnamese flag

SAN JOSE — Some supporters draped yellow flags of the former South Vietnam over their shoulders while others joined hands and held back tears as San Jose became the first Bay Area city to ban the flag of the communist Socialist Republic of Vietnam on city flagpoles.

“It shows we understand the pain of our community,” Nguyen said after the City Council meeting. “It gives us a chance to heal. We are no longer oppressed. We are really free now and we can sleep at night.”

The highly charged debate Tuesday pitted two factions of the city’s Vietnamese-American community against each other: Older generations of Vietnamese refugees who escaped communism and younger immigrants who identify with their country’s current national flag.

San Jose ceremonially raises cultural flags on its flagpoles at City Hall throughout the year. Although no requests were made to fly the Vietnamese flag, city leaders aimed to curb the possibility. Nguyen said the Socialist Republic of Vietnam flag — red with a gold star — symbolizes oppression and bloodshed. Some compared it to raising the Nazi flag.

“We speak up on behalf of those who have lost their lives,” said San Jose resident Khanh V. Doan, a U.S. Army veteran. “Please do not allow that bloody flag to exist in this city. It is our nightmare.”

Daniel Nguyen, another San Jose resident, said Vietnamese people “lost our country, lost our husbands, our wives and children because of that communist flag.”

After hours of emotional testimony, the City Council approved Nguyen’s flag ban and reaffirmed the city’s recognition of the “Vietnamese Heritage and Freedom Flag” as the official flag of San Jose’s Vietnamese-American community. That’s the yellow flag with three horizontal red stripes that represented the former Republic of Vietnam, the “South Vietnam” the U.S. backed in its battles against communist insurgents before it fell in 1975.

“It’s obvious the community still suffers very deep emotional wounds,” said Mayor Sam Liccardo after the meeting. “And to the extent we can help with that healing and still comply with the Constitution, we should do whatever we can.”

Councilman Chappie Jones likened it to raising the Confederate flag, which he said represents lynching and pain. But a small group of Vietnamese residents said banning the communist flag sends the wrong message.

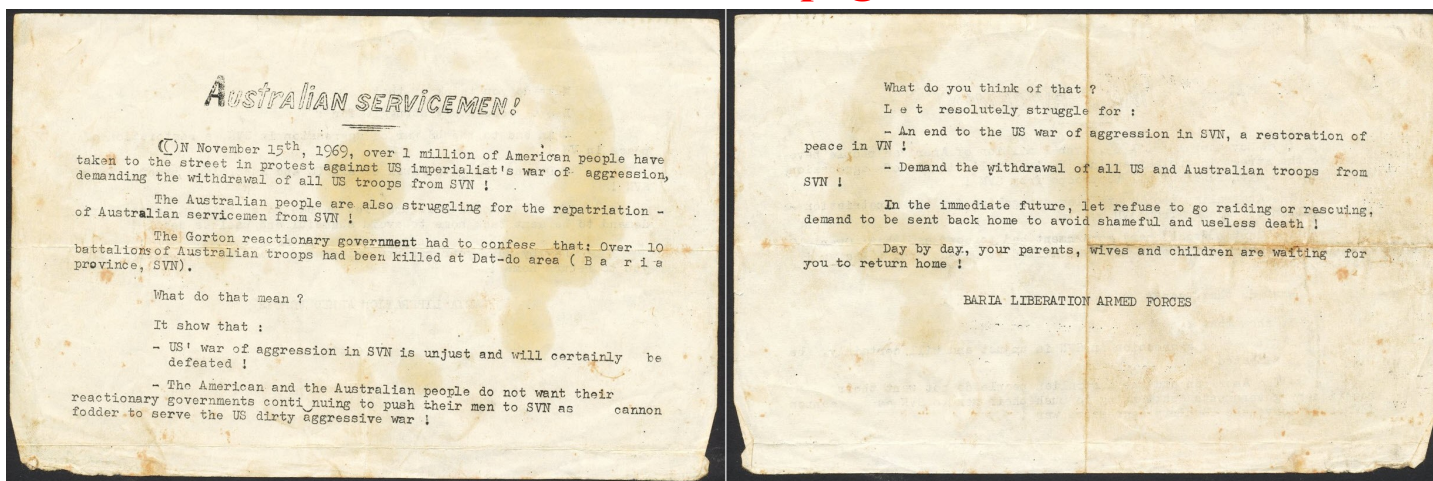
“Many of us hate the communist regime but we are here to defend the American ideas,” said San Jose resident Long Le. “Will you ban the flag of Mexico next? Cuba? We do not support the communist flag but we support keeping San Jose free.”

Nguyen said he got the idea to oppose the communist flag in San Jose from a similar measure in Westminster, a city of 90,000 in Orange County. Last year, city officials there adopted a policy to oppose displaying the communist flag anywhere in the city, though San Jose's proposal is limited to city property.

Westminster Councilwoman Kimberly Ho, who supported San Jose's measure on Tuesday, said the Socialist Republic of Vietnam flag brings back "a lot of hurtful memories."

"It's just like the Nazi flag," Ho said. "Would you fly the Nazi flag? Why would you not oppose it? It might be (Vietnam's) flag, but once you step foot on our turf — this is our home now. And they need to respect our flag."

Communist Propaganda



This was submitted by an Australian friend of mine. A friend of his picked up this piece of propaganda after a firefight in 1969. It is interesting to note that the NVA claimed to have annihilated over 10 battalions of Australian troops. The Australians only had three battalions at any one time in Vietnam!

Millions more vets to be able to shop at exchanges online

By TOM PHILPOTT | SPECIAL TO STARS AND STRIPES Published: January 12, 2017

After two years of study and debate, the Department of Defense has made a policy change, effective next November, to allow 16 million honorably discharged veterans to shop online for discounted military exchange products.

Peter K. Levine, acting undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, signed a memorandum Wednesday announcing the benefit expansion, effective Veterans Day (Nov. 11), and giving Congress the required 30 days' notice before actions begin to implement the plan.

Months of preparation are needed to make e-shopping portals more robust and to allow the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) time to create software for verifying veterans' status using Department of Veterans Affairs records.

Several million vets already are eligible to shop in exchanges — on base or online — because they are active or reserve component retirees, or 100 percent disabled from service-connected injuries or ailments, or Medal of Honor recipients.

Thomas C. Shull, chief executive officer of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, led a three-year quest to expand online exchange shopping to all honorably discharged veterans with access to computers. It cited two reasons.

One was to reward their service with exchange product savings that, on average, will be near to 20 percent versus commercial department store prices when military exemption from state and local sales tax are considered too.

Shull's other purpose was to increase exchange revenues to help offset troubling declines due to the drawdown of active-duty forces, base closures and the end of military tobacco discounts for the higher priority of healthier populations.

Exchange officials project that expanding online shopping will result in \$1.8 million in added annual fixed costs to handle the larger customer base. However, they also project added sales and revenue, which will more than offset any added operating or order-fulfillment costs. Higher net earnings are seen boosting exchange dividends to support on-base Morale, Welfare and Recreational activities.

With DMDC verifying shopper identities electronically, the department will not have to produce special identification cards. DMDC estimates that 13 percent of eligible veterans, primarily those who served before 1981, might not be in their database when the shopping benefit becomes available. Presumably guidance will be issued for veterans who might have access problems initially.

NEW AVEL, AVIONICS AND VIETNAM VETERANS REGISTERED

Pederson, Wesley (SP/5)

391 Hallberg St. SW
Warroad, MN 56763
218-343-4201

813 Sig. Det, B Troop, 3/17 Air Cav, DIAN 1969 - 1970

wesped47@gmail.com

MOS: 35L20

AGENT ORANGE

Comments: Looking for other members, reunions

Morse, Brad (SP/5)

4050 Alt Rd
Eureka, MO 63025
314-960-2822

Avel South/317th Maintenance Co. (LEM), Vung Tau & Phu Loi: Oct. 1969-Oct. 1970

morseb@sbcglobal.net

MOS: 35M20

Kidder, Ronald (SP/4)

17 Crescent St
Brewer, ME 04412
207-989-7253

720th Military Police Bn., III Corps, Long Binh, Phu Loi, Phouc Vinh and Quan Loi: 19 Oct. 1966-30 Oct. 1967

ronkid@rocketmail.com

MOS: 95B20

Also served with the 1st Infantry Division

AGENT ORANGE

Comments: Prostate Cancer & Peripheral Neuropathy

Martin, Richard S. (SP/4)

3258 SW Crumpacker St.
Port Saint Lucie, FL. 34953
816-377-0929

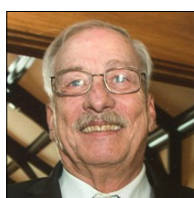
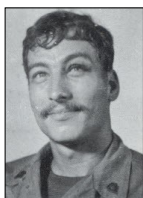
317th Maintenance Co. (LEM), Vung Tau: 1971-1972

martin.richard47@yahoo.com

MOS 72C20

AGENT ORANGE

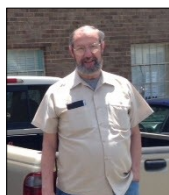
TAPS



Bob Weier

Avel Central

Bob died on 23 January 2017 of cancer caused by Agent Orange.
He was 69 years old.



John Handy

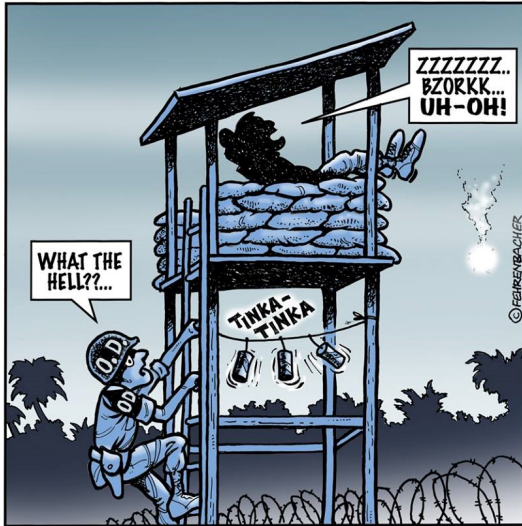
Avel North

John died on 2 November 2016.
He was 69 years old.

PHOTOS

Jim Ringle sent in his graduation class photo for 35L20, February 1970. It is posted in the Signal School photos on the website: www.avelvietnam.com

IN-COUNTRY



THE MANDATORY EARLY WARNING DEVICE!

IN-COUNTRY



THE SHORT-TIMER'S RE-UP TALK.

Newest USAF Ribbons



NEVER LEFT THE U.S.A.
Ribbon
For 20 years of continental service



EVERYBODY WENT TO GERMANY EXCEPT ME
Ribbon
Numeral denotes the number of years you have been asking for an overseas assignment



NEVER SERVED OVERSEAS
Ribbon
Globe device added for each overseas tour you weasel out of



MY WIFE'S UNCLE KNEW SOMEONE WHO SERVED DURING WORLD WAR II
Ribbon



MY UNCLE SPENT WORLD WAR II HIDING IN A SMALL CAVE NEAR DARTMOUTH
Ribbon



GOT DIVORCED AGAIN
Ribbon
Device added for each divorce



DADDY IS A GENERAL
Ribbon



HEADQUARTERS TOUR
Ribbon
Skull device added for each life-sucking three-year headquarters tour



CAPTAIN FOR LIFE
Ribbon
Device added for every four years



SENIOR AIRMAN FOR LIFE
Ribbon
Device added for every four years



D.U.I. AND STILL IN SERVICE
Ribbon
Martini device added for each D.U.I. conviction



NEVER BEEN DEPLOYED
Ribbon
Smiley device for each five-year deployment-free period



ALWAYS BEEN DEPLOYED
Ribbon
Device added for every two deployments



I'M NOT MOVING RIBBON
Ribbon
Device awarded for each threat of retirement if given a PCS



EIGHT TO FOUR
Ribbon
Shows up to work late, does minimum work, leaves early



FRIEND OF THE CAREER MANAGER
Ribbon
Palm tree device for each cushy PCS assignment



GOT MY LAST BOSS PROMOTED
Ribbon
Numeral denotes number of superiors promoted because of your hard work



NEVER EARNED A RIBBON
Ribbon



AVEL VIETNAM



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